



July Highlights

Welcome to new and continuing public policy chairs. We are your new state public policy co-chairs Ann Pehle and Barbara Price. We are humbled to follow Toni Hoffman and Susan McNamara and excited to work with you to continue the vibrant public policy work in Pennsylvania.

Ann, a retired human resources professional, joined AAUW-Carlisle in 2015 and served as Co-Chair Public Policy. She continues as Public Policy Chair. She joined AAUW for its non-partisan advocacy and an opportunity for local impact, yet had never done any public policy work previously to becoming an AAUW member. Barbara has been a member of Levittown-Lower Bucks AAUW since 1975 and has served in many positions at both the local and state level. She has 20 years experience as Executive Director of the NJ Coalition for Battered Women where she worked on public policy issues at the state and federal level, including lobbying legislators and testifying before Congress. She is a two year member of the (very active) Bucks County Women's Advocacy Coalition, serving on their Board and working on the GOTV committee.

Role of Branch Public Policy Chair (BPPC)

New to the SPPC (State Public Policy Chair) position, we are traveling a steep and fast learning curve. As BPPC, you might be feeling the same. Our sincere desire is to assist you with your public policy work.

- **Highlights** will be sent every other month to BPPCs and branch presidents. Presidents, if you have a BPPC, this is a courtesy copy.
- **** In the alternate months, we are launching BPPC bi-monthly calls on the second Wednesday, starting August 10 at 7 pm. If you use your cell phone to call in there is no long distance charge. Dial-in Number: (641) 715-0700 Access Code: 825160#. ****
- You may always contact us at aauwppp1@gmail.com (Barbara Price) and aauwppp2@gmail.com (Ann Pehle).
- We have access to the AAUW communication tool Salsa that is used to send [AAUW Two-Minute Activist](#) alerts (we hope) you receive. While we're still learning about the capabilities of this tool, we know it can be used to support you locally.

Download the [Branch Public Policy Chair Manual](#) for a great overview of the role. While the date on the cover is past and some of the staff at national have changed, the content is still relevant. Please review pages 18-22 for the policy and legal guidelines for your role. These sections outline the proper use of AAUW name/logo, guidelines for election activities, and rules for participating in coalitions.

GOTV for November 8

A cornerstone of AAUW's Public Policy initiatives is Get Out The Vote (GOTV). While you and/or your branch membership may think political engagement is the messy part of public policy or distasteful because it is "just too political", think for a moment about the mission of AAUW. Advancing issues for women and girls happens in school districts, state legislatures, and at the federal level. The one thing in common is elected officials. We can't hope to have our issues implemented if we don't participate in the election process. Therefore, we must be engaged in big and small ways to make our voices heard.

Please send us dates and participants of any candidate or issues forums in which your branch is participating. With enough notice, we can send a Salsa blast to persons in that legislative district already registered for action alerts. Make sure you understand the [AAUW rules for GOTV events](#). It is critical these are followed to preserve our non-partisan reputation and 501c4 status.

Not sure how to GOTV? Here are some ideas.

- Hold a voter registration. Identify a group in your area such as the League of Women Voters or a C/U partner to hold a voter registration event. Haven't done voter registration? Attend the AAUW-PA "how to" webinar on voter registration on August 24 at 7:00pm (dial-in information will be sent closer to the date).
- Reach out to a non-profit organization serving low income clients using the [Voter Toolkit](#) as a resource. The purpose of the toolkit is to provide AAUW branches the tools to work on voter registration and promote voting. It is also an outreach resource for branches to give to other organizations that align with our issues, and/or agencies servicing populations that might not otherwise have this information.
- Find out how your Senator and/or Representative voted on AAUW issues using the [AAUW Action Fund Congressional Voting Record](#). Use that information to write non-partisan Letters to the Editor and OpEd columns to inform voters.
- Hold or attend a candidate forum to ask questions and evaluate candidates using the [2016 AAUW Voter Issue Guide](#) as a resource.
- Download the [Woman-to-Woman Voter Turnout](#) guide. This is a manual for community based campaigns.
- The [AAUW Action Fund](#) has magnificent materials to assist you with your GOTV efforts.
- Check registration or register to vote at www.VotesPA.com by October 11.

Advocacy and Events

Planning an advocacy activity or an event—[register](#) it with national to receive resources and materials free of charge. Complete [activity report](#) to keep national informed of your activity. Please send us an email too (aauwppp1@gmail.com and aauwppp2@gmail.com) to report your event so we can keep track of all the good work happening in your branch. Unfortunately, we don't receive the activity reports from national, so unless you tell us, we won't be able to credit your branch with Public Policy advocacy or events.

How to Stay Informed about Public Policy Issues

Become familiar with the AAUW website. It contains so much information and so many tools most easily accessed via the search tool in the upper right corner. In our written communication, we will include links as appropriate.

At a minimum, you must sign-up for [AAUW Two-Minute Activist](#) alerts. This tool enables anyone to contact their federal and state elected officials with just a click. National sends alerts for federal issues and events, and we will use it for Pennsylvania alerts.

Stay connected with AAUW work by subscribing to bulletins. [Washington Update](#) is an insider's view on the legislative process, the latest public policy news, resources for advocates, programming ideas, and updates from the AAUW Public Policy and Government Relations Department. [AAUW Today](#) is a premiere aggregate of the website posts and will make you proud to be a member. Debuting in September 2016, [AAUW in the Statehouse](#) provides updates on state policy from across the country, tips and resources for more effective advocacy, and insider information from the AAUW Public Policy and Government Relations Department about good and bad bills in the states.

Final Thoughts

This election season has seen lots of firsts and lots of rhetoric. Sorting it all out can be difficult. The Levittown-Lower Bucks branch book group recently stepped back in time to read *The Feminine Mystique* by Betty Friedan. It was an interesting read over 50 years later. But as the old saying goes the more things change, the more they stay the same. In 1997 Betty Friedan wrote an addendum for a new publication of the book which offered some food for thought almost 20 years later.

Sexual politics now feeds the politics of hate and the growing polarization of America. It also masks the real threats now to women's empowerment and men's - the culture of corporate greed, the downsizing of jobs hitting even college-educated white males, with nearly a 20 percent loss of income in the last five years, to say nothing of minority, blue-collar, and those with less education.....Men whose very masculine identity has been defined in terms of their score in the rat race, knocking the other guy down, can no longer count on that lifetime climb in job or profession. If they themselves are not yet downsized out, brothers, cousins, friends, co-workers have been. And they are more dependent now on wives' earnings. The real and growing discrepancy affecting both women and men is the sharply increased income inequality between the very rich - the top 10 percent, who now control two-thirds of American's wealth - and the rest of us, women and men. In the last decade, 80 percent of Americans have seen their incomes stagnate or decline. The only reason more families are not pushed into poverty is that both women and men are working. But in the present culture of greed, where all of us are told we can get rich in the stock market, it's easier to deflect the anxiety and insecurity that is growing among Americans, women and men, according to the polls - despite the booming stock market and corporate profits and the Dow Jones Index going through the roof - into sexual politics, and racial and intergenerational warfare. Easier to deflect the rage by turning women and men, black and white, young and old, against each other than to openly confront the excessive power of corporate greed.