



THE MARYLANDER

AAUW MARYLAND NEWSLETTER

Advancing equity for women and girls through advocacy, education, and research

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FALL 2014

HARFORD COUNTY BRANCH AIDS GED STUDENTS

ALICE LEEDS

The AAUW Harford County, MD branch began a GED Scholarship Program fundraiser nine years ago. Originated by our late sister member Toni Bram, the program solicited donations to support women struggling to obtain that all-important GED certificate. Many of these women have had to overcome financial and/or personal issues to obtain their GED, and it is a testament to their perseverance and desire to succeed that they ultimately achieve their goal so they can enter the job market with their diploma.



Harford Community College GED Graduates

Due to the untimely death of Toni Bram last summer, the 2013 GED fundraiser base was expanded to include her family members and friends.

RSVP OCTOBER 18 STATE BOARD MEETING

PLACE:

Harford Community College
Edgewood Hall Room 132
401 Thomas Run Rd, Bel Air, MD 21015
(443) 412-2000

DIRECTIONS:

Take 95 North to Exit 80 Rt. 543. At Rt. 22, go right to Thomas Run Rd. At Thomas Run Rd. (a light with McDonald's), go left. Drive to roundabout. Turn right at roundabout. Edgewood Hall is first building to right. Room 132 is to the right as you enter.

DETAILS:

Meeting will begin at 10:00. Lunch will be served. Lunch cost is \$20. Please make out a check to AAUW Harford Branch for \$20 and send to Bernadette Low. Please mail to 2105 Shuresville Rd. Darlington, MD 21034

Public Policy Fall 2014: What's Important in November Besides the Thanksgiving Menu?

ANITA ROSEN

This is an exciting time in our communities, our state and the nation. Why? Because on November 4th there will be an election that will have great impact on your lives, the lives of women in our state and in the nation. Now is the time to plan and participate in branch and collaborative activities and programs that further an agenda for women of all ages.

What is that agenda? It might mean promoting STEM programs for girls in middle school, high school and community colleges. It might mean finding out how candidates for office at all levels of government plan to address such issues as human trafficking, paycheck fairness, strengthening Social Security, reauthorizing the Older Americans Act, or fully reauthorizing the Violence Against Women Act. Or it might mean becoming educated about any important issue in your community that has serious consequences for women and families.

One such important and controversial issue for the nation, the state and local communities is immigration. No matter how you feel about the issue, it is important to become educated and to find out how our own Congressional, State and local elected officials and candidates regard the issue. Here's what AAUW's Two-Minute Activist thinks about the issue on the national level.

There is rare bipartisan consensus on one thing: America's immigration system is broken. No one believes the current system is a good thing for our country, economy, or human rights.

In July 2013 the Senate acted in a bi-partisan manner but so far the House has failed to do try to fix this broken system.

Although the Senate-passed bill is not perfect, it goes a long way to provide a fair and just path to legal status for an estimated 11 million immigrants, promote policies against human trafficking, honors an earlier deal with Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) authors to include battered immigrant provisions, and provide a long-term solution for growing our domestic science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) workforce.

How can we promote a woman-friendly agenda? One way is to get women to vote. Women's votes make a difference in elections. It can mean sending letters or questionnaires to local, state and national candidates to see where they stand on women's issues. It might mean participating in non-partisan forums, or writing letters to the editor. It might mean holding voter registration activities at community colleges or other venues. It might mean helping homebound elderly or those in nursing facilities sign up for absentee ballots, or help them get to the polls or to early voting. And it just might mean getting our own selves educated about the issues.

Whatever you do, remember that so many issues are women's issues and fairness issues. And remember that women can decide elections! So, informing women of all ages about AAUW issues and getting out the vote are important for our attention this Fall. And we hope that you are informed about and ask about your school board candidates' views, your state legislators views and certainly your Congressional candidate views. Maybe you and your Branch will want to take a bit of time this Fall to think about and prepare for November --beyond the Thanksgiving menu.

