



LAF Express

Welcome to the latest edition of *LAF Express*, LAF's e-update to keep our states and branches regularly informed on all the latest LAF activities, deadlines, and programming resources.

New Directions for LAF

LAF has undergone both staff and programmatic transitions. We are pleased to announce that Holly Kearl is the new LAF Program Manager (kearlh@aauw.org), working under the supervision of Jill Birdwhistell, PhD, Chief of Strategic Advancement. Several key LAF program decisions were made recently by the Board of Directors. This e-newsletter will provide information on some of these new directions and serve as an update on LAF programs.

Case Support

Many members and others who look to AAUW for our leadership have urged us to extend our [LAF plaintiff support](#) beyond academia to other workplace settings. AAUW's new Value Promise affirms that: *As AAUW members, you belong to a community that breaks through ...barriers so ALL women have a fair chance.* LAF is expanding to include sex discrimination in all workplaces to reflect our commitment to that fair chance.

A primary aspect of this expansion is to build on AAUW's history of participating as *amicus curiae* in cases affecting women's rights. In collaboration with the Public Policy and Government Relations department, we will seek expanded friend of the court opportunities in cases of discrimination that disadvantage women in the workplace. With this strategy, we believe that we will maximize our effectiveness and ensure that we will be heard by courts that affirmatively want our opinion on the cases and the issues before them.

AAUW has also made the decision that as LAF transitions toward expanded case and issue support, we will move away from direct financial plaintiff case support. While plaintiffs have been grateful for our financial support, it has always been the act of putting AAUW's name behind the case and the issue that has been our central contribution.

As our approach shifts, it is important that we maintain our commitments to the 10 plaintiffs whose cases we currently support. Thanks to your continued generosity, LAF expects to provide third-cycle case support funds to them in May. Although AAUW is on a July-to-June fiscal year, we are annualizing LAF's 2008 case funding support to accommodate the expectations of current plaintiffs and the tax year needs of our donors. We expect to provide direct plaintiff case support funding in August/September and November/December. LAF is no longer accepting new plaintiff case support applications, and we will not provide such direct case funding to current plaintiffs after December 2008. We will, however, continue to provide travel and speaking stipends and are exploring emergency relief funding to assist with the many additional burdens faced by plaintiffs (health decline, job loss, family obligations, etc). More information on this will be announced shortly.

Over the years, many plaintiffs have been very grateful for our support and have spoken at AAUW meetings across the country, sharing their stories and thanking our members for their help. Given our members' interest in these cases, we hope very much that the visits will continue and expect that to be so based on our experiences with plaintiffs we have previously supported.

Progress in Equity and Speaking Out for Justice Awards:

The Board of Directors decided to put both awards on hiatus indefinitely as we explore other ways to support campus programming and recognize individuals who have advocated for change on behalf of women and girls.





Campus Outreach Programs

We will continue the successful educational initiatives of the [LAF Campus Outreach Programs](#) in schools across the country, informing audiences about sex discrimination in higher education and strategies to prevent and combat the problem. We expect to expand our campus outreach efforts in the coming year.

Online Resource Library

The [online LAF Resource Library](#), a source for accurate background information, legal facts, statistics and credible outside resources on issues of sex discrimination, will be expanding soon. For example, a new section just launched last week focused on the [Family and Medical Leave Act](#).

AAUW Signs onto New Amicus Brief

In March AAUW signed onto an *amicus curiae* brief (friend of the court) for the case [Crawford v. Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County, Tennessee](#). In this case, the U.S. Supreme Court will examine whether Vicky Crawford, an employee of the Nashville Metro School District, is protected under the anti-retaliation provisions 704(a) of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act after she cooperated with her employer's internal investigation of sexual harassment and then was dismissed from her job. The U.S. Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit found that Ms. Crawford did not have such protection, and if the ruling is upheld, it will set a bad precedent for future sexual harassment cases. It is crucial that we convince the Supreme Court to reject the overly narrow interpretation of the court and protect employees such as Ms. Crawford under Title VII's anti-retaliation provision.

The *amicus* brief AAUW is signing onto will present social science research that demonstrates that psychological and social factors pressure victims of sexual harassment to discount and remain silent about the discrimination.

AAUW Visits University of Missouri, St. Louis to Discuss Sexual Harassment Policies

In March, AAUW staff visited the campus of the University of Missouri, St. Louis (UMSL), as a follow-up to a [November 2007 visit](#). AAUW Executive Director Linda Hallman and AAUW Director of Public Policy and Governmental Relations Lisa Maatz participated in various LAF-related campus outreach programs based on AAUW's 2006 research report [Drawing the Line: Sexual Harassment on Campus](#).

March 13: Maatz moderated a panel of four experts at a public forum on the UMSL campus. They discussed concrete ideas to combat sexual harassment on campus.

March 14: Maatz and Hallman moderated a roundtable at UMSL where equal opportunity and human rights directors from campuses in the area discussed the topic: "Sexual Harassment on Campus: strategies for addressing, sharing best practices, and sharing federal regulatory information and AAUW resources."

March 15: At the AAUW Metro St. Louis Interbranch Council's Spring Fling Luncheon, Hallman gave the keynote speech, Maatz spoke about related public policy advocacy issues, and UMSL students in the social action theater program performed a skit depicting sexual harassment between students and faculty.



LAF Plaintiffs Speak at AAUW State Meetings

The AAUW Educational Foundation Board awarded travel grants to sponsor current and past LAF-supported plaintiffs as speakers at eight state meetings in 2008. Plaintiffs will discuss how they fought against sex discrimination cases on issues like Title IX, retaliation, pay inequity, and sexual assault on their campuses.

Meeting	Date	Location	Plaintiff	Case
Arizona	March 28-30	Green Valley	Beverly Nash	<i>Nash v. Ray L. Belton and the Southern University System</i>
Massachusetts	April 4-6	Cape Cod	Michael Burch	<i>Burch v. Regents of the University of California</i>
Florida	April 25-27	Daytona Beach	Sherry Towers	<i>Towers v. State University of New York at Stony Brook</i>
Minnesota	April 25-27	St. Paul	David Johnson	<i>Johnson v. University of Iowa, et al.</i>
New York	April 25-27	Cooperstown	Claire Schuster	<i>Schuster v. Berea College</i>
Washington	April 25-27	Shelton	Lisa Simpson	<i>Simpson, et al. v. University of Colorado</i>
Texas	April 25-28	Dallas	Roderick Jackson	<i>Jackson v. Birmingham Board of Education</i>
Idaho	May 30-June 1	Orofino	Michelle Jaureguito	<i>Jaureguito v. Feather River Community College</i>

Call for Information about Your Campus Programming

Please write to Holly Kearn, kearlh@aauw.org, with information about any campus outreach programs your state or branch has recently undertaken or will be undertaking in the near future. We want to highlight such initiatives on the [LAF Campus Outreach Program webpage](#) to recognize your good work and let others learn from your experiences.

If your state or branch has LAF news or programming ideas you would like to share, please e-mail Holly Kearn at kearlh@aauw.org. You can also read past issues at the [LAF Express archives](#).

