THE STUDENT DEBT CONUNDRUM
What You’re Saying

The current issue of Outlook (spring 2017) is especially encouraging, citing achievements of powerful women working for the betterment of humanity. These forward movements are much needed given the political situation since January 20. Thank you for this issue and more important, thank you AAUW for all the success in improving women’s opportunities and lives these past years.

KAREN WOODS, NATIONAL MEMBER

I was disturbed to read on the inside cover of my recent AAUW Outlook magazine (spring 2017) the provoucher letter from a Barbara Bailey of New Jersey. Granted, she was reacting to an article in the previous magazine. But to print her negative, biased comments about public schools in such a prominent location, and NOT have the text or reference to AAUW’s policy in support of public education, serves to undermine AAUW’s support of public education.

MARY ELLEN BROOKS, NATIONAL MEMBER

Fantastic issue (winter 2017)—ERA at the forefront and a focus on human trafficking. Don’t forget climate change once we get equality.

MARY O’DONNEAL ENHORNING, ADIRONDACK (NY) BRANCH MEMBER

“We ignore women’s contributions at your own peril.”

2013 AAUW ALUMNAE RECOGNITION Awardee MELISSA HARRIS-PERRY, PH.D., at AAUW’s National Conference for College Women Student Leaders

“We still have to knock down doors. We still have to have women running for office.”

REPUBLICAN POLLSTER LINDA DIVALL AT THE 2017 AAUW NATIONAL CONVENTION

EMPOWERING WOMEN SINCE 1881

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

AAUW Outlook (ISSN 1044-5706) is published quarterly by AAUW, 1310 L St. NW, Suite 1000, Washington, DC 20005, and distributed to all AAUW members as a member benefit. For information or to join AAUW, call 800.326.AAUW (2289) or email connect@aauw.org. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to AAUW Outlook, AAUW Membership Department, 1310 L St. NW, Suite 1000, Washington, DC 20005, connect@aauw.org, 800.326.AAUW.

Editorial offices AAUW Art and Editorial, 1310 L St. NW, Suite 1000, Washington, DC 20005 editor@aauw.org, 202.785.7700.

Advertising AAUW Outlook Advertising Office, same address, ads@aauw.org, 202.785.7714.

Address changes AAUW Member Records, connect@aauw.org, 800.326.AAUW.

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Printed in the U.S.A.

3-18 8/17

ON THE COVER: ISTOCKPHOTO/ADAPTED FROM ARTWORK BY ENIS AKSOY

We welcome your comments. Send letters to editor@aauw.org or to AAUW Outlook, 1310 L Street NW, Suite 1000, Washington, DC 20005. Letters may be edited for brevity and style. All opinions expressed in letters are the authors’ own.
Student Debt through the Gender Lens

BY KEVIN MILLER, PH.D.

AAUW’s newest research report examines the student debt crisis with new insight about how debt is turning the promise of education into a financial quagmire for many women.

10 Questions for Kimberly Churches

Get to know AAUW’s new chief executive officer: what inspires her, where she thinks AAUW is headed next, and more.

100 Years of International Fellowships

BY MEKITA RIVAS

International tensions inspired one of AAUW’s most significant programs. And since then AAUW fellows have influenced art, public health, science, and more on a global scale.

AAUW Campaign Takes on Everyday Sexism

BY KATHRYN BIBLER

How should subtle sexism be addressed? A new campaign is bringing in experts to help.
Did you know that AAUW Outlook has gone DIGITAL? The digital Outlook has the coverage and insight you are accustomed to as well as bonus features that are not possible in print. See video from our events, hear experts speak about our research, get immediate access to resources and social media, and much more.

Please contact AAUW Connect at 800.326.2289 or connect@aauw.org to either update your email address and receive the enhanced digital Outlook, or to request continued delivery of your print version for a limited time only.

Thank you to those who have already advised us of your preference and thanks for reading!
An Unfolding Story

AAUW will turn 136 years old later this year but a new chapter of our story is being written right now. We’ve seen some big changes in the last few months, but there’s one thing that remains consistent: our mission to advance equity for women and girls.

In this issue of Outlook you’ll read about some things that you’ll recognize and some things that you might not. You’ll read about our newest research report, Deeper in Debt: Women and Student Loans, which puts a gender lens on the student debt crisis to show how women are disproportionately affected.

You’ll meet, if you haven’t yet, our new Chief Executive Officer Kimberly Churches, who answers questions about what inspires her and where she sees AAUW going in the future. You’ll take a look back at 100 years of AAUW International Fellowships and witness the effect these awards have had on scholars globally. And you’ll find out about AAUW’s newest campaign to fight everyday sexism and how you can get involved.

If you attended the June convention in Washington, D.C., you heard from our new leadership, including Board Chair Julia T. Brown, J.D. In this issue, you’ll find the abbreviated election results and (in the digital edition) a video of Julia’s speech to the membership in which she describes an awe-inspiring lifetime of advocacy rooted in the civil rights and women’s movements.

Seeing what we’ve accomplished this year and hearing Churches and Brown talk about where they think AAUW can go from here, it’s hard not to walk away hopeful. If you take their vision and combine it with the potential energy of our grassroots membership, it’s a breathtaking mix. AAUW branches and states regularly pull off things that seemed impossible—case in point, Oregon’s equal pay law (see page 30). Our student groups are thriving. Our programs are growing and attracting more sponsors. What more can we do if we do it together?

It’s not up to me to decide what the future of AAUW looks like—I’m just one of the people who gets to help tell the story. But I can’t wait to see how it turns out.
STUDENT DEBT THROUGH THE GENDER LENS

BY KEVIN MILLER, PH.D.
On May 24 AAUW released its research report *Deeper in Debt: Women and Student Loans*, which offers a broad overview of how student debt became a women’s issue, and in doing so hopes to change the conversation around student debt to include gender-based analysis and solutions.

Over the course of the past few decades student loans have become an increasingly common means of paying for a college education. Most students who complete a college program now take on student loans, and the amount of student debt that students assume has increased as has the cost of attending college. At this time about 44 million borrowers in the United States hold about $1.3 trillion in outstanding student loans.

The scale of outstanding student loans and an increasing share of borrowers who fail to repay mean that many Americans have become aware of student debt as a challenge for society and for individual borrowers. But many do not think of student debt as a women’s issue despite the fact that women represented 56 percent of those enrolled in American colleges and universities in fall 2016. AAUW’s new research report, *Deeper in Debt: Women and Student Loans*, reveals that women also take on larger student loans than do men. And because of the gender pay gap women have less disposable income with which to repay their loans after graduating from college, so they require more time to pay back their student debt than do men. As a result, women hold nearly two-thirds of the outstanding student debt in the United States—more than $800 billion.

How did higher education in the United States—and women in college—end up in this situation? Within the past 50 years there have been a number of large shifts in American higher education. The passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which outlawed discrimination on the basis of race and sex by federal and state governments, and the passage of Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, which outlawed discrimination on the basis of sex in federally funded educational activities and institutions, set the stage for an immense change in the demographics of college students in the United States. College students today are more diverse than ever. Once rarities who received but a small fraction of college degrees when AAUW was founded in 1881, women now earn 57 percent of bachelor’s degrees from American colleges and universities.
There have also been large increases in the representation of racial and ethnic minorities in college enrollment. Between 1976 and 2014 the portion of enrolled college students who were not white more than doubled from 16 percent to 42 percent. Though college enrollment increased across all race/gender groups in that period—the enrollment of white men increased by 3 percent—the larger gains were for women, especially women of color. White women’s enrollment in college increased by 2 million (47 percent) between 1976 and 2014, but black women’s increased by 1.2 million (214 percent), Asian women’s by 550,000 (610 percent), and Hispanic women’s by 1.7 million (982 percent). Women across all racial and ethnic groups are now more likely than men in the same group to earn a college degree. This educational advantage for women is one factor in slowly closing the gender pay gaps within racial and ethnic groups as well as the gap between all women and all men.

These changes occurred in tandem with broader changes in American culture, in gender norms for women, shifts in attitudes toward race, and the entry of women into the workforce in numbers comparable to men. However, this increased diversity within colleges and universities occurred alongside another change: a large increase in the cost of attending college. Though median household incomes in the United States have barely budged since 1976—and what little increase has taken place is due to the entry of women into the workforce, increasing the number of earners in the average household—the median price of college attendance has more than doubled within that period. This increase is occurring across both private and public institutions and reflects increases both in the price of tuition as well as the cost of room and board and other expenses. At the same time, Pell Grants—the primary source of federal grant aid for low-income students—have failed to keep pace with the increasing cost of college, and the maximum Pell Grant now covers less than 30 percent of the cost of attending a four-year college. The increase in the price of college, the stagnation in household incomes, and a lack of sufficient grant support have resulted in a situation in which students—especially low-income students—have no choice but to take on loans to bridge the gap.

