



Pine

Deep Roots—Strong Branches

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

A MESSAGE FROM AAUW MINNESOTA CO-PRESIDENTS CAROLINE OWENS AND TERESA SAGEN



We are proud to be part of an organization that is making a difference for women and girls throughout Minnesota, the nation, and the world. AAUW, with 165,000 members and supporters, 1,000 local branches and 850 college/university partners, is a powerful advocate for issues affecting women. We know that when the 2,000 members, 30 branches and 21 college/university partners in Minnesota work together and with other “like minded” organizations, we can influence issues affecting women and girls in Minnesota.

Because there is so much to accomplish, it is important to prioritize. In July, the AAUW Minnesota board reviewed the state strategic plan and convention resolutions which are not yet fully implemented. Three public policy resolutions were adopted in April

2012, by the delegates to the AAUW Minnesota State Convention in Brainerd. During the year which ended June 2013, public policy efforts throughout the state focused on the two resolutions opposing amendments to Minnesota’s state constitution. This year we are focusing on the third resolution, Human Trafficking. We are now aware that human trafficking is a huge problem in our state. It’s a difficult issue to face, especially since we want to think we are all pretty nice people in Minnesota. As we are writing this, we know of two branches that are already planning programs about human trafficking, and are sure there are many more. Let’s share ideas and resources on AAUW Minnesota’s Facebook page and in upcoming issues of *The Pine*.

In addition to human trafficking, the board identified another priority for AAUW Minnesota, increasing and strengthening college and university partnerships throughout Minnesota. Young women are the future of AAUW, and we believe that a powerful

way to introduce young women to AAUW is through college and university partnerships. Branches play a crucial role in building these partnerships. Young women are drawn to action, and are anxious to volunteer for meaningful projects. We encourage branches to reach out to colleges and universities to plan and carry out AAUW related projects. Be sure to promote the free student affiliate memberships to students who attend C/U Partner schools, and to tell your contact at a school about the benefits of becoming a C/U AAUW Partner, if they are not already partnering. We welcome your ideas, and appreciate branches sharing their experiences. There are many resources on the AAUW website www.aauw.org, including an August 1 article: *Three Tips for Involving Your Local College in Your Branch*.

Be assured that AAUW Minnesota is not forgetting other issues important to women and girls, such as pay equity, bullying in schools, the importance of education, equal employment opportunities, STEM programs for girls, voting rights, etc. Thank you for your continued support of AAUW and your dedication to its mission. Each of you makes a difference when you advocate for women and girls. We wish you a wonderful AAUW year and look forward to working together during our second year as Co-Presidents.

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PUBLIC POLICY



By Mary Petron

Vice President, Public Policy

I'm your new state public policy chair, Mary Petron, and I will be discussing MN AAUW issues this year. One of the issues MN AAUW will be addressing this year is sex trafficking. For many this is a very sensitive subject and brings up uncomfortable feelings. However, this issue needs to be addressed by everyone because it affects all women—children, teens, young adults, and adults. It affects our families and our lives. Please go to the website provided and read the research. I would like to read your comments, ideas, and personal thoughts. I can be reached at mcpetron824@gmail.com or [218-263-9497](tel:218-263-9497). We CAN STOP this pervasive problem by standing strong and speaking for those who cannot. All it takes is one small voice to lead many, a campaign of the Women's Foundation of Minnesota <http://www.wfmn.org/>.

GET THE FACTS

Child prostitution is an issue so hidden from our public consciousness that the mere mention of it results in shock and denial. But, it's true: Minnesota girls are being bought and sold for sex. Many of us believe the prostitution (or sex trafficking) of girls for sex is something that happens only in distant nations. Or, if it does happen in our state, it only involves girls smuggled in from those faraway countries. Bottom line? The prostitution of girls is happening here, right now, in Minnesota — and it's on the rise.

NATIONAL

- 12-14: Average age girls prostituted (trafficked) for sex are first victimized.
- 83%: Percentage of total sex trafficked victims between 2008 and 2010 who were United States citizens.
- 50+%: Domestic prostitution (sex trafficking) victims classified as runaway youth living on the street.
- 55%: Approximate number of street girls who become entangled in prostitution networks.
- 75%: Girls entangled in prostitution networks controlled by a sex trafficker or 'pimp.'
- Domestic prostitution (sex trafficking) victims experience extreme violence, forced drug use and constant threats.
- Girls not classified as runaways are often recruited through forced abduction, pressure from parents, or through deceptive agreements between parents and traffickers.
- The National Center for Missing and Exploited Children conservatively estimates that 100,000 children are exploited each year for prostitution in the United States.
- The Polaris Project conservatively estimates that a pimp with a "stable" of three girls or women often enforces an average nightly quota of \$500, or \$1,500 a night. If these quotas are met consistently, the pimp can make as much as \$547,000 (or more) in a year (\$1,500 a night x 365 nights a year = \$547,500).
- Since 2006, the U.S. Department of Education has focused on the problem and worked on training with several schools. In doing so, they collaborate with the White House, the FBI, the Departments of State and Justice as well as other agencies.