HARFORD COUNTY AAUW LEARNS OF WAYS TO SUPPORT ASYLUM SEEKERS

HAZEL HOPKINS

Every year thousands of migrants arrive in the United States in search of protection. The U.S. government offers asylum to those who can prove past government persecution or a “well-founded fear of persecution” on the basis of race, religion or membership in a specific social group in their native country. According to Molly Corbett of Asylee Women Enterprise (A.W.E.), they work to provide transitional housing, companionship and community to these women by offering a safe and nurturing home, opportunities to connect within the larger community and to each other. It can take years for individuals to be granted asylum, and they are not allowed to earn money until that time. They are able to be placed in volunteer positions, however.

If individuals are granted asylum, they may reside in the United States and are then able to pursue a path to citizenship. The asylum process is long and lonely and unfortunately most of the women have no family here, so A.W.E. volunteers become their new family. They are supported during the long immigration process with transportation and companionship.



Molly Corbett of Asylee Women Enterprise and Bernadette Low President of Harford County Branch

The seeds of A.W.E. began in January 2011 as a collaboration of Catholic sisters from 9 Catholic women’s religious communities in Baltimore. It is the only known such organization in the U.S. For more information about Asylee Women Enterprise, go to www.asyleewomen.org.

GARRETT BRANCH SUPPORTS COLLEGE WOMEN

JUDY CARBONE

On the first Saturday of August each year the AAUW-Garrett Branch holds its annual Yard Sale to raise funds for the AAUW Scholarships for Women Fund. From this fund, the Garrett branch selects scholarship recipients, women entering Garrett College who have interrupted their education and are considering returning to school.

The scholarships administered by the Foundation Office at the college are awarded at the Second Chances for Women program. The branch considers Garrett College women students who have transferred to the Nursing Program at Allegany College of Maryland and Garrett College women graduates who are transferring to a 4-year institution.



Garrett Members working at yard sale: (from left to right) Rachelle Davis, Director of Enrollment Management; Judy Carbone, Director of Advising and Academic Success; Olivia Gaither, recent Garrett College graduate who will be attending Frostburg State University in the fall as an Education major; Debi Faccioli, Adjunct Instructor of Business; and Qing Yuan, Program Director of Business & Information Technology.

SUMMER BOARD MEETING MOTIVATES MEMBERS

BERNADETTE LOW

The summer meeting of July 19 attracted over fifty participants to the beautiful Ashbury Methodist Village in Gaithersburg. Hosted by the Gaithersburg branch and welcomed by Mary Wykes, all attendees enjoyed this comfortable setting and the good food provided by the food service.

Important issues were discussed after the co-presidents, Dorothy Fraquelli of Baltimore and Sandra Smith of Howard County extended their welcome, expressing their enthusiastic response to the AAUW mission and the purpose of this gathering.

The meeting featured Erica Stout, the training and program manager for AAUW's Member Leadership Programs. She leads the development of a national-level leadership development program for AAUW branches and states of the national office of AAUW. She initiated a brain storming discussion of strategies for enhancing membership through targeting of audience. After modeling the approaches, she broke the large group into smaller groups.

Karen Richardson of Patuxent Branch described strategies suggested by her small group.



Karen Richardson of Patuxent Branch. Photo by Barbara Fetterhoff

Each group also suggested ideas that a designated reporter noted for sharing with the large group. The long list of all of these ideas provided members and leaders with a plan or two to take back to the branches for 2014-15 recruitment. All members recognize the



Erica Stout

need for membership enhancement, and all are eager to identify and invite women who would thrive on this connection to join AAUW.

After lunch, attendees focused on other topics of interest—some choosing to discuss public policy, some membership, and others finances. The afternoon wrapped up as members inspired each other with good programming ideas as various branch representatives described some of the special branch projects and events that ignited interest and often generated funds for supporting women this last year. Here, Sandra Smith, co-President of Maryland AAUW welcomes new friends.