Unfortunately for borrowers, both federal student loans—which make up about 90 percent of the student loan debt being taken on in recent years—and private student loans are difficult to discharge in bankruptcy. This is intended to offset the greater risk of lending money to college students, who often have little or no earnings to make a traditional loan appealing. But it also means that student loans are a higher risk for the borrower, since there are only very limited circumstances under which federal student loans can be cancelled, discharged, or forgiven: death of the borrower (or student, for loans to parents of students); total and permanent disability; loans taken on to attend an institution that closed before a borrower completed the program; and loans received under fraudulent circumstances. In addition to these circumstances, federal loans can sometimes be forgiven under programs for students who make regular payments while teaching or working in public service. Both federal and private student loans are possible to discharge in bankruptcy only by convincing a court that repaying the loan would cause undue hardship, which requires arguing against opposing counsel representing the lender.

Women are now the majority of borrowers of these loans, as well as the majority of college students. AAUW’s analysis of federal government data in *Deeper in Debt* found that women are more likely to take on debt: 44 percent of female undergraduates take on debt in a year compared with 39 percent of male undergraduates. On average women take on more debt than men at almost every degree level and type, from associate degrees to doctoral degrees and across institution types; across degree levels women in college take on initial student loan balances that are about 14 percent greater than men’s in a given year. Though most students finishing a degree take on some amount of student loan debt, the gender imbalance in loans is reflected in students’ cumulative debt balances at graduation. Upon completion of a bachelor’s degree, women’s average accrued student debt is about $1,500 greater than men’s ($20,907 versus $19,454), while women completing an associate degree or credential take on $1,900 more than men completing those credentials ($9,338 versus $7,461). Black
women take on more student debt on average than do members of any other group; black women completing a bachelor’s degree in 2012 graduated with an average debt of almost $30,000.

In *Deeper in Debt* AAUW also looked at federal government data tracking the outcomes of students after graduation in order to determine whether there is a gender difference in the ability of graduates to repay their debt. After graduating with a bachelor’s degree, women repay their loans more slowly than do men, in part because of the gender pay gap. Women working full time with bachelor’s degrees make 26 percent less than their male counterparts though the gap is smaller immediately after college (18 percent one year after graduation and 20 percent four years after). Lower pay means less income to devote to debt repayment. AAUW found that in the time period between one and four years after graduation, men paid off an average of 38 percent of their debt, while women paid off 31 percent, or 13 percent of debt annually versus 10 percent annually. The pace of repayment was particularly slow for black and Hispanic women, as well as for men in those groups. AAUW estimates that it takes women almost two years longer than men to repay their student loans as a result. Because women continue to make student loan payments longer than men, women may also get off to a later start on saving for retirement, investing in homeownership, or starting a business.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, making payments on student loans can make it more difficult to make ends meet for some college graduates. Graduates who are still repaying loans four years after college are less likely than graduates without loan payments to be able to meet such essential expenses...
as rent or mortgage payments. Women—especially women of color—are more likely than men to experience difficulties making ends meet—34 percent of all women relative to 24 percent of men. Most black women (57 percent) who were repaying student loans reported that they had been unable to meet essential expenses within the past year, the highest rate of any group.

Women’s greater difficulty in repaying student loans is also reflected in default rates. Defaulting on student loans has serious consequences: a ruined personal credit rating, being hounded by a collection agency, and the loss of eligibility for any future student loans. Default rates are higher for women than for men, and much higher for black and Hispanic borrowers than for white and Asian borrowers. Default rates are also higher for single parents, students with disabilities, and especially for students who do not complete their academic program.

Rates of default on student loans are particularly high among students who attend for-profit institutions. These institutions, which include both small technical and cosmetology schools as well as large shareholder corporations that operate online and across multiple states, are legally able to produce profit for their owners and shareholders and thus are motivated to extract profit from their students. Though for-profit institutions enroll a relatively small portion of American college students, these institutions disproportionately enroll women—about 65 percent of their students are women. For-profit institutions also disproportionately enroll people of color, low-income students, and members and former members of the U.S. military, and the students enrolled at for-profits take on student loans at the highest rate of any sector of higher education. These institutions use advertising and high-pressure

### Percent of College Graduates Experiencing Financial Difficulties by Race, Gender, and Loan Repayment Status

![Bar chart showing the percentage of college graduates facing financial difficulties by race, gender, and loan repayment status.](chart)

Source: AAUW analysis of U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics, Baccalaureate and Beyond Longitudinal Study 2008/12 data.

Note: “Not repaying” includes students who never had loans or had completed paying them off. “Repaying” includes only those students who were making payments, not those in deferment or default.

Note: “Financial difficulty” means that at some time in the past year, the respondent was unable to meet all essential expenses.
recruitment tactics to woo students, but debt outcomes for students at these institutions are particularly dismal. Even after accounting for student demographics, and despite the fact that for-profit institutions disproportionately absorb federal student aid, these institutions have low completion rates and high default rates—a matter of serious concern for students and others.

Another serious issue for those concerned with student debt is outcomes for students who leave college without completing an academic program or degree. The struggles of college graduates with student debt can be significant, but students who leave college without completing their academic program are more than twice as likely as graduates to default on student loans. While these borrowers may have amounts of debt that are small in absolute terms, their precarious economic position without a certificate or degree to improve their prospects in the labor market means that they may be unable to repay those loans: More than half of student debt defaults are on loan amounts of less than $10,000. An inability to repay even relatively small student loans that results in default means the loss of eligibility for future student aid, which may mean that noncompleting students are locked out of any future attempts to earn a college degree. As such, supports and programs to help students complete the programs they begin are a key strategy not just for improving academic outcomes but also for efforts to reduce default rates.

What else can be done to make changes to our student debt system in order to reduce the burden on women? Because women—especially low-income women and women of color—are disproportionately endangered by student debt, any strategy that reduces student loan debt is likely to disproportionately benefit women, but AAUW is advocating some changes in particular.

Federal Pell Grants are the primary source of federal aid for low-income students attending college in the United States and for many low-income students may be the only substantial nonloan aid they receive. Low-income students are disproportionately likely to be women and parents of dependent children, so strong support for Pell Grants means strong support for women: The maximum Pell Grant amount should be increased. And Congress should move Pell Grants to a mandatory funding system to ensure that students can rely on the program and that it is not subject to annual funding disagreements in Congress.

Income-driven repayment (IDR) plans are crucial for women to manage their debt because these plans allow struggling borrowers to customize their repayments to reflect their economic circumstances. The Department of Education has made progress in making sure borrowers have access to IDR plans, but AAUW advocates streamlining the many varieties of IDR plans as well as making it even easier for borrowers to enroll. Additionally, AAUW encourages Congress to allow refinancing of both federal and private student loans as well as supporting provisions to make student loans more easily dischargeable in bankruptcy for students facing the worst-case scenario.

Both the federal government and educational institutions can also take more steps to help students meet the costs of college other than tuition, such as the cost of child care for students with dependent children. Students with dependent children now make up 26 percent of undergraduate students in the United States, and many of these students struggle to find and pay for child care that meets their needs as students and parents. The federal Child Care Access Means Parents in Schools program pays for on-campus care for children of low-income students, and AAUW supports reauthorization and full funding of this program.

AAUW’s work in fighting the gender pay gap is a key part of the campaign to reduce the burden of student debt on women. Making sure that women are paid fairly and have access to the same career and advancement opportunities as men means women having paychecks sufficient to pay off their student loan debt. AAUW supports updating the Equal Pay Act to close loopholes in the existing law, as well as moving to eliminate salary history as a determinant of future pay.

Kevin Miller, Ph.D., is AAUW’s senior researcher and the author of Deeper in Debt: Women and Student Loans.
10 Questions for Kimberly Churches

Kimberly Churches assumed her new role as AAUW’s chief executive officer on June 1. Prior to joining AAUW Churches most recently served as the managing director of the Brookings Institution, headquartered in Washington, D.C., providing strategy and vision, leadership, and guidance to the president and the institution and serving as the catalyst for enabling the institution to achieve its financial goals. She also served as the organization’s chief development officer, overseeing all fundraising efforts and leading the institution’s Second Century Campaign, and served as the secretary for the board of trustees. In the interest of introducing Churches to AAUW’s members Outlook posed 10 questions to her. She responded as follows.

Outlook: What attracted you to AAUW? Why does the position of chief executive officer of AAUW interest you now?