MINNESOTA

- The FBI has identified the Twin Cities as one of the nation's 13 largest centers for child prostitution.
- By very conservative measures, a November 2010 study found that each month in Minnesota at least 213 girls are sold for sex an average of five times per day through the Internet and escort services. This number does not include hotel, street or gang activity.
- A November 2010 study found that on any given weekend night in Minnesota, 45 girls under age 18 are sold for sex through the internet classified websites and escort services.
- In 2010, investigators from three states determined that Minneapolis was the home base of a large domestic prostitution (sex trafficking) ring comprised of three generations of one Minnesota family that was prostituting (trafficking) mostly young girls across the United States.
- About 50% of adult women interviewed as part of a 2010 study focused on North Minneapolis stated that they first traded sex when they were under the age of 18, with the average age at 13.

YOUR AAUW BRANCH PROGRAMS COUNT!



By Rose Cyert
Vice President, Program

Many AAUW branches have programs as part of their yearly activities. These programs ought to reflect the mission of AAUW: AAUW advances equity for women and girls through advocacy, education, philanthropy and research. Of course, there are also fun activities and functions throughout the year happening in most branches. There are interest groups, such as, literature/book groups, gourmet/cooking groups, social/dining out groups, financial study groups, international study groups, etc. The list goes on and on. Although these activities are important to AAUW, the **mission in action** ought to attract members to your branch. Consider some of these resources as you plan your program...

- **AAUW Program in a Box**, which can be found at www.aauw.org, has all the latest studies that can be downloaded and utilized. Some of these are *Crossing the Line: Sexual Harassment at School*; *Why So Few? Women in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics*; and *\$tart \$mart*. Please consider using these resources, which your national /association membership fee is financing.
- **Branch Hi-Lights 2012-2013** found in the 2013 convention booklet, *Women's Health, Women's Wisdom* is a good resource for program ideas. Check out what other programs branches are having. You may find some great ideas.
- **National Conference for College Women Student Leaders** (NCCWSL) is another resource for a branch program. Check the Summer Pine, page 6, for names of students. Mary Parcheta, (maryparcheta@gmail.com) can get your branch in contact with these students. The Winona Branch will be having Samantha Schwanke, a Winona State University student from Owatonna, speak at the February meeting. The branch has invited Samantha to participate in their meetings throughout the year.

I hope this information is of some help to your branch. I realize that many of your programs are already in place for next year. If so, file these ideas for future use.

Do remember that a branch program that reflects the mission of AAUW is important for membership. AAUW is a membership organization. New, lapsed and returning members are important to every branch!

zom55@charter.net or 507-454-3555

MEMBERSHIP



By Carrie D'Andrea
Vice President Membership

So you want to grow your branch membership?

If you are reading this, you are already a believer in the AAUW Mission of advancing equity for women and girls through advocacy, education, philanthropy, and research. The question is how do you involve others in your community? First

of all, you need to be visible. A good way to do that is to become active partners in community activities that support our mission. Invite others to your branch activities. Here are some ideas for partnering with other local organizations and activities: host a speaker on a topic of interest to your community and invite the community to participate along with your AAUW Branch, join other organizations to sponsor candidate forums, work with your local grade school girls on Science Fairs and STEM projects, provide college scholarships to local high school girls. Need some more ideas? Check out the AAUW Programs in a Box provided by our national organization. These are easily downloaded from the AAUW website and available to all members. Check this out: <http://aauw.org/resources>

Dates to remember...

January 1, 2014

Half-year dues accepted for New Members

March 15, 2014

15-month dues accepted for New Members

April 11–12, 2014

AAUW State Minnesota Convention in Minneapolis

June 18–21, 2015

National Convention in San Diego

There are 21 Minnesota Colleges with AAUW-Minnesota College/University Representatives. Their names are listed in AAUW MN Directory that can be found at www.aauwmn.net. Students at these colleges become e-student affiliates. These e-student undergraduates will be able to get AAUW's publications, including research projects, electronically and at no cost. What a great way to start a young woman on her way to a future in AAUW.

And don't forget the "Give a Grad a Gift" program. Give a recent college graduate a free one-year AAUW membership within two years of graduation, at no cost to you or them. Check it out at <http://aauw.org/resource/give-a-grad-a-gift>.

