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Palmetto Leaf

AAUW of South Carolina Newsletter

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January 2006

Education, Taxes and Advocacy - Key Topics at State Legislative Day

by Betty Bayless, AAUW of SC Public Policy Chair

Sign up now to participate with members of AAUW of SC, the League of Women Voters of SC (LWVSC) and the SC School Improvement Council (SCSIC) in our annual State Legislative Day in Columbia on Tuesday, February 21, 2006. We will begin the day at the Columbia Marriott Hotel (formerly the Adam's Mark) and conclude the day at the State Capitol.

Rep. William (Bill) Cotty [R], member of the House Ways and Means Committee, and **Sen. Nikki Setzler [D]**, member of the Senate Education Committee, have been invited to discuss the impact of proposed tax reform on public education funding and related legislation. They will be available to answer your questions on this vital issue.

State Superintendent of Education Inez Tenenbaum will evaluate the future of public education in South Carolina and share her proposals to this General Assembly session. Take this opportunity to recognize her for all that she has done for public education in our state!

After lunch, **Anton Gunn, Executive Director of SC Fair Share**, will energize us with useful suggestions on how to influence state legislators regarding our priority issues. He will also describe the

successful advocacy efforts by his organization.

We will close the day by walking to the State Capitol to observe selected committee meetings and House/Senate sessions, and meet with our General Assembly members. We urge you to **contact your legislators in advance** to schedule an appointment with them.

Cost for Legislative Day is \$30 and covers morning beverages and muffins, materials and lunch. Parking passes for those who park in the municipal garage adjacent to the hotel will be available at the AAUW registration desk for \$5.

Mail your registration postmarked by February 14, 2006. If you have questions, call Betty Bayless at 843-987-1930 or e-mail tbbayless@islc.net. As our State Public Policy Chair, Betty is responsible for State Legislative Day plans in cooperation with Sarah Leverette, LWVSC advocate, and SCSIC Executive Director Jean Norman, Ph.D.

Please join us for this special opportunity to learn and to network!

*Legislative Day
registration form
is on page 4.*

Legislative Day Schedule
Tuesday, February 21, 2006
Columbia Marriott Hotel,
Columbia, SC
Palmetto Ballroom

9:00 – 9:30 a.m.

Registration, beverages and muffins

9:30 – 10:30 a.m.

**The Impact of Property Tax Reform
on Public Education Funding**

Rep. Bill Cotty [R]

House Ways and Means Committee

Sen. Nikki Setzler [D]

Senate Education Committee

10:30 – 10:45 a.m.

Health Break

10:45 – 11:45 a.m.

**The Future of Public Education in
South Carolina**

Ms. Inez Tenenbaum

State Superintendent of Education

11:45 a.m. – Noon

Break – Setup for Lunch

Noon – 1:00 p.m.

Luncheon in Palmetto Ballroom

1:00 – 1:45 p.m.

**Advocacy at the General Assembly –
Your Voice Matters!**

Anton Gunn

Executive Director, SC Fair Share

1:45 – 2:00 p.m.

Wrap Up the Day

2:00 p.m.

Walk to State Capitol to observe
committee meetings, and to meet with
General Assembly members

Funding of education part of AAUW's mission

by Trish Johnson, AAUW of SC President



The state of South Carolina is only as strong as its weakest link. Our weak link is the state's under-funding of its public schools in rural school districts. As an organization whose focus is equitable education for women and girls, we can no longer turn a blind eye to inequitable funding of our schools. We cannot hope to achieve this goal if any child is denied an equitable education because she or he is poor.

The video *The Corridor of Shame*, which explores the education climate in school districts along the I-95 corridor in South Carolina, has been shown in many AAUW of South Carolina branches as part of your fall programming. Since viewing this DVD, several branches have taken action to do what they can to change this climate in whatever way they can.

The **Beaufort** and **Hilton Head** branches have begun to collect books for Jasper County Schools. **Rock Hill** donated over 600 books to the Estill High School in Hampton County. **Charleston** is talking about finding a school in its district that may need help as well.