Churches: I’m honored to join AAUW at this moment because of the opportunity to help shape what feminism means in 2017 and beyond. With the rise of populism in the U.S. and around the globe, challenges to women’s rights continue, and the fight for equity becomes critically more important for women and girls. The moment in our nation to get to practical solutions to gender equity is right now—whether we are creating action plans to increase representation for women in science, technology, engineering, and math fields; reducing the gender pay gap; defending the important continuance of Title IX; or eliminating additional barriers to leadership roles for women. For the past six years I’ve worked for a well-known public policy think tank in Washington, D.C., and one of the reasons why I was attracted to AAUW is its nonpartisan stance. It’s just pragmatic for
Introduced to members at the 2017 AAUW National Convention, held in Washington, D.C., June 14–17. AAUW’s new chief executive officer, Kimberly Churches, underscored the convention’s message: We must be stronger than ever in our dedication to progress for women and girls. PHOTO BY ROSE SKEGG
“I’m honored to join AAUW at this moment because of the opportunity to help shape what feminism means in 2017 and beyond.”

all political persuasions to embrace equity, and we know equity is good for the bottom line. There are many organizations out there representing different political and social viewpoints, and our goal at AAUW is to be the table to which they can all come for practical conversations about the issues so that together we create solutions. That’s inspiring!

As a divorced mother raising a daughter who was born in Guangxi, China, I’m driven to build a future for her and all young women that is shaped by opportunity and equity—one with no limits on their passions, their intellects, or their boundless creativity. The mission of AAUW is very personal to me, as I was a scrappy kid growing up in a household in which neither parent had been able to graduate from college. Education is a terrific tool for eliminating inequality, but as we’ve seen from AAUW research and other studies, the path to competitive salaries for women in varied fields is still not paved.

Outlook: AAUW was founded as a nonprofit organization that advances equity for women and girls by means of advocacy, education, philanthropy, and research. Should those pillars remain the foundation of the organization or should we add to them?

Churches: Our mission and our values live on and should be sustained because there’s more work ahead to make more strides toward equity. While the backbone of AAUW remains, we’re also in a time of disruption, and I don’t mean just following the 2016 national election. Technology and automation, trade, and mergers and acquisitions are all disrupting systems we knew and understood in the 20th century and in the first decade or so in the 21st century. As Leo Tolstoy observed, “Everyone thinks of changing the world, but no one thinks of changing himself.” AAUW must be nimble and dynamic to ensure that we can achieve our aspirations.

Outlook: Since its first meeting in 1881, AAUW has been a catalyst for change. Today AAUW is nearly two decades into the 21st century. What do you think its direction should be at this point in its history?

Churches: The impact AAUW has had is immeasurable over its long history thanks to our dedicated members. Through this extraordinary network AAUW’s in-depth and respected research, programs, and advocacy work have helped women and girls in real and important ways. Take the 2016 report *Barriers and Bias*, for example: a ground-breaking study on the continued under-representation in leadership for women that helped spur a national dialogue about what can be done to change the status quo.

In order to continue to be a catalyst for change, however, we must sharpen our focus on the issues that we have historically adopted in our efforts to empower women and girls individually and as a community. Clearly, that means continued research, educational programs that help women and girls flourish and advance, and advocacy efforts, as well as our fellowships and grants. And it means we’ll need to engage new audiences and disseminate information differently to inspire people in their communities and on the national stage.

I am looking forward to engaging in a listening tour around the nation with members and key stakeholders to hear directly from all of you on how we should refine our mission, marshal our strengths, and set the tone for pragmatic, nonpartisan engagement that will lead to effective change—even in this increasingly polarized environment.

Outlook: What do you think is AAUW’s greatest untapped potential?

Churches: Our members are the heart of AAUW, but optimizing some of our terrific
programs like AAUW Work Smart and AAUW Start Smart may require more collaborative partnerships to enable us to reach more women in communities around the country. We’ll continue to be grateful to our committed members to help in every branch, community, state, and national effort, but ensuring leadership positions for more women in every sector will mean sharper focus. These programs and our research will also guide us in reaching new audiences and new stakeholders who embrace our mission.

**Outlook:** The marches that took place here and around the world on January 21 gave powerful form to women’s concerns: pay equity; immigrant protection; LGBT rights; domestic violence; intersectional feminism; Title IX protection; health issues, including paid maternity leave; and human trafficking, for example. The women’s movement of the 1960s and 1970s led to tremendous advances for women. Has that momentum stalled—as the enormous turnout for these marches suggests—and if so what are the means of jump-starting the cause of women’s rights?

**Churches:** I don’t think we’ve stalled. I believe we took our progress for granted and stopped sprinting. Too many of us were heartened by the cracks in the proverbial glass ceiling and thought—following the extraordinary progress in the late 20th century—we were well on our way to equality. If anything, the vitriolic political comments we’ve read and heard, which could result in devastating setbacks for women’s rights, have emboldened women and feminists. I was not only personally heartened and emotionally struck by the extraordinary crowds at every women’s march on January 21, but also by the participation of so many men and boys who believe with all of their hearts that women and girls deserve equity. We haven’t stalled—we’re just getting back into marathon shape again! But as we all know, it’s about more than marches and rhetoric. We must put forward practical action plans that resonate with both men and women in order to effect meaningful change.

**Outlook:** How can AAUW attract a larger number of younger members—those under 40?

**Churches:** So many organizations are grappling with this question, and I think one of AAUW’s main objectives must be inclusion. While all of us are interested in equal representation in government and business and in solving the pay equity gap for women, many millennial feminists are really focused on equality for all. To some, being feminist means being a humanist; we need to ensure that we are listening to what inspires our young people to action and what interests them in joining our community. We may need to think about building a new network of programs in which millennials have expressed interest.
A great way to engage and attract younger members may well be in our outstanding AAUW Work Smart and AAUW Start Smart programs. (AAUW Work Smart, for example, has been extremely successful to date in Boston; Washington, D.C.; Tempe, Arizona; San Antonio; Long Beach, California; San Jose, California; and San Diego. And through our relationship with LUNA we are planning to activate the program in other cities as well. From January 2017 to May 2017 we conducted 496 salary negotiation workshops in all but one state, including AAUW Start Smart on 212 host campuses. That’s a total of 744 workshops during this period and a total of 22,320 women trained!) The AAUW Work Smart and AAUW Start Smart programs are terrific ways to involve young members (and potential members) in mentoring and training.

That first professional salary negotiation after college is critically important—just read Lean In/McKinsey & Company’s 2016 Women in the Workplace study about the importance of being promoted early in our careers to avoid falling behind our male counterparts (mckinsey.com/business-functions/organization/our-insights/women-in-the-workplace-2016).

Our community of AAUW members will continue to evolve and change if we are working together with open ears, committed to inclusion, and inspired to act.

**Outlook:** What do you think AAUW will accomplish within the next 10 years?

**Churches:** AAUW will be known nationally as the go-to resource on equity and recognized for our measurable impact. Together we will have created a stronger platform for our members and our future members and stakeholders to elevate our voices in our communities, armed with tool kits to spur action and formulate practical solutions for greater access for women and girls.

**Outlook:** Which particular women in history do you admire and why?

**Churches:** There are too many to list, and I imagine that my top 20 would match so many of our members’ favorite women in history. I could write pages on Eleanor Roosevelt for rewriting the role of first lady or Margaret Sanger for boldly fighting for contraceptive rights for women, so I’ll answer with a few different women of measure:

1. In my spare time, I love to cook, poring over cookbooks, perusing foodie blogs, and learning about new cuisines as I travel the globe, but one woman stands taller than so many: **Julia Child.** She broke barriers in a male-dominated industry and taught America to be fearless in trying new foods. She played by her own rules and clearly had fun doing it! A timeless feminist to applaud.

2. I have always admired strong, assured, barrier-breaking **Serena Williams.** She’s refused to conform to the old stereotype of what a female professional player should look like or say. She stays true to who she is in body, mind, and spirit. She’s fierce, she’s beautiful, and she gives my daughter someone to look up to—a role model of self-acceptance, ferocity, and a never-ending drive to compete.

3. If I had to choose a female leader today, it would easily be **Angela Merkel.** A former research scientist with a doctorate in physical chemistry, her ascension as an extraordinary politician and diplomat is her second career. Brilliant, composed, and collaborative, Merkel speaks truth to power and is the gold standard for Western democratic leaders today.

“While all of us are interested in equal representation in government and business and in solving the pay equity gap for women, many millennial feminists are really focused on equality for all.”
4. I wrote a paper in college expressing my belief that Clytemnestra was one of the world’s first feminist characters in literature. In Aeschylus’s play Agamemnon, which was part of his famed trilogy, Oresteia, she murdered her husband, Agamemnon, to avenge his sacrifice of her daughter, Iphigenia, in exchange for success in the Trojan War. Clytemnestra professed that her daughter’s life was as valued as her husband’s, and that is why she boldly murdered him. Clytemnestra would not and could not stand for Iphigenia’s sacrifice, so she took his life to avenge his murder of Iphigenia. Throughout time, story after story, we’ve read of women being valued less than men. Even though Clytemnestra’s means were more than questionable, Aeschylus’s interpretation inspired me for portraying a woman of confidence in conviction, even at a time when society viewed things dramatically differently about a woman’s worth.