AAUW MINNESOTA CALENDAR OF EVENTS 2013-2014

September 2013

15 Nominations Open for State Offices

October 2013

11 Eleanor Roosevelt's Birthday

15 Deadline for Board to Branch Contacts
(September 15 – October 15)

26 State Board Meeting

November 2013

15 Deadline for Nominations for State Board
Offices

December 2013

15 Deadline for AAUW Funds to Jan Paulsen

January 2014

1 Half-Year Dues Accepted for New Members

1 State Board Meeting

15 Pine Deadline

15 Deadline for Convention Resolutions
Submission

February 2014

1 Deadline for NCCWSL Applications to State

15 Convention Mailing to Branch Presidents,
Past State Presidents, C/U Reps,
Committee Chairs, and State Board

15 Credentials Chair Notifies Branches of
Number of Delegates

15 President's Mailing to Branches

March 2014

8 International Women's Day

15 15-Month Dues Accepted for New Members

15 Deadline for Applications for Young Women
for Equity Award

April 2014

8 Equal Pay Day

11 State Board Meeting

11-12 State Convention in Minneapolis

TBD NCCWSL Early Registration Deadline

May 2014

15 Pine Deadline

June 2014

5-7 NCCWSL 2014

30 Deadline for Branch Officers to State and
National

30 Deadline for 2014-2015 Dues

AAUW
of
Minnesota
2014
State
Convention



*The Art of Purposeful
Living*

April 11–12, 2014

at

**The Gale Mansion, Home of
AAUW Minneapolis**

AAUW OF MINNESOTA 2014 STATE CONVENTION

In April 2014, AAUW Minneapolis will host **The Art of Purposeful Living**, Minnesota's first 24-hour convention, at our historic home, The Gale Mansion. We'll begin at 3:30 p.m. on Friday, April 11, with an optional Docent led tour at the Minneapolis Institute of Arts and end at 3:30 p.m. on Saturday, April 12, when you pick up your AAUW Silent Auction treasures. The Gale hospitality will include cocktails and dinner on Friday night, coffee throughout the morning and lunch on Saturday. We're developing a wonderful program of speakers and workshops that you won't want to miss!

A block of rooms will be set aside at a nearby hotel for those who need to stay overnight. You might even decide to come for the whole weekend to take advantage of other cultural opportunities such as the many local theaters, museums, and nightlife. You could even do some shopping at the Mall of America!

All branches will receive a convention packet in February with registration forms and more information.

AAUW MANKATO STEM RESEARCH TEAM PRESENTS AT COLLOQUIUM

University of Minnesota - THE STEM EDUCATION CENTER'S 3rd Annual National Colloquium on P-12 STEM Education:
Research to Practice

The Colloquium on P–12 STEM Education is an interactive national forum bringing together educators, researchers, STEM professionals, and other STEM stakeholders in a dynamic two-day colloquium. Sessions are hands-on, participatory, and/or experiential. This is an opportunity to learn about the newest research in STEM education, bridge the gap between research and practice to implement effective practices, see and experience what is working in P–12 STEM education classrooms, and discuss next steps and potential solutions for the issues encountered in STEM education.

The AAUW Mankato STEM Research Team, Marla Mastin, Mary Mastin, Celsey Tiry, and Erica Oberender, was invited to present a Poster session entitled “Storigami STEM Math” on August 5, 2013, in the Mac Namara Center. Their research project findings had determined there was value in using Storigami as an instructional method to enhance mathematics learning for all. The focus was on equity for girls and mathematics. Attendees received a handout outlining the project. They experienced Storigami mathematics, took home objects to use in their classrooms, and discussed educational advantages using Storigami such as: interdisciplinary capabilities, memory skills improvement, fine motor skills improvement, group dynamics, and improvement of communication skills. Also, the AAUW Team members pointed out the correlation to state standards and national mathematics standards. This poster session sent everyone home with an instructional method (research–proven) for teaching mathematics for all.

AAUW AND THE MINNESOTA WOMEN'S CONSORTIUM



By Sharon Bigot

President Elect and AAUW MN Representative to the Minnesota Women's Consortium



The Minnesota Women's Consortium held their Annual Meeting in July. The main portion of the meeting included presentation and passage of a new strategic plan. Considering a new strategic plan is a great way to look at the past and reassess for the future. As part of the planning process, MWC members were surveyed. They asked for change. Members stated that the current political and social climate requires MWC (and AAUW) to be vocal, visible and relevant. This means MWC (and AAUW) shouldn't sit back and quietly work behind the scenes.

- MWC's New Mission: To advance equity and justice for all women through advocacy and collaboration.
- MWC's Vision: A day when all women and girls have the freedom, power, and confidence to reach their full potential.
- MWC's Values: Equity and Justice, Inclusivity, Integrity and Collaboration

MWC's Goals:

1. Advance a public policy agenda to achieve equity and justice for Minnesota women and their families.
2. Provide timely, accessible and actionable information that enhances the ability of our members to achieve our common goals.
3. Build a resilient and vital organization that transforms the lives of Minnesota women and their families.

