

AAUW NEWS OF NOTE

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Membership VPs: Patricia McKay (781) 337-3375 and Patricia Laidler (781) 878-6242
Program VP: Carol Sullivan-Hanley (781) 545-9341

Mission Statement: AAUW advances equity for all women and girls through advocacy, education, and research.
Vision Statement: 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.

HINGHAM AREA BRANCH OCTOBER 2009

CALENDAR

October 6, Tuesday	Book Group Home of Carol Sullivan-Hanley
October 6, Tuesday	Choice Day, 10:00 AM to 12 noon State House, Boston
October 8, Thursday	Adventures in Dining, 6:30 PM Salsa, Hingham
October 13, Tuesday	Program Meeting "Social Networking," 7:00 PM Hanover Public Library, RTE 139, Hanover
October 15, Thursday	Girls' Game Night, 7:00 PM Home of Chrisanne Gregoire
October 15, Thursday	Declutter Bugs, 4:30 PM Panera's, Derby Street Shoppes, Hingham
October 22, Thursday	Writers Group, 7:30 PM Brewed Awakening, Hingham
October 27, Tuesday	Board Meeting, 7:00 PM Home of Sandy Carle

BRANCH MEETING

Social Networking: Is It More Than Just Chattering?

Are you tempted by Twitter? Fascinated by Facebook? Dying to use Delicious? Perhaps you're just wondering what all the hype is about. Either way, October's program will show the pluses and minuses of social networking and Web 2.0 and the ways it is changing our lives and those of our families and friends. The meeting will be on Tuesday, October 13, at 7:00 PM at the Hanover Public Library, 534 Hanover Street (781-826-2972).

Branch Member Pat Laidler, Professor of Business at Massasoit Community College, who uses technology extensively in her online classes and faculty training seminars, will discuss this phenomenon as it relates to us and our everyday world. Bring your questions and concerns!

For more information about this meeting contact Lynn Howard at 781-901-9120 or lynnphoward82@comcast.net Directions to the Hanover Library follow.

From the North:

Take Route 3 South to Exit 13. Follow Route 53 to Hanover (past the Hanover Mall). At the 3rd traffic light, make a right turn onto Route 139. (Hanover Street becomes Route 139 further up the road). Travel for about 1.3 miles. Library is a red brick building on the left.

From the South:

Take Route 3 North to Exit 12. Follow Route 139 toward Hanover. Be sure to stay on Route 139 through its sharp turns. After the left turn (at traffic light - Crossroads Cafe is on the corner), travel for about 1.3 miles. Library is a red brick building on the left.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

In 2010, the US Census Bureau will call on every resident of our nation to be counted. Questionnaires will be mailed or delivered to every household in the US between February and March 2010. The data collected during the census determines federal funding for your community, your representation in Congress and planning decisions made in your community.

We in the Hingham Area Branch have decided along with other branches in the state to join in support of Census 2010. At the state meeting at Massasoit Community College, the Hingham Area Branch discussed the possibility of aiding the elderly in this process. We will be discussing this at the board meeting on October 27th.

Thanks go out to Susan Mahan and Ginny Giordano for co-hosting the Pot Luck dinner, we all had a great time. Thanks also to Patricia McKay and Pat Laidler for the directories. I hope to see you all on Tuesday, October 13th at the Hanover Library at 7:00 PM for the program "Social Networking: Is It More Than Just Chattering". See you then.

Sheila Doherty

THE PAMELA J. LINCOLN AWARD

Each year the Hingham Branch of the AAUW offers the Pamela J. Lincoln Award to a high school or mature female student who is pursuing undergraduate or graduate studies. The award committee is looking for a student with an outstanding record in academics, school activities and community service. Candidates must be sponsored by a Hingham Branch member, so we urge everyone to think of a worthy candidate and have them apply. If you know one such woman you would like to recommend, you can obtain an application form from Beatrice Kelly. All applications must be returned by March 1, 2010.

WRITING GROUP

Our next meeting will be on Thursday, October 22, at 7:30 PM, at Brewed Awakening in Hingham.

Although we have not met all summer, our members have had a fruitful season.

Susan Mahan has had her poem *Cleaning Up* accepted for the Brockton Public Library Anthology of Poetry. Her poem *Ethan Ate a Marble* was published in the on-line publication The Family Storybook Daily Digest, and two poems *War Story* and *Swan Dive* will be published this Fall in Whispering Angel Books' new anthology titled *Hope Whispers*.

Kay Campbell's essay, *Strolling for the Mail*, was published in Down East Magazine this past July. Her short story *Harvest Gold in Spring* was published in the online journal Aroostock Review. Beatrice Kelly's essay *Blowin' in the Wind* was published in the Hull Times on August 13.