_Outlook:_ Which women’s issues are of most interest to you personally?

_Churches:_ Pay equity and increased leadership roles for women in every sector; safety (against sexual assault, harassment, and racial bias); Title IX; prochoice and women’s health.

_Outlook:_ What does feminism mean to you?

_Churches:_ My nine-year-old daughter, Ruby, epitomizes the 2017 feminist to me. She refuses to conform to social stereotypes, and defines who she is with confidence and curiosity. She recently said to me, “When can women get beyond pink, Mom? I don’t understand why pink is always the color for girls! I hate pink!” What she is talking about is choice and inclusion. Allowing for no constraints, no definitions. Freedom. She reminds me of Virginia Woolf: “There is no gate, no lock, no bolt that you can set upon the freedom of my mind.”

“As feminists today we must be open to listening to our young people to hear what feminism means to them, while cherishing and applauding all of the work the feminists of yesterday and today have accomplished. Free our minds, unlock every possibility, and refuse to accept barriers to our progress. We have more miles to go on our path, but I’m excited to meet and engage this next generation of feminists.”

Throughout my career I’ve refused to be stopped. I’ve relied on my curiosity, my intelligence, my problem-solving skills, and emotional intelligence to get ahead despite a path that encountered rocks, uneven pavement, and even sinkholes along the way! That’s what being a feminist means to me: unlocking the doors of every board room to women, cracking the ceilings in every sector of the workforce.

But as feminists today we must be open to listening to our young people to hear what feminism means to them, while cherishing and applauding all of the work the feminists of yesterday and today have accomplished. Free our minds, unlock every possibility, and refuse to accept barriers to our progress. We have more miles to go on our path, but I’m excited to meet and engage this next generation of feminists.”
Maria Salazar Garcia, M.D., was an International Fellowship recipient in 2015–16. She hopes that her postdoctoral research in reproductive immunology at the Rosalind Franklin University of Medicine and Science will help find new treatments and diagnostic tools to support women’s reproductive health, particularly women with polycystic ovary syndrome.
The year was 1917 and the world was at war. “World War I had a great effect on the Association of Collegiate Alumnae and its members,” says Suzanne Gould, AAUW’s archivist and historian. (The Association of Collegiate Alumnae, or ACA, was one of AAUW’s predecessor organizations.) As the United States prepared to enter the war, a war service committee was established, which put the association in a unique position to aid the Wilson administration in its wartime efforts. “Members really directed every aspect of their work toward support of the country during the war,” Gould says. “This included finding and recruiting college women and graduates to serve as trained nurses and as agricultural workers in the Women’s Land Army. Plenty of members traveled to Europe and assisted in hospitals with the Red Cross and other organizations.”

Due to an increased need for trained women to fill positions left vacant by men, the association provided lists of qualified women for various industries and the national service. Additionally, many women began working for the federal government. The number of women attending college also increased, bolstering the ACA’s ranks (since membership has always required a college degree).

“During World War I we grew so much that we needed a permanent national headquarters, so the first house was purchased in 1919 at 1634 Eye Street N.W. in Washington, D.C.,” Gould says. “In many ways the war was a turning point for the ACA. The association really found itself on the national stage and started addressing issues beyond just those that affected college women in academia. Our mission expanded.”

That mission reached well beyond U.S. borders. Members turned their attention to Latin America, creating a fellowship program that brought Latin American women stateside to pursue studies in subjects relating to public service. The intention was that international scholars would go back to work and study in their home countries. At the time the association’s leadership emphasized the importance of positive relationships between nations, especially in the midst of mounting global instability during the war.

“In the literature, there is a sense among the association that there was a real need in that part of the world for greater educational opportunities for women,” Gould says. “And with Europe embroiled in war by 1917, the fellowship was a way to solidify relations within the Americas against the growing threats to democracy elsewhere in the world.”

This year AAUW is celebrating a century of awarding International Fellowships to women worldwide. Within the past 100 years more than 3,400 women have benefited from these fellowships. Recipients have represented more than 140 nations and a wide range of disciplines including academia, activism, the arts, business, government, and science. Despite differences in geography and areas of study, these women are united by a shared desire to be leaders and agents of change.
The first 30 Latin American fellowship recipients came from 15 countries, and many of them studied medicine and made significant public health advancements. One such woman was María Teresa Mora de Nochera, M.D., a Puerto Rican studying at the Women’s Medical College of Pennsylvania who received the fellowship in 1921 and 1922.

“This interchange of friendship among North and South American women will help greatly in making this hemisphere safe for peace and democracy,” Mora de Nochera said in a follow-up report. She would go on to return to Puerto Rico and serve as the only female medical doctor in her city of 70,000 people. She ran several clinics for prenatal, maternal, infant, and child health care.

“With the award of this fellowship, I was able to become a doctor of medicine,” Mora de Nochera said. “This training has helped me to be useful to my fellow citizens.”

Virginia Alvarez Hussey, M.D., also studied medicine at the Women’s Medical College of Pennsylvania and specialized in the treatment of leprosy in Venezuela. Other early recipients of the Latin American fellowship included Margarita Mieres-Cartas de Rivas, a Chilean who studied philosophy and librarianship at Columbia University, and Marina Núñez del Prado, a Bolivian sculptor.

By 1921 AAUW had broadened its international reach by administering the Rose Sidgwick Fellowship, which was offered to women graduates of universities in Britain or British territories. Notable recipients include astronomer Cecilia Payne-Gaposchkin, Ph.D., the first woman to be promoted to full professor at Harvard University who was known for her research using a spectroscope to determine the composition of stars, and Elizabeth Kathleen Goldie-Smith, Ph.D., who came to the University of North Carolina on the fellowship in 1948 and discovered a previously unknown form of life in a combined fungus-bacteria.
AAUW began offering fellowships with broader boundaries by 1923. These didn’t focus on specific regions—as the Latin American fellowship and the Rose Sidgwick fellowship had. Those fellowships became what are now known as the AAUW International Fellowships.

These early international efforts very much shaped AAUW into what it is today.

“All of our international work, including the fellowships, began around this time,” says Gould. Today, AAUW’s global work includes special consultative status at the United Nations, exchange programs with the U.S. Department of State, and work with international college/university members.

The establishment of the first International Fellowships also occurred concurrently with the establishment of the AAUW Committee on International Relations, which was designed to educate members about international issues.

“So it is clear that the International Fellowships weren’t just a one-off thing, but rather part of a larger concerted effort to set AAUW on the international stage and to improve AAUW’s position globally,” Gould says. “You could say that work has continued to this day.”

Esther Ngumbi, Ph.D., has always dreamed of being a professor of entomology.

“As I was growing up, there were many years in which we almost lost our crops like maize and beans to insects and plant diseases,” says Ngumbi, a 2007–08 AAUW International Fellow from Kenya. “I became interested in pursuing a career that would permit me to study these insects, the diseases they cause, and how we can use knowledge about their behavior to manipulate insect-plant systems to reduce their depredations. I wanted specifically to be able to make a contribution to food security.”

Ngumbi came to the United States to pursue a doctorate in entomology. For the first two years of her program she was on a fellowship. But then that fellowship concluded.

“I was risking ending my dream,” Ngumbi says.

At that moment she applied for an AAUW International Fellowship.

“I still remember with much fondness the day I received the email that I had been granted the fellowship,” Ngumbi says. “I jumped with joy, I danced around, and I celebrated because AAUW believed in me and wanted to ensure that my dream to get a Ph.D. did not die.”

In 2011, Ngumbi earned her doctorate in entomology from Auburn University. Since then she’s been busy with an array of projects.

One of Ngumbi’s research objectives yielded pioneering results that led to the issuance of multiple U.S. patents, and she was inducted into the National Academy of Inventors.

Ngumbi and her parents cofounded the Dr. Ndumi Faulu Academy to ensure that students from their community have a chance at a quality education. She also lectures on issues including food security, education, women and girls, youth, and sustainability. Today she’s a postdoctoral researcher at Auburn University.
“I have truly enjoyed a fulfilling professional life and career,” Ngumbi says. “And it could never have happened if AAUW did not initially support me.”

Miriam Matinda has a similar story. After being admitted to pursue a doctorate in law at the University of Arizona, she was confronted with financial uncertainty. “While immensely thankful for the opportunity of a lifetime, I immediately faced another challenge,” says Matinda, a 2015–16 AAUW International Fellow from Tanzania. “How would I cover living costs for me and my two kids?”

When a friend told her about the AAUW International Fellowships program a light bulb turned on. “It was fascinating to see how the fellowship was very much in line with what I wanted to pursue, both with my career goals as well as the research area of my dissertation,” Matinda says.

The fellowship enabled Matinda to focus on her studies—not finances. “Had it not been for the fellowship I would have not been able to cover the daycare costs for my daughter,” Matinda says. “AAUW’s support of women globally spreads the message that women can support each other regardless of their geographical location.”