The new logo for MWC is a multicolored chain link with "Stronger together" as the new brand. "The Minnesota Women's Consortium exists because we cannot work for justice and equity alone. We are stronger together."

Save the Date: JANUARY 23, 2014 CELEBRATION 34

Join me and other AAUW members for the annual MWC Celebration, which recognizes organizations and individuals from throughout the state who have done work enhancing equality and justice for women and girls. Do check out MWC's recently rebranded and updated website: www.mnwomen.org. In addition to AAUW MN, both AAUW Minneapolis and AAUW Saint Paul are MWC members and have their events on the MWC calendar. In fact, many AAUW members have their own individual MWC membership.

See the
Academy Award nominated
documentary film~

The Invisible War

Winner of the Sundance Film
Festival's Audience Award

at the

Gale Mansion

2115 Stevens Avenue South
Minneapolis MN 55404

on

Thursday, October 24,
2013

7:00 p.m.

Tickets available online at:

[http://minneapolis-
mn.aauw.net](http://minneapolis-mn.aauw.net)

or

at AAUW
beginning October 7, 2013

\$15 in advance

\$20 at the door

Students and military
pay \$10

at the door with valid ID



YOUNG WOMEN FOR EQUITY AWARDS

By Judy Urban
Committee Chair

Do you know a young woman who has exceptional leadership skills and is using them in making life more equitable for women and girls? If so, AAUW MN would like to hear about her and recognize her efforts.

Nominations for the Young Women for Equity Award will be open in January. It is not too soon to encourage your branch members to think about someone they would like to nominate. The award is based on the quality, leadership, and creativity a young woman has demonstrated in working on advocacy, educational, research or philanthropy projects that **specifically target equity issues** for women and girls.

We want to encourage branches to partner creatively with youth organizations to provide opportunities for young women to work on these kinds of projects. Involving the next generations in learning about the challenges in women's equity is a way we can assure that our work will be carried on.

We are also looking for members to join our selection committee. Most of the work can be done via email. There may be one "in person" meeting to attend. Most of the work begins after March 15th. Nominations are read and evaluated the last two weeks in March. Please contact Judy Urban via the contact information given below, if you wish to join the committee this year.

The criteria for this award are:

- A young woman may be nominated for either a high school or college level (up through age 25) award.
- The nominee must have shown **leadership in a specific action or event** that reflects the AAUW Mission: "Advancing equity for women and girls through advocacy, education, philanthropy and research."
- There must be evidence of the impact of the action or event. The evidence must be specific to the nominee's participation. Measurable outcomes should be shown, if possible. These could include any of the following: number of women or girls served, results of the event or research as they impact women or girls, any statistical measures of success, "before and after" stories of women or girls benefitting from the action.

The honorees will be awarded a monetary contribution toward their continuing education and a framed certificate. The recipients of this award will be announced at the State Convention and they will be invited to our convention banquet. Each winner will have the opportunity to speak briefly at the banquet.

One parent, guardian, friend, or significant other, accompanying the nominee, may attend the banquet free of charge as our guest. Other family members are welcome, but will need to make reservations and pay for their own meals.

More information and nomination forms are available from Judy Urban, 1007 Cliff Road Eagan, MN 55123, or judyurbansm@netscape.net. Forms must be returned no later than March 15, 2014.

FROM OUR ARCHIVES

By Sharon Bigot
President Elect

The Minnesota Branch of the Association of Collegiate Alumnae (which would later change its name to AAUW) was organized by eight women in March 1889. The members were from Minneapolis and Saint Paul and were alumnae of Vassar, Smith, Wellesley and the University of Michigan. All were recent graduates and they joined together “to express in their contacts with the community a sound reason for the existence of the college training which they had received”. It was decided to hold monthly meetings alternately in Minneapolis and Saint Paul with a program of practical educational work partly in cooperation with the national organization (founded in 1881) and partly for local purposes. They initially had four study groups: German, Latin, history and social science. Through the years, many speakers of distinction appeared on their programs and a variety of subjects were studied. In 1890, the branch formed its first committee for the Fellowship Fund of the then ACA, and has continued supporting fellowship projects up to the present day. In 1897, the University of Minnesota was admitted to the ACA as an accredited college. This resulted in a wider membership and in 1889, the Minneapolis College Club came into existence. In 1909, Saint Paul members formed a college club in their own city, so that they might be of more service to their community.