This video has given us a cause; we know we can make a difference. I encourage you to take this action a step further. Write your Legislators to encourage them not only to view the video, but to take a field trip to these schools. Ask them why they can spend millions on fighting against making sure the children in our state don't get a quality education. Ask them what is the value of keeping our children under-educated? Why can these children not be educated so that they will be more than low wage employees for big discount stores and fast food restaurants? Ask the hard questions.

The one other action you can take to make a difference is to show up for Legislative Day on Tuesday, February 21, and make your voice heard.

Trish

AAUW of SC Calendar

January, 2006

Finance Committee Meeting

January 21, 2006

State Winter Board Meeting, Hilton Head

February 1, 2006

Deadline for *Palmetto Leaf*

February 21, 2006

Legislative Day, Marriott Hotel, Columbia

March 31-April 1, 2006

State Convention, Hilton Garden Inn, Rock Hill

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AAUW Helpline

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Membership Efforts are important throughout the year

by Pat Batten and Sue Norton , AAUW of SC Membership Co-Vice Presidents

We're half way through our membership year and that gives us another opportunity to add new members. Anyone joining after January 1st has the opportunity to pay dues for half the year. This is an excellent opportunity to have a new member activity in your branch and invite friends, co-workers and others interested in being a part of AAUW. It's also an excellent time to reach out to the new membership possibilities opened to us with the change in our eligibility. And, don't forget our student affiliates!

We have some good news to report. A new branch is in the process of forming in **Florence**. Diane DeLucia has been working with a core group of interested members in the area to form a new branch.

She has managed an excellent publicity campaign to get out the message about AAUW, our mission and the advantages of being a part of our lobbying efforts. If you know anyone in that area, please give their name to Diane at

ddelucia@alumni.clemson.edu. We'll keep you informed about their progress.

Reminder: February 21st is our Legislative Day. Please promote it in your branches and plan to bring a group. AAUW has the best women's lobby organization in Washington. This is one way to show how we can continue that activism at the state level. New members and potential members benefit from seeing our members "in action." Bring a car load! It's a great way to show what AAUW can do for them, their county and their state.

Let us know of any unique program you have planned to increase your membership so that we can share it with the group. We're all looking for new ideas.

Every member is part of the membership committee to increase our numbers and spread the word about AAUW.

Educational Foundation Board approves Terry endowment, releases research and supports LAF

by Bev James , AAUW of SC Educational Foundation Chair

The challenge is on! At its November meeting, the AAUW Educational Foundation Board formally established the **Ann Scott Terry Research and Projects Grant**.

The grant will have 10 years from its establishment to reach the completion level of \$75,000.

We already have a great start with approximately \$7,500 for 2005. This would be a great opportunity for your branch to initiate new fund raising ideas. We can do this!

The Board also announced that a **research report** entitled, *Drawing the Line: Sexual Harassment on Campus*, funded by the Eleanor Roosevelt Fund and AAUW of Oregon, will be issued in January 2006. They also approved eleven Legal Advocacy Fund (LAF) Travel Grants for plaintiffs to attend state and regional conventions, adopted and approved initial funding for a new LAF case and approved funding for six ongoing LAF cases.

Questions have been raised by several members about **Legal Advocacy Fund (LAF)** giving now that LAF is officially a program of the Educational Foundation. Please be



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assured that procedures for giving to LAF remain the same. Contributions intended for the LAF program can be made out to LAF as they were previously. These contributions will be designated to the LAF program in keeping with the donor's intention. Donors can also choose to address checks to the Educational Foundation and write "LAF" on the memo line.

Don't forget to be thinking about the fantastic **auction item** your branch might provide at the State Convention the end of March. Last year was great fun with a variety of items – framed pictures, plants, a cigar box handbag, for example.

Each branch is encouraged to put together items to be auctioned - a themed basket, baked goods, a trip, jewelry, handmade items, clothing, bath products, household items – anything that can be auctioned. These items will be auctioned off during the state convention with the proceeds credited to the individual branch that provided the item. So, put on your thinking caps and let's have plenty to auction!

If you have questions, contact me at 843-671-4289 or bevjames1998@yahoo.com.