And Matinda soon learned that the fellowship isn’t just defined by the money it provides. “The fellowship is more than financial assistance,” Matinda says. “It is a mentorship program.”

Petreena Campbell was an International Fellowship recipient in 2014–15. Her doctoral research at Loma Linda University focuses on combining breast cancer resistance, recurrence, and metastasis with the aim of reducing associated mortality among women.

She’s right—the program includes linking fellows to different AAUW branches and other fellows to build upon their connections and resources within AAUW. “I was linked with local branch members who always reached out to me and followed up on my personal and academic progress,” Matinda says. “Most importantly they become friends and mentors to the fellows.”

Through meetings and discussions with members, Matinda reinvigorated her philanthropic dedication beyond providing legal services to women and children in need. She wanted to do even more. “I returned to my country for summer break [and] I used most of my time to volunteer, teach, and mentor girls in elementary schools,” Matinda says. “My message to the girls has been: You can be whatever you want to be. The sky is not even the limit. Believe in yourself.”

A lot has changed in the 100 years since AAUW awarded the first International Fellowship. In the United States and most places around the world, women now have the right to vote, and they are more visible and vocal throughout all facets of society. The world has also become increasingly interconnected—a reality that places in perspective the ways in which the various international fellowships programs were ahead of their time.

“The program was established long before ‘international understanding’ and ‘global citizenship’ became a part of the general conversation,” says Gloria Blackwell, AAUW’s vice president of fellowships, grants, and global programs. “It was a pretty radical idea at the time.”

Additionally, the International Fellowships grew without government support and were funded entirely by women—a point of pride that makes the program particularly unique. “It occupies a special and unparalleled place—not just in women’s history but also in education and global affairs,” Blackwell says.
“Our forebears felt that all women ought to have the opportunity to grow intellectually and to gain access to professional training, and that improving their capacity to serve their countries would result in improved conditions for everyone. It’s still true today that we need to open the door for cross-cultural understanding.”

GLORIA BLACKWELL

Today, the International Fellowships are an integral part of AAUW’s programming and overall mission. The once “radical idea” has evolved into something that’s absolutely essential, perhaps more than ever before.

From speaking at branches, state conventions, the United Nations, and beyond, fellows are woven into the very fabric of AAUW. They are donors and members. They serve as expert panelists in their respective fields.

“ Their scholarly and professional expertise provides ongoing value to AAUW,” Blackwell says.

During the past 100 years AAUW leaders have been investing in the potential of women all over the world, and that investment has reverberated to help countless families.

“Our forebears felt that all women ought to have the opportunity to grow intellectually and to gain access to professional training, and that improving their capacity to serve their countries would result in improved conditions for everyone,” Blackwell says. “It’s still true today that we need to open the door for cross-cultural understanding.”

But keeping that door open comes with challenges. “Like many similar programs, there are always more qualified recipients than available funding,” Blackwell says. “We are also constantly trying to improve outreach to nations with more limited-English speakers to diversify the awardees. We’ve been successful in supporting women from 141 countries, but there’s room to grow.”

Further complicating matters are the current political climates in the home countries of the applicants and fellows, which can present obstacles with visas and travel restrictions. And the Trump administration’s proposed travel ban could exacerbate those issues. “We are not yet sure about the effects of the U.S. travel ban, though reports indicate that many students are opting out of studying in the United States, which is unfortunate,” Blackwell says. “We need to continue to send the message that education and cross-cultural understanding are important and a priority for global development and peace.”

What might the AAUW International Fellowships program look like in 2117? “It’s my hope that we will continue to support fellows and reach more countries where women’s challenges are great and opportunities are few,” Blackwell says. “I envision fellows taking on more leadership roles in their societies and having greater decision-making abilities to contribute to the improvement of the lives of girls, women, and communities.”

Learn more about AAUW’s fellowships and grants at aauw.org/what-we-do/educational-funding-and-awards.

Mekita Rivas was AAUW’s editor and writer.
Sonia Rao, a member of the AAUW student organization at Rice University, stands up to sexism.

I #StandUptoSexism

because all genders deserve to be treated equally!
AAUW Campaign Takes On Everyday Sexism

BY KATHRYN BIBLER

Microaggressions are brief, commonplace actions that communicate hostility and derogatory or other negative slights toward an individual or a group. AAUW tackled these insidious forms of bias with its #StandUptoSexism campaign. Here we explain why you should become involved.

If you search Twitter or Instagram for #StandUptoSexism you’ll find a number of versions of the same photo: a person holding a sign printed with “I #StandUptoSexism” at the top and handwritten words below it to complete the sentence:

“I #StandUptoSexism because rape and sexual assault are normalized” reads one. “I #StandUptoSexism because women scientists are necessary” reads another. “Because I don’t want a male-majority Congress making decisions about my body.” “Because my little sister deserves better.” “Because feminism is NOT a dirty f-word.”

The signs began showing up on social media in February, when AAUW launched a new online campaign encouraging people to share how they confront everyday sexism in their lives. By building visibility around a common problem, the campaign aims to take the first step toward ending sexism in the workplace, in the classroom, and in our thoughts. On April 14, the hashtag #StandUptoSexism trended on Twitter, meaning it was one of the most talked-about topics on the social media site that day (after Coachella and the new Star Wars trailer).

The campaign also includes a video and a three-part panel series, the first two of which took place at NYU Washington, D.C., on March 24 and April 14 (the third is yet to be scheduled). The panels brought together experts and writers in gender studies research, public policy, workplace racism and sexism, women’s leadership, academia, and the tech world to offer new solutions to the familiar problem of casual sexism.

Last summer former AAUW College and University Relations Manager Paige Robnett was looking for ways to engage more students by means of AAUW’s research report Barriers and Bias: The Status of Women in Leadership. The report explains how both explicit biases (such as outright gender discrimination) and implicit biases (such as an unconscious preference for male leaders) contribute to the gender leadership gap.

Robnett heard stories of casual sexism all the time in her work with students. One young woman came to Robnett asking for advice because her engineering professor had told
the men in the class that they didn’t have to listen when he talked about the mechanics of washing machines, since only women had to know how to work them. Robnett helped that student channel her frustration into activism on campus supported by her student organization and AAUW Student Advisory Council cohort. But the experience reaffirmed how badly students need a tool to help them confront everyday sexism.

As the school year wrapped up, Robnett began to sow the seed of an idea. “I wanted people, especially students, to see AAUW as an organization that they could come to if they experience sexism on campus, at their job, in their communities,” she says. One of the visual pieces created from Barriers and Bias caught her attention: an illustration of a woman with speech bubbles floating around her head conveying sexist comments that women hear in the workplace all the time. Something clicked. Robnett thought, “There’s something here that we could use as an engagement tool.”

Robnett also wanted a visual example of the stories she was hearing from students, so she started working on a video with AAUW colleagues and the production company Loose Films. The video quickly became one of AAUW’s most viewed for the year. “After the video was created we realized we had something that was going to move people, and that’s when we brought more people in to create the campaign,” said Robnett.

By March Robnett saw the campaign come to life as she introduced a panel event, (Not) All in Your Head: How Women Internalize Sexism. Soon after came the second panel, The F-Word: How to Be a Feminist in the Workplace.

Bias affects women differently, but all of the panelists who participated in the #StandUptoSexism events offered examples of how it has affected them. There was the man who asked for a business meeting with writer Jennifer Dziura, who owns an online retail business, and revolved his pitch around how much he loved working with mothers because “they expect so little, and they’re so grateful.” Psychologist and gender bias researcher Gina Torino, Ph.D., an associate professor of human development at State University of New York Empire State College, remembered a male colleague who would greet only the men in the office every morning. Public policy expert and author C. Nicole Mason, Ph.D., who is black, talked about how class and race factor in. “When I pick up my children from school, I get asked if I’m the nanny,” she said. People who have not met her in person often come to her office looking for Dr. Mason, expecting to find someone who appears different.

All of these examples are considered microaggressions—“brief, commonplace, and daily [actions] ... that communicate hostile, derogatory, negative slights toward a target person or group,” as Torino defined the term in the March 24 panel. During the April panel, writer Susannah Weiss called microaggressions “not a very noticeable or obvious form of oppression.”

The term “microaggression” was coined in the article “An Experiment in Racism: TV Commercials” by Chester M. Pierce, Jean V. Carew, Diane Pierce-Gonzalez, and Deborah Wills and published on November 1, 1977, in SAGE journals. Torino’s coauthored piece in May–June 2007 American Psychologist, “Racial Microaggressions in Everyday Life: Implications for Clinical Practice,” rocketed the term to wider social consciousness by expanding it to include gender.