Some of the community projects undertaken by the Minnesota Branch included an 1891 inauguration of university extension courses in Duluth and Minneapolis. These courses in English literature and history continued until 1893, when the University of Minnesota took over the extension work. The Minnesota Branch also did an extensive study of sanitation, plumbing and lighting in public schools in Minneapolis. This led to the entire reorganization of the sanitary program of the Minneapolis board of education. The Minnesota Branch’s promotion of Florence Kelley as a speaker at a number of meetings brought about the formation of the Minnesota Consumers’ League. *

*The above information comes from, “The History of the American Association of University Women, 1881-1931,” by Marion Talbot and Lois Kimball Mathews Rosenberg

DECADE HISTORY



By Alice Laudon,
Secretary / Historian

In 1953, AAUW MN decided to create a

Decade History document for our records. This was not meant to be a comprehensive history, but a sampling or snapshot of what transpired during this period, and how AAUW MN and our branches carried out their commitment to advance equity for women and girls. Vera H. Frohlicher created our first history monograph, covering the years 1923 to 1953. Decade histories have been written by Isabel F. Koski, in 1963, Elizabeth B. Vaill, in 1973, Ethel B. Wonson, in 1983, and in 1993, and Karen L. Reichensperger, in 2003.

As Secretary/Historian, it is my job to document the **2003-2013 Decade History**, and *I need your help!* I need a short paragraph from **each AAUW Minnesota branch**. Please include your branch highlights, or an area of focus from the past decade. If anyone has historical information regarding our State Organization that they feel should be included, please let me know.

Please send branch highlights to:

ajlaudon@q.com

Thank you!

MINNESOTA STATE BOARD OPENINGS

Nominations are now open for the coming two-year term on our AAUW MN Board. The State Board, composed of volunteers, serves Minnesota's AAUW branches. The Board links member branches together with one another and links AAUW nationally with branches and their members. Elections at the state convention fill half the team positions each year on a rotating cycle.

We are seeking candidates to serve on the state board of directors, July 2014-June 2016, for the following positions:

- Vice President for AAUW Funds, 2014-2016
- Vice President for Membership, 2014-2016
- Secretary/Historian, 2014-2016
- Nominating Committee, 2014 for 2015 elections (3 members and 1 alternate)

The members of the current Nominating Committee are Sharon Bigot, Minneapolis; Barb Liukkonen, Ely; Susan Moody, Hibbing; Mary Petron, Hibbing, and Roger Sween, Chair, Red Wing. Alternate members are Lucy Diesslin, Ely, and Joan Macheledt, Northeast Metro. Please feel free to contact any one of us, if you have questions.

A strong belief in the mission of AAUW remains a major attribute of candidates as well as a willingness to learn and grow. Rewards for state service include leadership development, camaraderie and teamwork with other leaders. **An applicant may be self-nominated or nominated by your branch, branch board of directors, or any individual member.**

A brief description of position responsibilities and a vita sheet to be used for nominations can be found on the AAUW Minnesota website: www.aauwmn.net.

Nominations are open for the period of **September 15 to November 15**, and may be received at any time up to the closing date, mailed to the address below. Please note that the signature of the nominee is required on the vita sheet.

The nominating committee will present a slate of candidates to the membership at the 2014 state convention in Minneapolis.

Please give serious consideration to applying for a state board position. These leadership positions provide a great opportunity for you to share your talents with AAUW Minnesota State.

We need you. Thank you.

Mail completed and signed vitae by **November 15, 2012** to:
Roger Sween, AAUW Minnesota State Nominating Committee Chair
2464 Maryland Avenue East
Maplewood, MN 55119-7182
Phone: 651-528-7454
rdsdesk@comcast.net



Heather Nicole Saladino • Tessa Lasswell • Pa Nhia Khang • Katie Kuehn • Jenna Maus

NCCWSL LEADERSHIP FOR TODAY AND TOMORROW

By Mary Parcheta, MN NCCWSL Coordinator

For the past 28 years, the National Conference for College Women Students (NCCWSL) has offered unprecedented training and development for college women. Ten Minnesota students were represented among the more than 500 students that gathered at University of Maryland for NCCWSL 2013. Thank you to branches that sponsored students! At NCCWSL these outstanding women learned from skill building workshops, networking with other college women, heard inspiring keynote speakers and attended the unforgettable women of distinction awards ceremony and reception.

Reports and pictures of attending students are included in this edition of the *PINE*. Past students have returned and are ready to take on leadership roles on their college campuses. One student came back and joined her sponsoring branch and is now Vice President of Membership. Students have made presentations about their experience at our State Convention and at branch meetings. They are anxious to share their experiences with Minnesota AAUW members.

"I want to give a HUGE THANKS to AAUW for this amazing opportunity – I learned skills that I will use in my college and professional life. It was an incredible experience that I hope many others will get to participate in." Hanna Gjermo representing St. Croix Valley branch.

