Women’s Policy Summit ONLINE branch Program

January, 2014

Welcome to the January Program for the Online branch:

**"The California Women's Policy Summit, 2014**

**AAUW's Presence and the Legislative Impact for Women and Girls."**

We will dialogue with our State President and online branch member, Alicia Hetman, as well as CA AAUW Public Policy Director, Sue Miller, who is also a member of the state board.

Background:  The Women's Policy Summit is a major policy forum held in California's State Capital to help launch the legislative session with proposals to advance the health, wealth, and power of women and girls in all of their diverse communities.  It was held on Thursday, Jan. 16 in Sacramento.  AAUW CA was a co-sponsor, took part in workshops, and in the mentoring reception for young women interested in finding out how to engage politically in California.  It is a summit that has been taking place for ten years and is hosted by the California Center for Research on Women and Families.  Founding co-sponsors include the California Women's Legislative Caucus and the California Commission on the Status of Women and Girls.  Legislative co-sponsors include:

California Asian Pacific Islander Legislative Caucus, California Latino Legislative Caucus and the California Legislative LBGT Caucus.

This is our chance to hear from a participant and attendee from AAUW CA's leadership.

Member comment:

Here’s a link to the summit agenda and workshop list:<http://ccrwf.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/2014-wps-invite-brochure-11.13.131.pdf>

Here's a little background on our speakers:

**Alicia Hetman:**  Graduated from Chico State University with three teaching credentials. She also earned a Public Sector Labor/Management Relations Certificate from UC Davis.  After teaching for the Marysville Unified School District for 23 years, she began work at the CA Dept of Education, Gender Equity Unit, first as a "visiting educator, and then full time as an Education Program Consultant for the Department.  She came by this career move as a direct result of an AAUW CA sponsored bill,  AB 1476, a bill that mandated the inclusion of gender equity in the Coordinated Compliance Review Program for CA public schools.  She was brought to the department specifically to develop and implement the provisions of the bill.   Her gender equity work included the provision of on-going technical assistance and training for school districts in an effort to bring them into compliance with Title IX and the state's gender equity laws and regulations.   Now serving as AAUW CA State President, she has also served at the branch level, twice as President of Marysville-Yuba City and is currently a member of the Sacramento branch and the online branch; served on the CA state board in many positions since 1980.At the national level, she was the Chair for the Eleanor Roosevelt Teacher Fellowships Panel, the Educational Foundation Board before the merger and then the national board during its transition to a full 501c.3 and as it began its new structure.   This is only the tip of the iceberg when it comes to her leadership skills.

**Sue Miller:** Graduated from Miami University (Ohio) with a chemistry and biology degree and pursued both high school teaching and medical research for a time. Deciding to head in a new direction, she obtained a Master's degree from the University of Cincinnati in Health Administration, with a focus on community health planning. When she moved to California she became employed in hospital planning in the Sacramento area, which led to the planning, construction of a new hospital in Folsom.  As hospitals were merged, she moved into regional responsibility over facilities planning and development and she eventually joined a consulting firm working in the areas of city, county, and court facilities planning.  Sue's AAUW involvement began in California.  She has held various branch offices and served as President of the Roseville-South Placer Branch four times.  She then moved on to the AAUW CA Board of Directors.  She currently serves as a Director and her duties include being the AAUW CA Public Policy Director.  She wants to see that AAUW CA is active and visible in the Capitol as a leading organization in the state dedicated to gender equity and improving the lives of women through legislative and policy change, and she is leading us well in this endeavor.

We are fortunate to have these two active and passionate AAUW leaders dialogue with us about the recent summit.  While they have many AAUW CA duties, they are taking time for the next few days to tell us about the summit and its policy implications for AAUW CA.

Let's begin with asking about the big picture and highlights of the summit.

Alicia and Sue: What was your impression of the summit and can you give us some of the highlights?

**Alicia**:

I was extremely pleased to see more than 550 women and men in attendance at this year's Summit.  Everyone was very engaged and I believe that many actions will be the result of this one day event. On Wednesday evening, in conjunction with the Summit, there was a reception for the 70 young women who attended this first CCRWF Mentoring Initiative: Pathways to Policy all day event on Wednesday.  They were provided with the opportunity to explore careers in government and public policy.  At the reception I had the opportunity to speak individually and in small groups with some of these young women (in their 20s and 30s),.  One approached me, as I had been introduced during the welcome, to tell me that she was very thankful to the Danville-Alamo-Walnut Creek AAUW Branch had paid for her to attend!  She then told me that she is a third generation member of AAUW.  I also met a young woman from Kenya who has started her own non-profit to help the women in her country escape domestic violence.  There also are other stories that made me realize that in just that one hour I did have an opportunity to mentor some younger women.  Of course, they all left the room with my business card, an AAUW public policy brochure and an AAUW membership brochure.