Torino’s research outlines three types of microaggressions: microassaults (old-fashioned racism and sexism including slurs and hate speech), microinsults (insensitive, thoughtless comments—for example, expressing surprise at a woman working as an engineer), and microinvalidations (interactions that nullify a person’s experience—for example, dismissing a black employee’s concerns about racism by saying “I don’t see color”). The latter two categories are especially insidious because quite often the perpetrator is not conscious of inflicting harm. But complimenting a black woman on being “articulate” presumes that black women generally are not well spoken; telling a woman not to be “emotional” dismisses her reaction as unjustified.

Microaggressions may seem insignificant but can become destructive over time. In hiring and promotion stereotypes and bias do play a role, and they’ve have been shown to lead to women’s self-doubt and even a
phenomenon called stereotype threat. AAUW’s 2010 research report Why So Few? Women in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics describes it as a fear of being viewed through the lens of stereotypes and the fear of behaving in a way that confirms a stereotype. The report details the effects that stereotype threat can have on test-takers who hear negative stereotypes about their demographics—for example, that people like them underperformed on tests, had higher blood pressure, and worked more slowly.

During the March 24 panel Mason described this internalized reaction as perceiving a boundary against people who look like you “and accepting the boundary as true.” When we push against those boundaries, backlash happens—a woman who disagrees in a meeting might be labeled “difficult” or “pushy.” In order to avoid these negative reactions, some people choose not to step outside of prescribed social boundaries. The threat of fulfilling a stereotype, then, becomes just as much a barrier as the stereotype itself.

Stereotype threat illustrates the insidious power of microaggressions. “They’re meant to keep you in your place and to remind you of the power dynamics—who you’re supposed to be and if you’re stepping outside the bounds,” said Mason.

For someone new to this discourse the vocabulary can be intimidating. But educating ourselves in these terms matters, the panelists urged, because identifying a problem is the first step toward solving it. Torino’s work centers on this identification, and her work is reaching a wide audience: As of June 2016 her coauthored article on microaggressions made the top 1 percent of highest-cited articles in psychiatry and psychology, with more than 1,700 citations, according to Google Scholar.

Identifying our internalized sexism and racism can be uncomfortable. Still that’s no reason not to lean in to the conversation. “We need to take that head on. People don’t want to be called racist or sexist, but I am all about accountability,” said Mason. Such tools as the Implicit Association Test, a version of which AAUW commissioned from Project Implicit and Harvard University as part of the 2016 Barriers and Bias research report, offer an easy way to uncover our biases. That test, which you can take at www.aauw.org/article/implicit-association-test, measures how quickly you categorize words together to figure out the differences between your implicit associations of women and men with leadership. The early results of AAUW’s test revealed that even people who identified as feminist had a slight tendency to associate men with leadership over women. We’re only beginning to understand how deep-seated our biases are and how we can fight them.

So it’s never too early to start introducing awareness about biases, sexism, and racism into schools and workplaces. Mason said she could not avoid starting these conversations with her children even if she wanted to. She has seen how her twins, a boy and a girl, are treated differently at school, due to both gender and to race. “As a parent, I’m hypervigilant and careful about the messages that I’m sending. … I’m monitoring what comes home, what kind of projects are happening.” It’s hard work, she said, and sometimes she does resent it. But “until we get to a place where there’s more empathy, more curriculum integration, this is the work that has to happen.”

Avis Jones-DeWeever, Ph.D., a writer and the chief executive officer of the Exceptional Leadership Institute for Women, echoed Mason’s comments in the second panel.

Panelists for the March 24 event included, from left to right, Soraya Chemaly, the director of the Women’s Media Center Speech Project; Abigail Sara Lewis, Ph.D., AAUW’s vice president of leadership programs and campus initiatives; Gina Torino, an associate professor of human development at State University of New York Empire State College; and C. Nicole Mason, Ph.D., the executive director of the Center for Research and Policy in the Public Interest at the New York Women’s Foundation.
Being taken seriously at work alongside men who gain that status apparently effortlessly “takes a little bit more maneuvering,” she said. “It’s an extra burden.”

And the burden should be a shared one. Introspection about how bias affects your decisions about yourself and your family is crucial, but so is intervening when you observe bias. “I should not be the only one acting when I see something racist or sexist,” said Mason. Intervening when we see someone else experience a microaggression can go a long way, not only for the victim but also for witnesses.

Women face unique obstacles in the workplace; we’ve learned again and again that “being good at what you do isn’t enough,” said Jones-DeWeever. “You also have to become comfortable with self-promoting.” Allies can take on some of that promoting and give credit where it’s due.

Dziura called it “bringing the floor back to other women.” If you hear a colleague offer a solution and her male coworker repeat it louder as his own (there is an informal term for this: bropropriating), for example, gently acknowledge it by saying something like, “I see you liked Lindsay’s idea, Bob.” If you can restore that credit publicly, either in front of bosses or via email, you can go a long way toward ensuring that women’s contributions are seen.

Women as well as men perpetrate microaggressions. “Other women have called me a bitch when I reinforced rules or policies,” Torino said. Some female coworkers once advised civil engineer Patricia Valoy to “be careful” not to wear tight or revealing clothing because she works predominantly with men—the implication being that she’s a distraction to her colleagues and not a peer.

Jones-DeWeever cautioned women in the workplace to watch out for “the stereotypical trope that women can’t get along.” Seeing few women in upper-level management, women sometimes subconsciously compete with each other for those few spots. Valoy admitted that she experienced this feeling of competition at first when another woman entered her workplace: “The way I perceived the situation was there’s only space for one of us at the top. … I’m gonna push her aside or else I’m not gonna make it.”

Jones-DeWeever also advocated more cooperation among women to support women of all races, rather than being satisfied with the advancement of white women alone, as so often happens in discussions of feminism. “White women, quite frankly, need to be able to take up the flag to say, ‘I’m not satisfied with this definition of gender diversity. If gender diversity itself is not diverse, then it’s not truly gender diversity.’” That comment brought a burst of applause from the audience.

Role modeling and mentoring are powerful antidotes to competition at work.
“Women don’t see themselves” in leadership positions, said AAUW Vice President of Campus Leadership Programs Abigail Sara Lewis, Ph.D., but when someone else does it can boost a woman’s confidence in pursuing leadership roles. Men and women mentors, too, can encourage women’s leadership. Traditionally, Dziura observed, men have avoided mentoring or sponsoring women because they seem to think the relationship cannot work the same with a woman mentee. And among men and women mentors, sometimes there’s a tendency to mentor a man into becoming the next boss while mentoring a woman only in her personal growth.

**Corporations and executives** have the power—and the responsibility—to effect change. There are things they can do in hiring and promotion, such as blind résumé review since case studies have shown that employers are more likely to favor male, white-sounding names. AAUW’s *Barriers and Bias* also recommends formally structured evaluations to avoid the dangers of “gut”—that is, implicit and often biased—instincts as well as companywide commitment to diversity and inclusion.

Of course, that means more than lip service. Jones-DeWeever has little patience for corporate whitewashing. “Companies need to stop being lazy .... It doesn’t take that much effort to find a diverse array of qualified people, and [companies] need to invest in that because, quite frankly, this country is changing. Demographically, we are quickly turning into a majority people-of-color nation, and if companies want to be able to relate to the population of people that they are seeking to serve, they need to do a better job of making sure that they have diverse leadership at the top.”

College campuses, too, have a powerful role to play in educating their students on gender bias. Torino recommended bringing in professionally trained facilitators to lead conversations around microaggressions, because those discussions can be emotional and difficult. There will always be critics who wish to shut down such conversations, arguing that training only brings painful issues to the surface. But Lewis is not dissuaded by naysayers. “That’s what you do when you feel threatened,” she said, but “we have to keep moving forward.” Her work with AAUW has shown her that people are looking for safe places to have conversations, build communities, and find solutions. That’s one reason, she noted, why AAUW’s student organization membership has expanded so much in recent years, with 100 campus groups and counting.

Where else can students turn? “Title IX, Title IX, Title IX,” said Lewis. She encourages students to meet their Title IX coordinator, the person who is federally required to assess their school’s adherence to Title IX requirements like sufficient bathrooms, birth control accessibility, and sexual assault prevention. Department chairs and the dean of students can also be valuable resources since they are responsible for students’ well-being. For students who aren’t ready to talk to an authority, anonymous course evaluations are another option to share problems with a class or learning environment.

While the discussions that the #StandUptoSexism movement has started are encouraging, calling out everyday injustices is the first step toward finding the solutions that break down barriers for all women and girls. You can become involved by watching the panels, starting a discussion, and more. Visit www.aauw.org/stand-up-to-sexism.

Kathryn Bibler is the AAUW senior editor.
**2017 AAUW National Election Results**

Every two years AAUW’s national election offers members the chance to vote on proposed amendments to the AAUW Bylaws, Public Policy Priorities, and resolutions as well as to select the members of the national AAUW Board of Directors. Online voting for the 2017 election closed on June 15. These were the results.