We encourage branches to offer this valuable lifelong experience to a deserving student for the 2014 conference, to be held June 5-7, 2014. The State Board, recognizing the value of this program, has voted to offer a \$500 grant to each branch that sponsors a student, up to a total of 10 students. The cost per student is about \$850 for registration, room, board, airfare and ground transportation. The deadline to have applicants to Mary Parcheta is February 1, 2014. If you have questions, contact Mary: maryparcheta@gmail.com.



AAUW Minnesota and AAUW Minnesota Branches sponsored ten young women to attend the 2013 National Conference for College Women Student Leaders, NCCWSL!

These thank you letters reflect their gratitude for this amazing opportunity!

NCCWSL

By Celia Byrne

Sponsored by AAUW St. Paul Branch

During the weekend of May 30–June 1, 2013, I had the amazing experience of attending the National Conference for College Women Student Leaders at the University of Maryland, College Park. During my time there, I not only met amazing young women from around the country that aspired to become strong leaders, but I also listened to extraordinary women speakers and their stories that made my jaw drop in awe. The keynote speakers and Women of Distinction award winners included author, educator and coach, Rachel Simmons; the co-founder and president of Women Thrive Worldwide, Ritu Sharma; LGBT activist Katie Miller; and University of Miami President Donna E. Shalala.

At the conference, I had the opportunity to participate in workshop sessions, including Feminism Today and Micro Aggressions, Gender, and Why It Matters. I found the Feminism Today one the most insightful. It was lead by graduate students and the workshop turned into a circle discussion where almost everyone shared their thoughts and opinions on what feminism is today.

This discussion opened my eyes to how many different ways feminism can be defined and critiqued. The workshops challenged my thoughts and ideas and also provided me with beneficial material and knowledge.

Throughout the conference, there was one message that was repeated over and over to all of us college women: DO NOT BE AFRAID OF FAILURE. If we never step out of our comfort zone and take risks, we may never reach our full potential as a person or as a leader. To go against what is normal or expected can be admirable and courageous, and you are only going to gain something rather than lose.

I am so appreciative of having this opportunity that was made possible by the AAUW St. Paul Branch. Because of this conference, I am left feeling more empowered as a woman and a leader, and full of energy to go out and help change the world!

NCCWSL

By Nicole Postl

Sponsored by AAUW Rochester Branch



Learning that I, along with my friend Alex, had been chosen to attend the National Conference for College Women Student Leaders (NCCWSL) was very exciting! And to be honest, at first, neither of us really knew much about NCCWSL or the American Association of University Women (AAUW). This lack of knowledge quickly changed as soon as we were contacted about being a potential candidates for the upcoming conference. I spent a lot of time researching NCCWSL and AAUW and discovered that they are two integrated organizations that focus on promoting leadership amongst women through education, research, advocacy, and global connections. After learning about how both organization focus on empowering women to be leaders in their communities, I was thrilled to be given the chance to apply for the opportunity of a lifetime. I have always considered myself to be a leader within my family, school, and community, so attending a conference that would allow me to build upon my leadership skills in order to make myself a better leader was something that I could not pass up!

We arrived at the University of Maryland on one of the hottest days of the year. Being from Minnesota, I was not used to the extreme heat and humidity that I experienced at the campus. After checking in and unloading our belongings in our room, we proceeded to the opening session. The opening session was two large conference rooms filled with 700 women from all over the United States. It was neat to see so many passionate women leaders in one area. The session proceeded with various women sharing their options on variety of topics such as gun control and feminism. That night was the Women of Distinction ceremony. This ceremony was one of my favorite parts of the conference because it was very eye-opening for me. There is so much that women have done, and continue to do, that make them role models and natural leaders. Six women were recognized as the winners of the Women of Distinction ceremony of 2013. I was completely engaged in each woman's personal story as they shared about their struggles, their failures, their triumphs, and their successes. We heard from a women who was a molecular biologist, another women informed us of her decision to leave her cadet position at West Point due the inequality of "don't ask, don't tell". We also heard personal stories on what is was like for one woman to be the first Indian American candidate for Congress, and another story on how a women strives for women's economic empowerment, and finally, how one of the speakers fights for the improvement of impoverished women throughout the world. It was stories like these that made me realize that I have so much potential do make a difference in the world.