GIRLS' GAME NIGHT

The next session will be on Thursday, October 15 at 7:00 pm at the home of Chrisanne Gregoire. RSVP to Chris

ADVENTURES IN DINING

Adventures in Dining is an informal group of members who meet monthly to enjoy each other's company while trying to stretch our gastronomic experiences at local area ethnic restaurants. The group selects the date and the restaurant. We invite you to join us monthly or when you can. On Thursday, October 8 we will meet at 6:30 pm at Salsa's Restaurant, 211 Lincoln Street, Hingham. Salsa's is on Route 3A in the Talbot's Outlet shopping plaza. The cuisine is Mexican. RSVP to Hollie by Monday, October 5 so that she can make reservations.

DECLUTTER BUGS

"That which you cannot give away, you don't possess; it possesses you." Need a little help getting rid of your "extra stuff"? Declutter Bugs might be the answer for you. We are a support group for those wishing to declutter their lives and become more organized. We meet monthly at 4:30 pm at Panera's in the Derby Street Shoppes in Hingham on a mutually convenient date. Our next meeting is on Thursday, October 15. Stop by and see what we're all about.

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

We are happy to welcome two new members who joined our branch at our pot luck supper. Please add their names and information to your Directory.

Phyllis Warren

Martha Cipullo

DON'T FORGET TO ADD INFORMATION ON THE HOLIDAY SOCIAL TO YOUR LIST OF DATES.

It will be **ON SUNDAY DECEMBER 6TH AT 11:00 AM AT RAFFAEL'S IN HULL.**

AAUW PUBLIC POLICY

Catherine Schindewolf, PP Chair

Student Loan Borrowing Reaches New Heights as Report Highlights Cost Barriers:

According to the Wall Street Journal, numbers recently released by the U.S. Department of Education show that students are borrowing more than ever to finance their college education. The amount of federal student loans taken out by students in the 2008-09 academic year grew by 25 percent over the previous year, a rise that exceeded expectations. The federal National Postsecondary Student Aid Study shows that two-thirds of college students take out loans to pay for their education, and those students graduate with an average of \$23,186 of debt.

The White House Middle Class Task Force released a related report highlighting barriers to college education. Many of the key findings focused on the rising cost of college, noting that family income is a major determinant of college enrollment and especially college completion. Lower income students are

less likely to have available information to find good affordable schools and financial aid and are more likely to eliminate college from consideration based on cost, even before applying to researching aid options.

ACTION: Because women are more likely to borrow money for college than men and will earn less on average after graduation, female graduates are more likely to struggle with their loan debt. Rep. George Miller (D-CA), chairman of the House Education and Labor Committee, recently introduced the Student Aid and Fiscal Responsibility Act (H.R. 3221). As one of the single largest investments in higher education ever, this bill will make college more affordable for millions of students and their families. Help make the dream of college a reality for many by urging your representative to support this important legislation now.

Can Girls Play Too?: The National Football Foundation and College Hall of Fame announced that five colleges have added football teams this year, with 12 more schools set to do the same over the next four years. The announcement did not specify whether or not any of the schools were adding opportunities for female athletes as well. Given the large amount of resources required and the high number of players college football programs generally boast, AAUW encourages schools to follow Title IX law.

Changes on the Hill: Sen. Tom Harkin (D-IA) Wednesday accepted the chairmanship of the Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee, a role previously filled by the late Sen. Edward M. Kennedy (D-MA). Sen. Christopher Dodd (D-CT), who had been the acting chairman in Sen. Kennedy's recent absence, decided to keep his chairmanship of the Senate Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs Committee rather than take the reins at the HELP Committee. Harkin's move freed up the lead spot on the Senate Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry Committee, which will now be filled by Sen. Blanche Lincoln (D-AR). Lincoln is the first female ever to serve as chair in the committee's 184-year history. Sen. George LeMieux (R-FL) was sworn in as the newest senator. Florida Gov. Charlie Crist (R), who is expected to run for the seat in 2010, selected George LeMieux (R) to fill the seat vacated when Sen. Mel Martinez (R-FL) stepped down from his Senate seat.

LEGISLATIVE AND REGULATORY UPDATES

President Presses for Health Care Reform: In a primetime speech, President Obama addressed the nation about the urgent need for health care reform. Speaking before a joint session of Congress, the president laid out in more specific detail his vision for comprehensive health care reform. The address came on the heels of a summer congressional recess filled with town hall meetings that were marked by emotional outcries and wild accusations about the president's plan. President Obama took these critics head-on, charging that such scare tactics are nothing more than "bogus claims spread by those whose only agenda is to kill reform at any cost." The speech itself was marked by one such incident, when Rep. Joe Wilson (R-SC) angrily shouted "You lie!" in response to the president's correct assertion that health reforms would not insure illegal immigrants. Rep. Wilson later apologized for his outburst. The vital need for comprehensive health reform was underscored later in the week as well, when the U.S. Census Bureau released statistics showing that the number of people without health insurance coverage rose from 45.7 million in 2007 to 46.3 million in 2008, an increase of 600,000.

ACTION: AAUW believes that health care is a basic right, and that women in the United States are in particular need of health reform legislation. Specifically, AAUW believes that any health reform legislation must include the following three tenets: an end to the practice of gender rating; coverage of reproductive health services; and access to and coverage of preventive services and care. If you haven't yet done so, urge your members of Congress to make these three critical pieces a part of the final health care reform bill. For more information, read AAUW's full position paper on health care.