Charleston Branch makes *Caring Connections*

by Lori Glenn, Charleston Branch President

AAUW Charleston Branch had the honor of serving as a co-sponsor on November 5, 2005 at: *“Caring Connections, Women to Women: Forum on Women and the HIV/AIDS Epidemic”* at St. Matthew Baptist Church in North Charleston.

Spearheaded by Women Engaging Globally, a joint effort of the League of Women Voters Charleston Area, the League of Women Voters Education Fund, the Center for Women Policy Studies and the Women’s Environment Development Organization, AAUW Charleston Branch joined 22 other local organizations in co-sponsoring the event, which drew more than 250 people.

Barbara Conard served as the AAUW Charleston Branch liaison on the Forum planning committee and worked tirelessly with her colleagues on the hugely successful event.

Speakers addressed the HIV/AIDS epidemic and its impact on women from a global, national and local perspective. As we listened to the speakers, we laughed and we cried; we were told the “ugly numbers” and heard stories of tremendous hope and courage.

We learned:

- Nearly 50% of the 40 million people living with HIV/AIDS are female
- Among teens 13-19 in the United States, girls account for over 50% of new HIV infections
- Seven of the 10 states with the highest case rates are among women in the South. About 4,000 women are estimated to be living with HIV (including AIDS) in South Carolina. More than 8 out of 10 women with HIV are African American SC has experienced a 71% increase of all persons living with HIV/AIDS from 1995 to 2003.

The AAUW members who attended overwhelmingly agree they were deeply moved by the personal stories and dire statistics they heard. All agreed that the HIV/AIDS threat had fallen a bit off their radar, possibly because it is not front page news anymore.

A sobering picture to say the least, but not entirely bleak. We were very encouraged to hear from those who are out on the front lines of this epidemic in our state working hard to stop the spread, whether they are healthcare professionals, advocates, clergy or persons living with HIV/AIDS.

We are grateful to have been a part of this project to get this important information out to the public.



AAUW Charleston Branch members in attendance at the Forum: (seated left to right) Barbara Conard, Jerry Cassidy, Toni Johnson; (standing left to right): Lori Glenn, Barbara Zia, Joan Dehne

State Legislative Day Registration

Tuesday, February 21, 2006

Columbia Marriott Hotel (formerly the Adam’s Mark); 1200 Hampton Street, Columbia, SC

Name _____
 Branch/Org. _____
 Address _____
 Daytime Phone _____ Fax _____
 E-mail _____

Advance Registration of \$30 must be postmarked by Tuesday, February 14, 2006
 Lunch cannot be guaranteed without advance registration

Registration (*postmarked by February 14*) \$30.00 _____
 Late or on-site registration (*after February 14*) \$40.00 _____

Send this completed form and check payable to *AAUW of SC* to:
 Kathryn W. Sharp, 139 Alexander Glennie Drive, Pawleys Island, SC 29585-6882

AAUW Louisiana Library Project – a way to help our AAUW sisters and their communities after Katrina

AAUW friends around the country have asked how they can help in the hurricane recovery.

In response to their concern, AAUW Louisiana has developed the *AAUW Louisiana Library Project*.

AAUW thought that a project to assist the public libraries damaged by the storm to rebuild their book collections would be consistent with the AAUW emphasis on education.

About 15–20 public libraries have been damaged or destroyed. The project was developed in consultation with Rebecca L. Hamilton, State Librarian of Louisiana.

Here is what you can do:

Money for Books:

The best way we can help libraries is with money to buy new books. They need up-to-date books with library bindings, and these have to be purchased. Branches can have fundraisers or bundle private contributions. The money will be funneled through the Louisiana Library Foundation, a 501(c)(3) charitable organization. The Foundation will give the money directly to the libraries that need help without politics or red tape. Identify your contribution as coming from your AAUW group and

state that your gift is for libraries damaged by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita.

Make checks payable to:
Louisiana Library Foundation
PO Box 2583
Baton Rouge, LA 70821

Send New or Used Books:

The affected libraries can only accept limited numbers of used books. If a AAUW group is interested in collecting and shipping books, they should contact the State Library of Louisiana: Diane M. Brown, Deputy State Librarian (dbrown@state.lib.la.us). The State Library will help you partner with a specific library, and you will ship your books directly to that library.