**Sandra Smith
Co-President of Maryland AAUW.
Photo by Barbara Fetterhoff.**

SENATOR JENNIE FOREHAND, RETIRING MARYLAND STATE SENATOR, SELECTED AS NEW HONOREE

CHRISTINE SCHMITZ

Senator Jennie Forehand a retiring Maryland State Senator has been selected as a new honoree as a Woman of Distinction. Senator Forehand has been a strong advocate and friend of AAUW causes. She says that she is thrilled to be so honored. Maryland AAUW voted to continue its support of this National Conference for College Women Student Leaders (NCCWSL Ceremony). AAUW members can contribute to this important cause by designating their contributions into the existing Fund #4355 at www.aauw.org.

As AAUW Maryland Funds Vice President, I recently received an envelope filled with wonderful thank you letters and photos from nine recipients

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SENATOR FOREHAND CONT'D

of our scholarships to NCCWSL. In addition to our “Janet Wert Crampton Honorary Fund” being able to be the Platinum Sponsor of the Women of Distinction Ceremony at the National Conference for College Women Student Leaders 2014, we raised additional funds to be able to offer individual scholarships to the Conference.

This year NCCWSL was bigger than ever. It increased in size to nearly 900 students from more than 300 colleges and universities, in 44 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, Jamaica and Egypt. More than 130 students were offered scholarships. It was wonderful that the generosity of Maryland AAUW women provided numerous scholarships. Many of our Branches also provided additional scholarships to young women to attend these events. Thank you to all who contributed in some way.

Many of their letters expressed gratitude for having received this opportunity because without this assistance they would not have been able to attend the Conference. In the words of Alanna Flowers “...this conference has better equipped me for challenges and has made me welcome the failures I once feared.” Emily Harvey said... “this conference has given me confidence in my leadership and what I am passionate about.” Danielle Davis said “Thank you for believing in me enough to give me a scholarship to attend this conference. She continued “This was an environment of love, success and hope that I deeply needed.”

Women who received scholarships from the Janet Wert Crampton Honorary Fund:

Khlood Hassan-Assran
Katie Bosetti
Hjordy Perez Matos
Nicole Lane
Danielle Davis
Alanna Flowers
Karen McConarty
Emily Harvey
Mycashca Alexander

I was sincerely touched by these letters of appreciation and hope to share the letters and photos with you at the next AAUW Maryland meeting. Again, we have a deadline of April 1, 2015 to raise \$20,000 to continue this very important work. If more information is needed, please feel free to contact me at dialacpa@aol.com or 410-795-5091.

WHAT ARE WE LEARNING IN COLLEGE PARK?

RALUCA ROSCA

The beginning of the new membership year is a great time to reflect on our activities in the last year.

The first \$tart \$mart workshop at University of Maryland was a success, with 25 students participating in at least one of the sections. We wanted to thank again Susan Wierman from the Baltimore branch and Schnell Garrett from the Howard County branch for coming to our aid and facilitating the workshop. We are discussing now with potential partners on the UMD College Park campus and hope to have \$tart \$mart be a yearly occurrence.

I also wanted to thank all the people who answered my previous request for donations. While the total amount of gifts since 2012 in Gwen Turnbull's honor was \$2,439, only \$750 were specifically marked

for the NCCWSL scholarship fund #2504. With this, our branch sponsored one student's NCCWSL scholarship. We hope to see more of this student, Deepa Ramudamu, at our future meetings. In the same way we are enjoying the increased activity of Mia Chen, a former Gaithersburg branch scholarship recipient.

This year was my first opportunity to attend the Women of Distinction ceremony at NCCWSL and I was very inspired by the speakers at the ceremony and all the college women student leaders in the room. I know that I will be planning to attend next year and encourage some of the students I know to participate in the conference as well.

CITIZENSHIP FOR ANNAIS ZARATE

EDIE ALLISON

In the June newsletter, we asked the members if they would like to make individual contributions to help Annais Zarate, one of our scholarship recipients, with the fees associated with her application for citizenship. Our members responded generously with contributions totaling \$725. Annais was so surprised when she was presented with our gift in July. She sent the note below:

“I would like to sincerely thank you for taking the initiative to begin collections in order to help me finance my citizenship application. I would of course love to thank everyone at the Gaithersburg Branch of AAUW for being so un-believably generous in their donations. I have finally begun my application for citizenship!

