

**President's Message October 2017**  
**Mary Monroe Kolek, Ph.D.**

**Contributing Our Expertise, Channeling Our Energies-**

***AAUW Needs Women Looking to Contribute and Seeks to Serve Those in Need of Information and Resources.***

Last month I invited readers to share thoughts and pose questions in response to reflections about the impact of career and life style transitions that often accompany such events as a relocation, retirement or a shift from the workplace to caretaker role (*Living with Formerly Influential Woman Syndrome*, September 2017 newsletter). Coping with loss- perceived and real- of professional influence and identity is not easy; however, disequilibrium can act as a catalyst, leading us to recommit to lifelong passions, priorities and peer groups or to develop new ones. In the article I recommended membership in AAUW as a means of reclaiming influence by connecting with individuals and teams that apply their experience as scholars, professionals, community leaders and social activists to local and state needs.

This column is intended as a follow-up and offers information addressing the question:  
***Specifically, how can AAUW help women- no matter what life stage they are in- reframe and renew their sense of purpose and personal power?***

In our current environment the list of compelling issues calling out for urgent and concerted action includes: equity and respect in the in classrooms and the workplace; access for women of all means to quality health and human services; control over personal physical and lifestyle choices; guarantees of civil rights in the most inclusive sense; freedom and protection from violence- both physical and psychological; and access to careers and positions which offer good and equitable pay and benefits as well as pathways for growth and promotion. This is only a sampling as it is impossible to write about women's issues without noting that what affects us also impacts our families; as a result the AAUW positions and resources are expansive in their aspirations, outreach and impact.

As members of AAUW we serve as advocates, mentors and recruiters and so having a good grasp on the range of training and networking opportunities available to through our organization and our partners is important. Reaching out to women, especially those who are in the throes of coping with life transitions, and providing them with resources designed to target their most pressing needs is part of our action orientation.

This was the topic of a recent meeting of regional AAUW Board members facilitated by State Presidents Cherrie Wheaton and Jane Terwillegar. In addition to my representing Orange, Durham and Chatham, leaders from Raleigh-Wake, the Younger Women's Task Force and Sandhills- Southern Pines were also present.

A good majority of the conversation focused on state grants available to support local and regional sessions of Start Smart (SS) and Work Smart (WS). These are 2-3 hour seminars “designed to empower women with the skills and confidence needed to negotiate salaries and benefits”. *Start Smart* is designed to serve students transitioning from university to the work world and *Work Smart* is for women already in or re-entering the professional world. These topics will be discussed in upcoming local meetings. In the meantime, if you are interested in being trained as a workshop facilitator or in attending a SS or WS session please access [www.aauw.org/article/aauw-work-smart/](http://www.aauw.org/article/aauw-work-smart/) for information.

In addition, if you wish to participate in an ODC AAUW special topic coffee to explore the ideas in the article *Formerly Influential Women*, the Board would also like to know. If there is interest, we are planning to host a get together sometime in early November. We especially invite those who are not members but who are interested in learning more about AAUW. You can e mail interest to [odcaauw@gmail.com](mailto:odcaauw@gmail.com) or contact anyone of the Board members.

Finally, as we are focusing on recruiting potential members, educating new members and reenergizing long time members, it seems timely to highlight the breadth and depth of our organization. Toward that end I am providing a handy summary of AAUW services and resources. Please share this information with a family member, friend, colleague or student. It is how so many of us found our way to AAUW and ended up benefitting from its resources.

### **A Sampling of What AAUW Offers:**

- **Access to Research-** Deeper in Debt our Oct program- <http://www.aauw.org/research/deeper-in-debt/>
- **Campus Initiatives-** Education, Grants, Awards, Networking and Job Search and Negotiation skills
  - Campus Ambassadors
  - Campus Action Projects
  - AAUW Start Smart
  - National Conference for College Women Student Leaders
  - Campus Outreach Grant
- **STEM Education-** Our activities focus on *Building a Pipeline for Girls and Women* through programs, mentors and grants. We partner with local schools and universities as well as STEM organizations to support this goal.
- **Educational Funding and Awards**  
One of the world’s largest sources of funding for graduate women, ***AAUW is providing more than \$3.7 million in funding for fellowships and grants to 250 outstanding women and nonprofit organizations*** in the 2017–18 academic year. *At least one of our annual programs features women from NC who are current grant, action project and fellowship awardees.*
- **Public Policy and Issues:** Updates on current issues and related legislation and an easy way to make your voice heard through The Two Minute Activist. Sign up at:  
<http://www.aauw.org/what-we-do/public-policy/two-minute-activist/>
- **Legal Advocacy Fund** - The Legal Advocacy Fund (LAF) works to challenge sex discrimination in higher education and the workplace. Our resources range from community outreach programs to backing of major cases.
- **Global Connections-** International coalitions and partners make our network global and diverse.
- **Member Leadership Programs and Salary Negotiation Workshops-** An array of delivery methods provide access to quality training and information programs relevant to women entering and participating in the workforce as contributors and leaders. Advocacy, mentorship and education are key and the local AAUW partners with others to provide training and networking.

- **Community and social connections-** AAUW members serve as welcome ambassadors, guides and mentors for women looking to establish themselves in a new area or to grow their circle of friends. In addition to monthly meetings that feature a presentation on a topic of interest, members also host book clubs and other gatherings in response to member interests. We also network with members from other organizations that share our interests and commitments.