Acceptable books include: new or nearly new fiction and non-fiction (no mildew!); recent best sellers; children's books in good condition, especially Caldecott and Newberry Award winners

When you send your checks or books, please notify Anne K. Taylor, AAUW of LA President, Akt1208@bellsouth.net or 225-767-3565.

Mark your calendar for AAUW of SC Spring Convention

The AAUW of SC Board is busy planning yet another stimulating state convention which will be held in Rock Hill March 31 and April 1.

The convention will be held at the Hilton Garden Inn, with room rates of \$85 per night plus tax. Room reservation deadline is March 12. Convention registration will be \$55. There will be lots more details about speakers and workshops in the next issue of *Palmetto Leaf*.

Here is a brief preview of what is being planned:

Friday, March 31:

3:00-6:00 pm	Registration
1:30-5:00 pm	Board Meeting
7:00-9:00 pm	Women Scholar Athletes and Molly Barker from <i>Girls on the Run</i>

Saturday, April 1

8:30-9:00 am	Registration
9:00-9:30 am	Opening Remarks and Welcome
9:30-10:15 am	Keynote Address
10:15-10:30 am	Health Break
10:30 am-Noon	Business Session and Town Hall
Noon	Lunch
1:00-1:30 pm	EF Sales
1:30-2:30 pm	Educational Equity Panel
2:30-2:45 pm	Health Break
2:45-3:45 pm	Workshop
3:45 pm	Adjournment
4:30-6:00 pm	Possible off site fundraising reception for Ann Scott Terry Endowment

AAUW Advocacy – we must always be active in watching state and national issues

by Betty Bayless
SC Public Policy Chair



**Public Policy Update –
December 7, 2005**

Federal

When you read this Congress will have adjourned for the holidays. AAUW has opposed the budget reconciliation because the cuts in this measure would hurt a broad cross section of Americans by eliminating or severely cutting programs on which you or someone you know may rely. The House and Senate passed bills with significant differences particularly with respect to spending cuts on student loans, Medicaid and food stamps. These spending cuts were made to finance \$70 billion in tax cuts.

To make matters worse, under the guise of providing assistance to students displaced by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, an amendment was included in the Senate budget reconciliation bill that would funnel public dollars into private schools through creation of “student accounts.” This is a thinly veiled attempt to create a federal private school voucher program.

State

Equitable funding for public education will be AAUW SC’s priority for the upcoming General Assembly session that begins on January 10, 2006. Here is some key information that I learned at the Friends of Education Coalition meeting on December 6 in Columbia:

- The State Chamber of Commerce has three **education priorities**: total funding of the Education and Economic Development Act; 4-year kindergarten programs; and more certified teachers.
- **First Steps** sunsets at the end of 2007. **S 947** is a joint resolution to provide that The SC First Steps to



School Readiness Act, is reauthorized until July 1, 2013.

- The SC Municipalities Association, SC Counties Association, SC School Board Association and SC Fair Share have formed a coalition to respond to proposals for **property tax reform**. Revisions to the tax system will impact school funding. The best solution may be referral of tax proposals to a study committee for this session.
- **Choose Children First** has a new executive director – Lynn Moore. AAUW SC belongs to this coalition that was successful in defeating the Put Parents in Charge Act (PPIC) last session. Consensus by Friends members was that PPIC would not be an issue this session. The South Carolinians for Responsible Government (SCFRG) are raising funds to defeat House members who opposed PPIC. We will still monitor PPIC! We are concerned that SCFRG is sending negative e-mails to K-12 teachers.
- There will probably be a **voucher proposal** for pre-school education.
- **Education First**, the coalition that produced *Corridor of Shame* [see *President’s message on page 2*], is seeking additional funding to promote the next step in assuring that rural districts receive adequate funding. The video production won four national awards.
- Look for legislation that will promote **open enrollment** to solve the school choice “problem” in public schools.
- The decision in the **Manning case** could result in the need for \$500 million to \$2.5 billion from the state. This will probably mean a special session of the General Assembly in the summer of 2006!