The 2017–19 AAUW Board of Directors are AAUW Board Chair Julia T. Brown, J.D.; AAUW Board Vice Chair Peggy Ryan Williams, Ed.D.; and AAUW directors Joanna Amberger; Susan Barley; Janet Bunger; Melody Jackson, Ph.D.; Melissa Cooke Johnsen; Dot McLane, Ph.D.; Leah Sakacs; Cheryl Sorokin, J.D.; Mardy Stevens; and Mary L. Zupanc, M.D. Karen Kirkwood, Eileen Menton, and Susan Nenstiel were appointed to join the board. Bunger was later appointed as the finance vice chair and Sorokin was appointed secretary.

All but three of the proposed changes to the AAUW Bylaws passed; the two proposals that would have changed AAUW’s membership requirements failed to pass, as did a proposal that would have dropped the election quorum from 5 percent to 3 percent. All the changes to the Public Policy Priorities passed, as did the resolutions on human trafficking and the Equal Rights Amendment. For more information, including the vote tallies and state-by-state turnout, visit www.aauw.org/resource/national-election.

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**LUNA Sponsoring Salary Negotiation Workshops**

AAUW’s salary negotiation programs are designed to empower women with the skills and confidence to successfully negotiate for what they’re worth. The programs, AAUW Work Smart and AAUW Start Smart, have been spreading nationwide. And thanks to LUNA, they’re growing even more: LUNA is sponsoring dozens of AAUW salary negotiation workshops across the country. LUNA also worked with award-winning actress Gina Rodriguez on a video to launch the partnership with AAUW on Equal Pay Day and raise awareness about the 20 percent gender pay gap women face.

As the creator of the first nutrition bar for women, LUNA Bar, LUNA has an 18-year history of empowering women and never settling for the status quo. Learn more at salary.aauw.org.
Youth Advocacy at the United Nations
On March 21, AAUW held its first youth-led briefing as part of the UN Department of Public Information/NGO Relations’ briefing series. The event, Young Women at the UN: Intersectionality and the Future of Feminist Advocacy at the United Nations, was prepared by former AAUW UN Youth Representative Antoinette Gingerelli and supported by current Youth Representative Rena Zhu and Girl Advocate Asha Shaik.

AAUW Remembers Betty Dukes
The lead plaintiff in the biggest class-action employment suit in U.S. history, Betty Dukes, passed away at age 67 in July. Dukes was a Walmart greeter who was the face of an AAUW Legal Advocacy Fund-supported case, Wal-Mart v. Dukes, that represented more than a million workers who alleged that the behemoth retailer systematically discriminated against them based on gender. The U.S. Supreme Court ruled in 2011 that the class action was too large to move forward. Despite the setback, Dukes’s stand made a difference. “Betty Dukes stood up for gender equity because she saw injustice on her job,” said AAUW’s Legal Advocacy Fund Manager Ebonee Avery-Washington, J.D. “Her unwavering stance took her all the way to the Supreme Court. The ordinary action of fighting for what’s right shaped the narrative of her life and inspired many people.”

Now’s the Time to Become a Life Member
AAUW has been empowering women since 1881, and you can empower women for generations to come through lifetime membership in AAUW! Visit www.aauw.org to join us or upgrade your existing membership today and receive a letter of recognition, certificate, and lapel pin that you can wear with great pride knowing that now and for the rest of your life, you’ve put your values into action! Lifetime membership in AAUW is a one-time, fully tax-deductible gift of $980. Join today.

Disappointing Ruling on Salary History
On April 27, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit handed down an unfavorable decision in an AAUW Legal Advocacy Fund-supported case, Rizo v. Fresno County Office of Education. Aileen Rizo works as a math consultant for the Fresno County Office of Education (FCOE) in Fresno, California, training instructors in new ways of teaching math. In 2012, Rizo says a male colleague who had recently been hired mentioned that he had been placed at step nine on the county’s 10-step pay scale. Rizo was shocked—she had been placed at step one on the scale when she began her job, even though she understood that she had more experience and seniority than her male colleague. Rizo says that after filing an internal complaint, she was told that the FCOE based new employees’ salaries on just one factor: salary history.

In the April ruling the court held that using prior salary alone to calculate current wages can be permissible under the Equal Pay Act. This unfavorable ruling magnifies the need for strong state and federal legislation, like the Pay Equity for All Act, that eliminates the practice of using prior salary alone, which allows pay discrimination to follow women from job to job. The case was sent back to district court; in May, AAUW signed an amicus brief asking for a rehearing and for the Ninth Circuit to reconsider its ruling. Visit www.aauw.org for updates.

AAUW Dues to Increase to $59 in 2018
In June 2017, the AAUW Board of Directors approved a national dues increase of $10, from $49 to $59. The dues haven’t been increased since 2008. The change will go into effect July 1, 2018. If you have questions, please email connect@aauw.org.
Oregon Bill Shows How Bipartisan Pay Equity Should Be

How did an initially rancorous debate over equal pay legislation in the Oregon legislature end up passing unanimously and being signed into law June 1? A sharp pivot in the debate was partially due to the voices of AAUW members from the turn of the 19th century.

The state house bill passed after hours of tense debate during which detractors claimed that closing the pay gap would put the state in dire financial straits and line the pockets of lawyers, not women. The bill’s path in the state senate looked dim until AAUW of Oregon Public Policy Chair Trish Garner testified, citing an 1896 AAUW research report about pay discrimination. In the report early AAUW members describe being paid less for doing the same work as men. The problems of the 19th century were eerily similar to the testimony that modern-day women delivered to the legislature.

AAUW member Barbara Miner submitted testimony that she was told by her employer that she shouldn’t make more than her husband and that a woman colleague was passed over for a promotion in favor of a male colleague because he had a wife and baby. The research and testimony opened up a bipartisan dialogue that seemed impossible before.

Garner and her colleagues at AAUW of Oregon received a copy of the report from AAUW Archivist Suzanne Gould. The state AAUW group had been working on the bill for two years leading up to the flurry of activity early in 2017. They worked with AAUW Public Policy staff on strategy and resources, including a local Two-Minute Activist alert that garnered hundreds of responses and gathering testimony from Oregonians on their experiences with pay discrimination.

AAUW members were proud to be at the bill’s signing on June 1, and Garner was asked to speak. She presented legislators with a mounted cover of AAUW’s 1896 report after her remarks, saying that the women featured in the report were standing with them that day in spirit. Garner emphasizes that “you don’t have to have a lot of money or prior knowledge” to effectively advocate for women’s issues at your statehouse. You just have to keep pounding the pavement and calling on your AAUW colleagues to help.

Ohio State Students Start a Graduation Tradition

The AAUW student organization at Ohio State University may have just started in 2016, but its leaders are already thinking long term. The group’s executive board, Kirstie Sippola, Helena Rudoff, and Tyler Osborne, started a graduation tradition that will be passed down from leader to leader in their student group. They bought an AAUW graduation cord to pass on to AAUW leaders as they graduate. Rudoff wore the cord in May when she graduated with her degree in environment and natural resources, Osborne will wear it in December when she graduates with her degree in history, and then Sippola will wear it in May when she graduates with her degree in international studies and Spanish. Rudoff thinks that the cord helps showcase the accomplishments and bonds that AAUW student groups have, similar to the tokens that sororities share. “I do feel that women who participate in different kinds of sisterhoods (like AAUW chapters) also deserve to be recognized. The cord is a good way to do that,” she says.

Sippola, Rudoff, and Osborne started their group last summer but have gained traction quickly. Their members are most concerned about women in leadership, campus safety, Title IX, and equal pay. So the group held an event with local officials, a consent workshop, a Title IX discussion, and an event about the gender pay gap. Osborne says that they hope to address issues like human trafficking and women in science, technology, engineering, and math this year.

AAUW graduation cords can be found on ShopAAUW.
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A Voice for Women in Afghanistan

Born in Afghanistan, 2014–16 AAUW International Fellow Mahnaz Rezaie fled the country with her family, and they moved to Iran when she was eight years old to avoid the Taliban. She went on to earn a scholarship from Middlebury College in Vermont, where her advocacy work gravitated toward helping women in Afghanistan.

Rezaie has dedicated much of her time as a photojournalist, documentary filmmaker, writer, and poet to advocating for the rights of Afghan women. She earned a master’s degree in photojournalism from the George Washington University. Art offers multiple ways for her to “capture terrible odds and discrimination [and] ... protest against social and cultural injustice.”

Her efforts have not gone unnoticed. In 2014 she was honored at the Women in the World Summit in New York for her short film, which explores how wearing the hijab affected her relationships when she first arrived in the United States.