Sandra Fluke, Attorney & Social Justice Advocate was the luncheon speaker and she was very much a highlight of the day.  A young woman who has been doing great work for quite some time now.  One of her remarks that I really had an impact on me was that sharks must move forward or they will die.  She made it a point in her discussion regarding women's reproductive rights.  I took it and changed it:  AAUW CA must move forward or it will die...... Be a Shark!

**Sue:**

I was favorably impressed by many aspects of the Summit.

In the opening session Diana Dooley, Secretary, California Health and Human Services Agency updated us on the status of Covered California enrollment, and indicated that local engagement and local control was making a significant positive impact on how customers were viewing and making choices about their insurance.  It was interesting to learn that Covered California has partnered with dozens of agencies statewide, both counties and nonprofits, contracting with them and educating their staff about the program and how to enroll their clients. During the session we heard from six of these agencies.  What impressed me was the extent to which all of them were focused, not only on the enrollment itself, but going beyond:  focusing on the client, not just insurance, intent on developing longer term relationships to understand client needs, earning their trust by protecting their privacy and encouraging education and compliance. One group in Los Angeles, Black Women for Wellness, is engaging women in nail salons, hair salons, and other locations where women gather; BWW has set up protocols and relationships with these sites in order to respect client privacy.

Kate Karpilow, summit organizer, summed up the purpose of the day when she noted that the six workshops during the day are the building blocks that can bring organizations together.

Workshops I attended included Women, Poverty & Economic Empowerment, Title IX, and Building Political Power.  The presence of several female state legislators also enriched the summit as they stimulated our thinking about what needs to be done to gain equity for women, not only in pay, but in many other ways.

Member comment:

I truly believe that this is the time for women.  We are increasingly experiencing our power and our worth, so I think now is the time to make great strides in gender equality.  It was very heartening to me to read about this Conference and I hope it is the first of many.

Alicia, your remarks were very encouraging, but I would like to hear what actions you think might come about as a result of this conference?

Moderator:

Madame President:  You were on a panel for the workshop entitled Title IX Compliance: Opening Doors for Girls and Young Women.

The workshop description read:  “More than 4o years after the passage of Title IX, most schools and colleges are not in full compliance with this landmark federal law.  The workshop focused on three areas--- equal access to athletic opportunities, policies against sexual harassment, and prevention of discrimination against pregnant and parenting teens.  The panel described the progress that's been made and changes that we need to pursue.  They also presented a toolkit to assess Title IX and plans for a legislative hearing in May 2014."

Can you elaborate on the workshop and your role?  Is there a possibility for AAUW CA public policy action in this arena?

**Alicia:**

As President of AAUW CA, I have been working for the past four months with Kate Karpilow, CCRWF's Executive Director and representatives from the following law offices: The CA Women's Law Center (CWLC), Equal Rights Advocates (ERA) and the Legal Aid Society-Employment Law Center (LAS-ELC) to develop the Title IX workshop.  The representatives from CWLC, J. Cacilia Kim and the LAS-ELC, Elizabeth Kristen are both AAUW members. Our group is now called "The California Title IX Coalition". It was our plan from the beginning that there would be an "action outcome" and we started by discussing the AAUW Title IX: Know the Score Program in a Box (PIAB) and our original plan was to just make modifications to that review document.  However, as we got into our ongoing dialogue we agreed that we needed to expand beyond sports by asking our community members to look at additional components of Title IX.  We have expanded to also include the areas of Title IX Coordinator, Sexual Harassment and Pregnant Teens.

We created a *Title IX Check List* to assess local high schools for compliance with Title IX in these areas.  It is our intent to have at least 20 individuals/groups to participate in this activity during the upcoming months.  We are encouraging the participants to make this a positive process where the participants conduct research and identify action steps to bring your school into compliance, if the school is found to not be in compliance. I am Facebook friends with some of my former 4-6 grade students who are now young mothers.  Three of those students are parents of girls who attend school in Marysville, where I used to teach.  I am going to ask them to work with me to assess their high school.  Although it will be great to have many AAUW branches involved, in some cases it will take just one AAUW member mentoring others to conduct these reviews.  A good way to bring some new potential members into the work we do in AAUW.