Team work and caring spirits are all a part of AAUW

by Leslie Henderson, South Atlantic Regional Director, flaauw@aol.com



Dear SAR Colleagues,

I ended my last letter describing AAUW as a *lean, mean, equity machine*.

If I continue the analogy, and if we agree that a machine is an assemblage of interlinking and interdependent parts, designed to perform a given task, then a machine works only as well as its parts. This also applies to the

human body and to the body politic.

I have watched with delight as our AAUW staff works together as teams. In fact, the senior staff is officially called the Senior Leadership Team (SLT), which speaks volumes. Program, Communications, Public Policy, Membership, Research, and Development are all working together to launch new initiatives around our theme of Women's Economic Security.

The Association, the Foundation, and the Leadership Training Institute are all involved. Furthermore, almost all of our board working groups are actively cross corporate, and include staff, as well. Gone are those artificial lines that too often constrained effective team work and centralized the power base.

We in the field need to follow their example. Team leadership expands the vision. It empowers, both the individual and the group.

Team work makes it easier to take a risk, it increases the power base, it provides a safety net, and it makes what we do more satisfying and enjoyable. An important bonus to team leadership is that we create a new generation of leaders.

So, as we consider the roles of our branch and state leader positions, please keep in mind that to be that effective and prospering equity machine, our parts must be co-dependent and interrelated.

Finally, an announcement. You should have received your AAUW *Outlook* magazine by now. Inside you will find an important insert – the *Every Member Poll*. Note that it has a different format than the Every Member Survey we're accustomed to, and a shorter turn-around time. This is the single most important opportunity in the biennium for every member's voice to be heard. I strongly urge you to fill it out and send it back **before January 13, 2006**. It is also available on the AAUW website – www.aauw.org – and can be

completed in just a few minutes. Please be sure that your voice is heard.

Since I last wrote to you, we have seen major devastation from hurricanes and earthquakes. It is breathtaking the amount of destruction and death that has been wrought in such a short time.

On behalf of the South Atlantic Region, I would like to send our AAUW sisters in LA, AL, MS, TX, and FL our concern and our compassion. We can also help, so check out the information on a special AAUW project that is on page 5 of this issue.

Leslie

AAUW of SC Leadership Team 2005-2006

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Bev James
Educational Foundation Chair

Betty Bayless
Public Policy Chair

Take a Moment to Complete AAUW's Every Member Poll

Be sure to check out your Fall/Winter AAUW *Outlook* magazine. Inserted in the magazine are the new *ShopAAUW* catalog and *AAUW's Every Member Poll*.

AAUW's biennial *Every Member Poll* is easy to complete. Please take the time to complete the poll and return it in the envelope provided. Every member's interests are important to us! Information from this biennial survey helps us

to shape the future of AAUW. For your convenience, you can also easily complete the poll online at www.aauw.org/poll.

If you have not received your AAUW Outlook magazine, please contact AAUW's Helpline at 1-800-326-2289 or e-mail records@aauw.org to ensure that your mailing address is up to date with our records. You can also update your member record on the AAUW website www.aauw.org.

Do you receive AAUW's *Mission in Action* E-bulletin?

Mission in Action is AAUW's electronic bulletin of news tidbits and resources from the Association and Educational Foundation. If you are not receiving *Mission in Action* (typically e-mailed every other month) please make sure that

your e-mail address is up to date in your AAUW member record and let us know that you would like to receive *Mission in Action*. You can update your e-mail address and preferences by sending an e-mail to records@aauw.org.

AAUW Executive Director Search Update

The AAUW Association and AAUW Educational Foundation Boards of Directors have agreed to extend the contract of the current Interim Executive Director Michele Warholic Wetherald throughout this biennium (through June 30, 2007). The decision to extend this interim staff leadership position, with an experienced professional and committed member who has been effectively serving in this capacity to

date, will provide the stability and continuity needed at this particular time of organizational transformation. The Interim Executive Director will be charged with objectives including, but not limited to, addressing the administrative and transition issues, continuing momentum on the change process embarked upon during the past year, and strategic planning process initiatives.



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