Through her various art forms Rezaie has sought to examine the diverse and complicated issues that Afghan women and girls face on a daily basis, including pursuing an education, finding a voice in Afghan society, and navigating the sensitive and complicated issue of the burqa. She also helped launch an annual Afghan film festival in Washington, D.C., and the Blue Wings Project, which connects artists across disciplines and across countries to foster international connection.

“I have seen the difficulties of Afghan women around me,” she said. “I have felt their pain and I know their wishes. I advocate for Afghan women because it is advocating for my right, for [the] rights of my sisters and other close women around me.”
2017–18 Fellow and Grantee Highlights

Laura Jenkins
Laura Jenkins, a doctoral student and AAUW American Fellow at the University of South Carolina, is researching new functions for cell surface proteins during ovarian cancer progression. She expects her studies to identify molecules that regulate hyperactive cell growth pathways, which could be crucial to the development of ovarian cancer treatment strategies.

Amalia Napoli
Career Development Grantee Amalia Napoli is returning to school to earn her MS in physiology and biophysics from Stony Brook University. She spent her professional career in music. Her dream was to go to medical school, but her father would not allow her to attend. She is currently engaged in neurogenesis research.

Girls IMPACT
Community Action Grantee Girls IMPACT (Increasing Mathematical Potential Among College-Bound Teens) 2.0 Summer Program, run by Shawanda Thomas, is a six-week opportunity for approximately 25 to 30 minority girls (high school juniors and seniors) to build confidence and aptitude about careers in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics learning from women.

Marwa Ramadan
Marwa Ramadan is an International Fellow pursuing a Ph.D. in health services and technology at Johns Hopkins University. Her work has focused on helping women who have been victims of torture, violence, bullying, and unsafe working conditions. Prior to pursuing her Ph.D., she worked as an epidemiologist at Doctors Without Borders. Ramadan graduated with honors from Alexandria Faculty of Medicine and earned a master’s in environmental health from Johns Hopkins University. Her goal is to become a specialist in risk assessment and public policy.

Harriet Babikako, Ph.D.
Harriet Babikako, Ph.D., is a lecturer at Makerere University who is working with the Child and Family Foundation of Uganda on an International Project Grant to educate women with malnourished children on preparing kitchen gardens for improved family access to fruits and vegetables. Babikako was a 2009–10 International Fellow.

Brittany Mari Landgrebe
Selected Professions Fellow Brittany Mari Landgrebe is pursuing an MBA at Texas State University. Her research includes the diversification of the video game industry. She is interested in advocacy and mentorship for women of color in technology. After graduation, Landgrebe intends to continue her career in game development, focusing on strategic planning for independent game studios and publisher/studio relations.
Sexual Violence Data Raises Red Flags
AAUW released an analysis of U.S. Department of Education data that show that 89 percent of college campuses reported zero incidents of rape in 2015, which flies in the face of research on the frequency of sexual assault on campus. For the second year there is also data regarding dating violence, domestic violence, and stalking incidents on campuses nationwide. For 2015 about 9 percent of campuses disclosed reported incidents of domestic violence, around 10 percent disclosed reported incidents of dating violence, and about 13 percent of campuses disclosed reported incidents of stalking. The data indicate that students may not feel comfortable coming forward with their experiences. Accurate numbers are necessary in order to not only help understand the scope of the problem but to also properly allocate resources to prevent and respond to incidents. You can view the analysis at bit.ly/AAUWCleryAnalysis and find vital resources that you can deliver to local Title IX coordinators to ensure accurate reporting at bit.ly/1ENcwe3.

New Report Looks at Title IX at 45
The National Coalition for Women and Girls in Education, of which AAUW is a member, released its Title IX at 45 report on June 23, the 45th anniversary of the law that protects against gender discrimination in education. The report explores the barriers women and girls continue to face as well as the effects of Title IX on women’s access to discrimination-free education. The report also provides recommendations for schools, advocates, federal and state legislators, and administrators to ensure equity for all in education.

Paycheck Fairness Act Reintroduced on Equal Pay Day
Equal Pay Day marked the reintroduction of the Paycheck Fairness Act (H.R. 1869/S. 819) in the House and Senate by Rep. Rosa DeLauro (D-CT) and Sen. Patty Murray (D-WA). The Paycheck Fairness Act is a comprehensive bill that strengthens the Equal Pay Act of 1963 by taking meaningful steps to close loopholes in existing law, strengthen penalties for equal pay violations, prohibit retaliation against workers who voluntarily discuss or disclose their wages, and support data collection and research.
**Affordable Care Act Repeal Narrowly Passes House but Fails in Senate**

After weeks of uncertainty in May the House of Representatives narrowly passed (217-213) the American Health Care Act (AHCA). The bill is opposed by many organizations (as well as physicians and insurers, in a case of rare unity) who are concerned over its reversal of protections for people with preexisting conditions and opening the door for gender rating (when women are charged more than men for coverage). The AHCA’s repeal of Medicaid expansion and of federal subsidies would leave many more individuals uninsured. The bill also defunds Planned Parenthood, an organization that provides access to preventive care for millions of women and men. In late July, the Senate failed in a 49-51 Senate vote to repeal the ACA with Sens. Lisa Murkowski (R-AK), Susan Collins (R-ME), and John McCain (R-AZ), along with all Senate Democrats, voting against the harmful proposal. AAUW opposed both the House and Senate versions as well as earlier repeal proposals and will continue to oppose any efforts that seek to weaken women’s access to affordable, quality health coverage and put the health, well-being, and economic security of millions of families in jeopardy.

**President’s Budget Features Major Cuts to Women’s Programs**

President Donald Trump released a budget proposal that includes deep cuts that would have a severe effect on families’ economic security, access to education, and civil rights. The proposal slashes key programs for women’s education. It shows a $10.6-billion cut to federal education programs, resulting in the elimination of 22 programs and cuts to both K-12 and postsecondary education spending. Higher education would be particularly hard hit, as the proposed budget eliminates $700 million for the Perkins Loan Program and $490 million for the Federal Work-Study Program, as well as ending the Public Service Loan Forgiveness Program. These cuts, including $1.2 billion for after-school programs for disadvantaged students and $2.1 billion for teacher training programs, are coupled with funding increases for voucher initiatives. This comes on the heels of a recent Department of Education study of the D.C. Scholarships for Opportunity and Results voucher program, the only federally funded voucher program in the nation, which indicated negative effects on students’ standardized test scores a year after entering the program. The Department of Labor’s Women’s Bureau and the Department of Education’s Office for Civil Rights also face massive cuts to their budgets and staff. Proposed cuts to Medicaid, food stamps, and housing assistance would also disproportionately impact women. Ultimately, Congress controls the country’s purse strings, and AAUW urges legislators to reject this disastrous budget proposal that will lead to economic insecurity and inequality for women.
Dark Side of the Sun

BY KATHRYN BIBLER

Set in a time when railroads ran the world and bandits roamed the countryside, David Baron’s new book focuses instead on an unlikely adventure: the solar eclipse of 1878.

Eclipses of all kinds historically terrified people, who saw a darkened sky at midday and expected an apocalypse. Total solar eclipses occur only once in 400 years, and 1878 was the first time astronomers were able to accurately predict one. Around that event some of the most brilliant, peculiar, and egocentric minds of the 19th century jockeyed for scientific fame while America vied for international recognition.

One figure in particular dominates the book. Maria Mitchell was an astronomy professor at Vassar College (and a member of AAUW’s predecessor organization, the Association of Collegiate Alumnae), and she and a small cadre of her devoted students trekked across the country to view the eclipse from Colorado—and debunk the popular theory that higher education harms women’s fertility. (Disproving this idea was the subject of the Association of Collegiate Alumnae’s first research report in 1885.) As the book races to its climax, one almost wishes the narrative would detour further into Mitchell’s experience as a brilliant scientist surrounded by men who called her unworthy and literally undervalued her (she was paid less than half the salary of the male Vassar professors). Mitchell’s expedition and subsequent lectures on it helped advance the women’s suffrage cause.

Unfolding from Mitchell’s all-female classroom to the fame-seeking Thomas Edison’s lab to the newspapers that hosted custody battles over stars, the narrative reminds us that these Americans were calculating far more than the distance between the earth and sun: They were plotting the leap into the next decade’s industrial and social booms.

The obsessive need for international acclaim (under the guise of patriotism) strikes an uncomfortably familiar chord; the same argument legitimized Manifest Destiny and the systematic removal of Native Americans from the path of a grasping, growing country. Perhaps that darker side lingers in every great historical bound; each Edison has his ego, each Frankenstein his monster. In that, Baron’s metaphorical eclipse looms large with warning as well as triumph.

Kathryn Bibler is AAUW’s senior editor.
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From the Archives

The celebrated Bolivian sculptor Marina Nuñez del Prado, 1940–41 AAUW International Fellow, converses with First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt at the exhibition of Nuñez del Prado's sculptures at the Pan American Union in Washington, D.C., during the spring of 1941.