We also will be presenting the collective findings at a legislative hearing in Sacramento, probably in May.  This is thanks to our partnership with California State Senator Hannah-Beth Jackson. If you are interested in working with us on this project the check list, the information on technical assistance, the upcoming hearing and other updates will be on the Title IX page at [www.ccrwf.org](http://www.ccrwf.org/)  I will also be posting the Check List on the AAUW CA website. 

 I am happy to report that our workshop had more than 125 in attendance and of those we had quite a good representation from branches.

Stockton had 10 people and that included the attendance of a student member from UOP; 4 Roseville-South Placer; 2 Oakland; 2 Hayward-Castro Valley; 1 San Fernando Valley; 1 Davis; 2 Lodi; 2 Nevada County; also Auburn and Danville-Alamo-Walnut Creek branches were represented.  There may have been some that I didn't find.

On the question regarding potential public policy action I am happy to report that Sue Miller, AAUW CA Director and Public Policy Chair, Shannon Smith Crowley and I had a meeting in October with Senator Jackson's staff to discuss possible Title IX legislation.  The California Title IX Coalition is also having ongoing discussions with the Senator's staff as we are working towards co-sponsoring a Bill.  We just recently heard that the Senator has submitted a spot bill for this purpose.  So.....more to come.

Member comment/question:

You talked about some toolkit to access Title IX and plans for another legislative hearing in May that was handed out.  Is it possible to have access to it?

Moderator comment: In reading over Alicia's email, she was referring to a Title IX Checklist that expands on the PIAB from AAUW to include checking on such areas as a Title IX Coordinator, Sexual Harassment and Pregnant Teens.  She indicated she will be posting it on the state website soon.  After the 20 groups or individuals use the checklist (the target goal),  the coalition will  take those findings and use them to  make a presentation at a legislative hearing in Sacramento, probably in May.   I hope this coincides with hearings on our AAUW Co-sponsored bill on Title IX  (I am an optimist) with Senator Hanna Beth Jackson!  Such an endeavor and its findings would give us very good credibility and a good nudge for passing the bill out of committee.

Member comment:

Data collection isn't enough. There needs to be teeth and follow-up to get somewhere close to enforceable compliance. See this article from the SF Chronicle of last week, about the great deficiencies in another area of compliance which, if memory serves me correctly we worked on years ago: <http://www.sfgate.com/default/article/Outdated-California-day-care-policies-leave-5194519.php>. If data is collected, there needs to be efficient management of the data. 

Member comment:

What can we as individuals do?  How can we get involved?

Member comment:

It sounds like using the check list to do assessments all across the state would be an ideal project for the Online branch, since it can be done by an individual.  Alicia, would you send a message to the Online president, Harriet Tower, when the check list is ready so she can alert and invite our entire branch membership to participate?   (Perhaps there are some who aren’t participating in this program listserv discussion who might want to participate in it.)

We’d need to know the timeline required so that the findings from any assessments completed by our branch members could be included in the collective findings presented at the legislative hearing in Sacramento (in May?).

That is an excellent question about what we can do as individuals and I think leads right in to a couple I was going to ask our Public Policy Director, Sue Miller.  Maybe she can piggyback on both.

What are the implications for AAUW CA public policy and legislative work in this next session?

What can you tell us, Sue, about the ramifications of summit actions for AAUW CA?

**Sue:**

For me as your Public Policy Chair, sessions offered at the Summit provided the current status of many of the priorities in *AAUW CA Public Policy Priorities, 2013-2015.*The Public Policy Committee uses these in determining the bills on which we take positions.  In addition to the enforcement of Title IX being discussed in a workshop, another priority area is programs that provide women with education, training and support for success in the workforce.  Senator Holly Mitchell moderated an excellent session, "Recommendations on CalWORKs" in which she reminded us of the huge cuts in this program last year that penalized poor parents who couldn't find work. One of the most onerous penalties in current law denies basic needs assistance to any child conceived while a member of the household is receiving CalWORKS cash aid, the Maximum Family Grant rule.  State law exempts the child only if it was conceived as a result of incest or rape, or if the parent's intrauterine device, Norplant or sterilization procedure failed, and then the household would receive $122 per month for the newborn.

Senator Mitchell noted that over 23% of children in California live in poverty, and 45% of the children living with single mothers are poor compared to 29% of those living with a single father. Poverty, the persistence of the gender wage gap and high unemployment among single mothers all contribute to the fact that most of the 560,000 CalWORKs families are female single heads of households.  Senator Mitchell has submitted a bill to remove the Maximum Family Grant rule, as she believes there are serious privacy issues here as well as further contributions to poverty levels.