The next morning an all-women's A Capella group from the DC area surprised us. What a great way to start the morning! To keep the energy going, we were introduced to Rachel Simmons, the keynote speaker of the day. Rachel is a best-selling author and a co-founder of the Girls Leadership Institute who many NCCWSL attendees found inspirational. She spoke to us about how we need to listen to our inner voice so that we can make brave decisions on our own. It was an amazing message that I continue to follow through with on a daily basis. Later that afternoon, everyone had the chance to attend a graduate fair. This experience allowed for individuals to explore graduate schools and possible career paths that they had interest in. Another activity that I liked at the conference was the breakout sessions. Each attendee had the opportunity to attend four breakout sessions, which all had different themes. My two favorite sessions were on the Peace Corps and how to be woman leader in my community. That evening everyone had a chance to go out and explore the beautiful city of Washington DC. Alex and I took this time to get to know our new friends as they showed us some of the highlights of DC at night. I can honestly say that I have never seen so breath taking as the monuments lit up at night!

The following day was our last day of the conference. We concluded with a keynote speaker, Nina Godiwalla, a small networking activity, and a NCCWSL photo shoot. I cannot believe how fast the conference went. In the short time that I was at NCCWSL, I had learned so much about being a woman leader, how to network with people, and I had made a whole new group of friends that I continue to talk with today.

Before we headed back to Minnesota, Alex and I spent two extra days in DC. We traveled to Georgetown to the famous DC Cupcake shop (which has delicious cupcakes!), we saw all the major monuments, and even saw the President at his Annual Gala. Between the conference and our extra days in DC, I could not have asked for a better trip!

I want to say thank you to all the leaders at AAUW and a special thank you to Beth Nienow for opening up this opportunity to me and for sponsoring me. I never expected a gain so much from a conference like I did at NCCWSL. It was a once in a lifetime experience that I will never forget!

NCCWSL

By Alexandra Spindler

Sponsored by AAUIW Rochester Branch

Earlier this summer, I had the incredible opportunity to attend the 2013 National Conference for College Women Student Leaders (NCCWSL) at the University of Maryland—College Park in Washington, D.C. At this conference, I gained valuable lessons and was inspired by countless women who have accomplished amazing things to advance equality for all. I had the privilege to hear speeches by Donna Shalala, the former Secretary of Health and Human Services, and Reshma Saujani, the founder of Girls Who Code, among the six Women of Distinction honored on the first night of the conference. It was remarkable to hear their stories and profound words for all 700 of us in attendance, coming in from all around the United States. One of my favorite sessions at the conference was the keynote speech of Rachel Simmons, who talked of finding your inner voice, and how the “inner résumé” is much more important than that on paper. She spoke of the predisposed attitudes of women within our society and challenged us to take risks and do things we really care about—not because we are *supposed* to, but rather because we want to and are passionate about them. Such words really spoke to me in this point of my life, while I am discovering who I am and what career I plan to pursue. Later that same day, we were able to choose from a large selection of seminars and workshops to attend, including those on leadership development, stress management, and issues pertaining to women and women’s rights. It was immensely valuable to connect with others and find that I am not alone in my beliefs and goals to make a difference in the world. I have always been worried about my future, but after hearing of the incredible accomplishments and plans of my peers, I now realize the future is extraordinarily hopeful and have been inspired to set my dreams high as anything is possible. Furthermore, this conference was a great opportunity to meet some fantastic individuals as well as to explore Washington D.C. for a couple of days following. Being able to walk the National Mall, visit the Holocaust Museum and Arlington Cemetery, see the Declaration of Independence, and even catch a glimpse of President Obama at the Ford Theatre’s Annual Gala were extraordinary opportunities I would not have otherwise experienced. The city is so rich with American history, and I cannot help but wonder what our generation will contribute to our nation’s story. After attending NCCWSL, however, I am confident that women will be prominently involved in its advancement. It was truly an honor to represent the University of Minnesota Rochester at this esteemed conference; it has been one of the most valuable experiences of my life.

By Kelsey Sievert, Sponsored by AAUW St. Croix Valley Branch

I was honored to be chosen to attend the National Conference for College Women Student Leaders. I had an amazing time in DC, and learned a lot. Hanna and I were both excited to get the opportunity to meet with other college girls like us who hope to become leaders.

I had never been to DC before, so it was nice to be able to make a trip to the Capitol in the pre-conference activities. It was interesting to see how women have impacted our government and history, and how they have been represented around the Capitol. The coolest part about our visit to the Capitol was getting to sit in the House of Representatives' seats. To be in the room and the actual seats where decisions about our country are made was surreal. It made it seem like influencing today's world wasn't so unreachable.

The day of the conference was packed with different sessions that participants could pick and choose from to attend. The workshop that I thought was by far the most helpful was the public speaking session. The speaker gave us many tips on how to be an effective speaker, which is crucial skill as a leader. I know that I am not the strongest public speaker, and knowing little tips on how to stand, where to put your hands and how to monitor the tone of your voice gave me the confidence to keep trying to improve as a public speaker, rather than shy away from the idea.