“I am very excited and humbled by all the support I have received from AAUW. I am not sure how I could ever repay everyone other than to be the best I can be as a student, worker, and person in general. I am forever grateful, and

one day I hope to offer people as much help as I have received from AAUW.

“I will certainly keep you updated on my citizenship status. You all have brought so much happiness, hope, and motivation to my family and I. If I could only put my feelings into words I would. I will be sure to keep you informed of when and where the ceremonies will be; I would sure love to have you be present.”

Sincerely,
Annais Zarate

A NOTE OF THANKS

EDIE ALLISON

This is a note we received from Margaret McMillan, president of Caring Hands:

“Our kids love to read,” says Ann Dixon, media specialist at Stedwick Elementary School. It’s wonderful to have the opportunity to put books in the hands of such deserving children that they can take home to enjoy.”

No wonder she was excited when two representatives of Caring Hands, Seniors in Action’s charitable community outreach group recently delivered 400 children’s books to the attractive, well-organized library Dixon oversees. These books will be given to students at the end of the school year.



Liz Clark-Hessell and Jane Carroll prepare for next year’s sale.

Elijah Davis, MV’s liaison with Seniors in Action, and Margaret McMillan, Caring Hands chair, were also excited. “I’m over-whelmed,” McMillan says, “with the generosity of Seniors in Action members, non-members who also contributed, and the American Association of University Women which offered a sizeable donation following the group’s used book sale last month at Asbury Methodist Village. All are making a real difference in children’s lives in our community.” Seniors in Action’s Arts and Crafts group made bookmarks for the students.

Many of the Stedwick children have never had a book to call their own. Now they can write their names on bookplates under “This book belongs to:”

MAKE PLANS FOR STATE MEETING IN SPRING

SUSAN WIERMAN

The AAUW Maryland 2015 State Convention will be April 25, 2015. Mark your calendars and plan to attend! Hosted by the Kensington-Rockville Branch, this fabulous event will be held at Montgomery College. All members are welcome and encouraged to attend.

The Baltimore Branch's annual Valentine Luncheon will be February 7, and all branches are welcome. We are excited that our guest speaker will be Mollie Lam, who is the AAUW Legal Advocacy Fund senior manager. Mollie manages LAF's case support program, making recommendations to the LAF Committee and working with plaintiffs to challenge discrimination and harassment in education and the workplace. Mollie also manages Campus Outreach Grants and Case Support Travel Grants, collaborating with AAUW branches to promote awareness about the legal rights of workers and students. She earned her bachelor's in history with a concentration in cross-cultural studies from Carleton College. She received her juris doctor from Washington University in St. Louis. An attorney with a background in discrimination law, advocacy, and the federal court system, Mollie previously served as law clerk to Judge Michael J. Melloy on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 8th Circuit.

The Baltimore Branch website and Facebook page have been revamped, courtesy of Eileen Menton. (Thank you, Eileen!) Details about upcoming meetings and projects may be found there.

HARFORD COUNTY BRANCH AIDS GED STUDENTS

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ALICE LEEDS

A total of \$3,800 was raised, which helped seven women obtain their GED; an additional 11 women received scholarships for the class this fiscal year but have not yet taken all their tests. (All GED candidates must fulfill a contract with Harford Community College for financial assistance, successfully complete their coursework, and pass a GED exam leading to a state high school diploma.) Currently the tuition is \$190 and the books are \$50 and the need for assistance is great. And we know that our members will once again come through with their support in order to enable other women to advance in their career and life goals.

In 2014 the program was renamed the Toni Bram GED Scholarship Program in Toni's memory.

The Baltimore Branch is thrilled to congratulate Acquelnetta Yvette Myrick, who graduated on May 17, 2014 with a PhD in Higher Education Administration from the George Washington University. Yvette has been an active branch member and officer for many years. Associate Professor Myrick teaches at Baltimore County Community College. Way to go, Yvette!

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