The CA Public Policy Committee meets in March to determine bill positions. Bills related to Title IX compliance and the MFG rule definitely merit our consideration in this legislative session.

Question for Sue Miller:

Would you tell us more about the possible Title IX legislation that AAUW CA is working on with Hannah Beth Jackson?

What would it try to accomplish and how?

Alicia mentioned that Senator Jackson has submitted a “spot bill” for this.  Help those of us less familiar with the CA legislative process and explain what that means.

**Sue:**

Senator Jackson mentioned that she would be submitting a bill focusing on Title IX Compliance, but said little more than that.  We responded that we would be happy to co-sponsor.  At this point there is no other info. Given that a survey being is "tested" by around 40 branches or organizations, and is focused on K-12 schools, the Senator may be wanting to see the data before creating language.

A "spot" bill is a place holder, giving the author more time to elaborate.  Sometimes bills change considerably after submission, but this is allowable as long as the bill submitted has a number and an author.  Legislators have until February 21 this year to submit bills.

Moderator:

It seems our speakers have given us such thorough information, there don't seem to be any more questions.

I know that we have several members of the online branch that are members of other AAUW states and while our program was geared to the recent California summit, we'd like to hear of your legislative challenges that may be particular to your states and lend our support.

Would anyone like to comment on other state challenges?

Pris Mowinkel:

At this time I am still active on the State Level as the CU chair for Texas and we have been extremely busy utilizing and organizing our colleges to help us with our state legislative challenges.

In October 2012, Lisa Maatz notified me that she was coming to Dallas to address the Dallas Council of the National Jewish Women. I pulled together some of the

AAUW leaders in the North Dallas area along with leaders of other women’s organizations in our area to attend her presentation about what was happening on

Capitol Hill. She was extremely well received and these will hopefully be the organizations that AAUW Texas will be continue to bring together to fight the fight for Texas Women in Austin. It was also at this time that Lisa informed me that the “Get out the Vote” tools were going to become available for use by AAUW

states.

This year Texas has taken full advantage of those tools.

National media really assisted Texas Women by nationally covering the war on Women taking place in our state. Unfortunately, for the rest of the women in the U.S. what is happening in Texas is and will continue to influence what

happens to women all over the country. All you need to do is look at the Senators and Congressmen that are being sent to Washington from my state and other southern states and the chaos coming out of DC becomes understandable.

Keep in mind that I am a Republican and I am making these statements.

This summer, when the surprise assault was made on Women’s Health Care and Choice in the Texas Legislature, AAUW Texas and our LAF chair, Rosemary Herman with the help of the Salsa program and the AAUW Advocacy team in DC, put together a last minute petition which we then presented to the legislature. We

were proud of the number of signatures we presented to the legislature.

Planned Parenthood and Texas Freedom Network also focused on the plight of Texas Women with their petitions and from our coalition of activists, Senator Wendy Davis rose from the ashes and the rest is history.

AAUW continues to focus on this issue and we were awarded a mentor/organizer by AAUW which we share with Oklahoma and Louisiana. She has been a God send.

We now have another petition going which is titled Stand Up for Texas Women & Families

Our focus at this time is to increase advocacy and membership through our colleges and universities. Today, I meet Jessica from DC, Melodía (our organizer), and Jeannie Best our President at Texas A&M in College Station to help the university initiate their first “Elect Her” workshop. The keynote is actually a Republican state senator who formed a woman’s health coalition which

is trying to combat the effects of what was done by the legislature this summer.

She is being targeted by the Tea Party in her re-election at this time.

Unfortunately, Texas is becoming a Tea Party state.

Over the next few months, Melodia and state board and committee members will focus on recruiting participation at the different colleges and universities in Texas. The second week in February, Melodia, I, and others will be targeting

the colleges/universities in the North Texas area. We will be obtaining petition signatures from faculty, students and visitors to the student unions at the various campuses.

We will also be promoting C/U partnerships and registering e students at the various campuses that are already partners. We will be handing out NCWSSL info along with fellowship info for the graduate students. It is also our intention to visit and recruit all community colleges into our area.

Keep in mind that our petition uses the SALSA program which is the basic software for recruitment for AAUW. All those that sign the petitions automatically are signed up for Action Alert and go onto AAUW’s database. New members are signing up because of the use of this tool by Texas.

Looking forward to seeing all of you in San Diego in 2015!

**Conclusion**

**That is a lot of food for thought for online branch members.**

**Thank you all for your perspectives and input, and a special thank you to our presenters, State President, Alicia Hetman and State Public Policy Director, Sue Miller.**