We also attended a session about women in the fields of science and engineering. Being an engineering major myself, I know there is a lack of women in these types of fields, as I see it every day in my classes. This session helped highlight the gaps that exist between men and women in the science and engineering fields, and gave me ideas on how to help women like myself to be confident to choose technical majors and be successful in school as well as in the workforce.

The large group speaker that rang true with me the most was by far the "Curse of the Good Girl" by Rachel Simmons. What she means when she says, "curse of the good girl" is always doing what's "right", not in terms of morally, but rather in terms of work and career choices. She graduated with excellent grades, which was a heavily pushed agenda by her family and enforced by the values of the community that she grew up in. She talks about how she received many awards in her field, but she was more satisfied with the title and recognition of her award rather than its meaning off paper. She was awarded as Rhodes Scholar and when she got to Oxford, she had the realization that she really didn't like doing this type of work, and rather liked it because society deemed it important and something of value. She was incredibly unhappy and could no longer stand to do the work she had forced herself to do all of these years. She quit and left Oxford, which was a difficult decision for her to make because of the social fallout. She told us that she was so thankful that she did, because it has lead her to a job that she loves to do today, which is teaching young women around the nation about her experience. This really spoke to me because I feel that I have a bit of the "good girl" engrained me, and I have to remind myself that just because my parents think its a good choice or it's highly regarded by society, what matters most is that it is important to me and it is something I care about.

Though the conference was only a few short days, I will carry the knowledge I gained with me much longer. What I learned will be useful in my future not only throughout college, but my career afterwards. I have faith that the conference will keep growing and hope that AAUW and NCCWSL will continue to choose to educate young women like myself.

Thank you, Kelsey Sievert (pictured on left)

By Hanna Gjermo, Sponsored by AAUW St. Croix Valley Branch

I want to give a HUGE THANKS to AAUW for the amazing opportunity to attend the National Conference for College Women Student Leaders. I had an amazing time and it was truly a life changing experience. Kelsey and I participated in the pre-conference events. We went to the Capitol and took a special "inside" tour. I had never been to Washington DC, so going to the Capitol was really exciting. We got a special guided tour that focused on the "female" elements in the Capitol. I learned so much and was really impressed by the size and detail of the Capitol.

The day of the conference went way too fast! It was so hard to choose which workshop I wanted to go to because they all seemed very interesting and helpful. My favorite workshop was the public speaking one. Public speaking is a huge part of being a professional. I knew what good public speaking should look and sound like, but I had no idea how do it myself. The speaker told us all about eye contact, hand position, stance and inflection. My hand could barely keep up taking notes. I know those notes are something I will keep and reference for a long time. Another session I really liked was about negotiating. I had never thought about what an important skill this would be. The speaker gave us great tips and hints. She gave me a lot more confidence in my negotiating skills and in myself.

The Women of Distinction Awards Ceremony was amazing! It was incredibly inspiring to hear the Women of Distinction speak and accept their award. All of them started exactly where I am now, and they made such an amazing impact on the world. I loved how all of them came from different backgrounds and successes, but they all came together that one night. It was one of my favorite parts of the conference.

Even though it only lasted a few days, the conference will have a huge impact on the rest of my life. I learned skills that I will use in my college and professional life. I hope the conference keeps growing and you are able to keep sending girls.

It was an incredible experience that I hope many other girls would get to share too.

Thank you, Hanna Gjermo (pictured on right)



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NCCWSL

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By Danielle Swanson
Sponsored by AAUW Red Wing Branch

The women in leadership conference was inspirational, as well as a great learning opportunity. I feel very lucky and honored to have been recognized for my leadership that motivated this organization to sponsor my attendance. I was overwhelmed yet inspired to be with so many women in one place, many with different backgrounds that all share the same ambition. The learning and networking opportunities were amazing.

I am attaching some of the pictures I have from the conference. I would love to share information about the women leaders they had speak to us, that motivated me, as well as the things I learned.

Thank you again!



Danielle and Donna E. Shalala



By Jan Paulsen
Vice President AAUW Funds

AAUW MINNESOTA EARNS TOP TEN AWARDS

AAUW Minnesota received four 2012 National Fundraising Awards from AAUW. Linda Hallman, Executive Director, signed the award letters. The letters congratulated all Minnesota members for outstanding achievements in fundraising. The letters stated, "Top Ten Branch and State Fundraising awards are among AAUW's highest branch and state honors. We know that it is only because of the ongoing support and commitment of our members and donors that AAUW can continue to be a leading champion for women and girls." Good work Minnesota!

The "Top Ten" awards Minnesota earned:

- * Eighth in Total State Giving in Combined Support
- * Eighth in Total State Giving to the Educational Opportunities Fund
- * Fourth in Total State Giving to the Legal Advocacy Fund
- * Eighth in Total State Giving to the Eleanor Roosevelt Fund

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