President Addresses Nation's School Children: President Obama addressed the nation's school children on what was for many the first day of the new school year. Speaking from Wakefield High School in Arlington, Virginia, the president impressed upon students the importance of staying in school, working hard, and living up to their potential. In his speech, the president steered clear of policy issues, and instead discussed how a good education is the foundation for success later in life. Although the White House had consistently stated that the speech would be devoid of politics, a peculiar controversy had arisen in the days leading up to the address, with some right-wing critics charging that President Obama had ulterior motives having to deal with a so-called "socialist ideology." Not surprisingly, those claims were fully without merit.

Justice Sotomayor Takes Her Seat: U.S. Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor was formally welcomed to the Court in a ceremony attended by President Obama, Vice President Biden, her fellow justices, retired Justice David Souter, and others. According to the Washington Post, Chief Justice John Roberts administered the oath of office to Justice Sotomayor during the ceremony. Recently, Justice Sotomayor became the third woman and first Latina confirmed to the bench. She returned to participate in her first hearing as Supreme Court judge, when the Court heard arguments in a case about campaign finance law. The regular Court term will begin this October.

AAUW Adds to Voices of Support for Historic College Affordability Legislation: Bill described as single largest investment in higher education

WASHINGTON - AAUW urges the House of Representatives to pass the Student Aid and Fiscal Responsibility Act of 2009 (H.R. 3221), which is scheduled for a vote soon. The bill will be discussed at two media events hosted by U.S. Education Secretary Arne Duncan, U.S. Rep. George Miller (D-CA), chair of the House Education and Labor Committee, and other lawmakers.

This critical legislation would move all federal student loans to the Direct Lending Program, which would save the federal government and taxpayers almost \$100 billion over the next 10 years. These savings will be used to make college more affordable for millions of students at no new cost to taxpayers. The bill also states that improving postsecondary access for women and underrepresented students in STEM should be a priority.

"AAUW has been a leader in promoting women and girls in the science, technology, engineering, and math fields. Our work in this area dovetails with our efforts to improve women's economic security and to close the gender wage gap because STEM jobs are usually high paying," said AAUW Executive Director Linda D. Hallman, CAE.

AAUW is pleased that the legislation provides funding to improve community colleges, increases funding for early childhood education, and strengthens the Pell grant program.

While many students struggle with the cost of higher education and loan repayment, the burden is particularly significant for women. AAUW's report, *Behind the Pay Gap*, found that college-educated women earn 5 percent less than men one year out of college and 12 percent less than men 10 years out of college, even when they have the same major and occupation as their male counterparts and when controlling for factors known to affect earnings such as education and training, parenthood, and hours worked. This immediate and pernicious wage disparity makes it that much harder for women to repay their student loans.

"Only about 29 percent of Americans have college degrees-and that's not nearly enough to make us competitive in the global economy or to prepare people for 21st-century, technologically oriented jobs. This isn't just a feel-good, fairness issue-it's about keeping jobs at home and ensuring innovation and growth in the United States economy," said Lisa Maatz, AAUW director of public policy and government relations.

AAUW Reacts to New Census Data that Shows the Wage Gap is Stubbornly in Place: Calls for Passage of the Paycheck Fairness Act

Washington - Lisa Maatz, AAUW's top policy adviser, issued the following statement in light of the income data released today by the U.S. Census Bureau.

"The government's new report on income, poverty, and health insurance coverage shows that the wage gap between men and women working full time remains stubbornly in place. In 2007, the average woman made almost 78 cents for each dollar earned by her male counterpart. According to newly released 2008 figures, that number now stands at just over 77 cents for each dollar earned by a man. Given the tough economic times, some might say that women should be satisfied that the gap didn't widen. However, given that the wage gap has been stagnant over the past decade - in good times and bad - AAUW sees this as a time for action.

It is critical that we make real progress on closing the wage gap. Wage discrimination hurts whole families, not just women. This is not a time for employers to fall back on the stereotypes of men as the primary breadwinners, and tough economic times are not sufficient excuse to ignore civil rights laws. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, about a fifth of families with children are headed by single working moms, and nearly half of all families with children depend on two paychecks. Clearly a majority of working families have a stake in equal pay for equal work. These are real women, working everyday to make ends meet. They are not asking for special treatment; they are asking for simple justice.

AAUW remains committed to passage of the *Paycheck Fairness Act (S. 182/H.R. 12)*, a much-needed update to the Equal Pay Act of 1963. Congress made an important statement earlier this year by adopting the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act - the first bill signed into law by President Barack Obama. But it's only the first step to fair pay. The Paycheck Fairness Act, along with the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act, will help create a climate in which pay discrimination is not tolerated. The House has already passed the measure, but the Senate needs to take up the mantle. It's time we strengthened the Equal Pay Act so that it can finally live up to its name