

# GET WITH THE PROGRAM

March 2005      Volume I, Issue 6

## AAUW-PA CONVENTION LAF PLAINTIFF

We are pleased to announce the addition of Professor Ricky Hirschhorn to our convention. Prof. Hirschhorn, former assistant professor in the School of Biological Sciences at the University of Kentucky, sued the university for sex discrimination in the denial of tenure and pay inequity in violation of Kentucky state laws.

Hirschhorn joined the faculty as a tenure-track assistant professor in 1985 and maintained that throughout her employment at the university, she demonstrated an ability for conducting reliable research and earned recognition for excellence in her field through her re-

search and publications. The university denied her tenure in 1991. Hirschhorn questioned the criteria the university used when it determined that she had failed to measure up to her male colleagues maintaining that her scholarly production and funding history equaled or surpassed those of many senior faculty members in her department in recent years. Further, she alleged that her performance and efficiency reports were equal to or better than similarly situated male employees and that the university practiced a policy of sex discrimination and unequal pay towards women. Hirschhorn filed suit in

Kentucky state court in 1992. Following a trial in 1995, a jury found in favor of the university. Hirschhorn's appeal was denied. Her case is featured in *Tenure Denied: Cases of Sex Discrimination in Academia*.

Hirschhorn is now an associate professor of biology and director of the Graduate Biomedical Science Program at Hood College in Maryland.

Our President, Karen Rowe, applied for a LAF Plaintiff Travel Grant and Pennsylvania was fortunate to be one of six states to receive it and therefore we are able to bring Professor Hirschhorn to Convention. Thanks Karen.

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## Important Dates to Remember

|                  |   |
|------------------|---|
| April 8-10, 2005 | 76th PA State Convention, Hershey-Harrisburg                            |
| June 2-4, 2005   | National Conference for College Women Student Leaders, Washington, D.C. |
| June 24-27, 2005 | National Convention, Washington D.C.                                    |

## Program Idea— Women's History

Women's History month is always an exciting opportunity for AAUW to highlight programs about important women. There are many resources for programs. The Alice Paul Institute (API) is located in nearby Moorestown, NJ. If you are close enough you could schedule a field trip to Paulsdale, the birthplace and home of Alice Paul. Another option is that API offers "Alice Paul: New Jersey's Heroine for Equality", a 30 -60 minute presentation about Alice Paul's life and work that is available for organizations as well as schools. Staff and trained volunteers visit your location and bring history to life with slides (or a powerpoint presentation), historical replicas, and intriguing stories. There is a fee involved to help offset expenses. Contact Alice Paul Institute, 128 Hooton Road, Mount Laurel, NJ 08054, 856-231-1885 or [info@alicepaul.org](mailto:info@alicepaul.org). Visit the website, [alicepaul.org](http://alicepaul.org) to learn more.

The Newport County-East Bay Branch in Rhode Island has developed a great program for Women's History Month that they are offering to other branches. The branch developed a script using the words spoken by nine of the women who attended the first Women's

Rights Convention in Worcester in 1850 (e.g. Sojourner Truth, Abby Foster, Lucretia Mott, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Lucy Stone). It is presented as a "you are there" event. An off-stage narrator introduces each woman as she approaches the podium. Since these women actors read their speeches, there is no memorization required, only some read-aloud practice at home. Their words are very powerful and evoke women's longing to be free to vote, work at chosen vocations, participate in political life, own property, and NOT be merely extensions of their husbands. Period dress can be borrowed from a local high school/college or be left to your imagination and some closet searching. The Newport County-E. Bay Branch has done all the work and the program script is available online at a cost of \$10 or by mail for \$15. Contact Judy Terry, 18 Hunter Road, Portsmouth RI 02871 [judy.terry@mindspring.com](mailto:judy.terry@mindspring.com). All proceeds go to EF.

For a paid performer there is Jane Curry who describes herself as an "author, storyteller, performer, and recovering academic with a knack for provoking both thought and laughter with her one-woman shows". Performances she offers include Just Say Know: Educating Females for the 21st Century, Sisters of the Quill

and Skillet, Nice Girls Don't Sweat, Miz Wizard's Science Secrets, and Samantha "Rastles" the Woman Question. This may be a good one for multiple branches to offer in order to reduce costs. Check out the website, [janecurry.com](http://janecurry.com) and for information contact Jane Curry, 5048 37th Avenue S., Minneapolis, MN 55417, 612-729-6457, [jane@janecurry.com](mailto:jane@janecurry.com).

You can always visit the National Women's History Project website, [nwhp.org](http://nwhp.org). The NWHP is the source for information and materials related to women's history. They list speakers available by state and nationally. They also have available books, bookmarks, posters, DVDs, etc. that can be used if you contribute to local schools as a Women's History branch project.

Don't forget to look in your own backyard for women of history. You may have a veteran (nurse, soldier, officer) of WWII, Korea, Viet Nam, or the Gulf War, USO Volunteers from these wars, founding members of the community, etc.

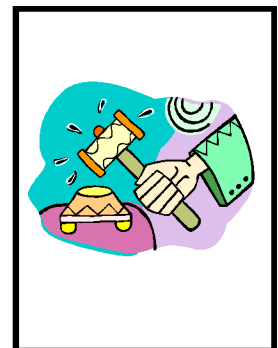
## PA Branch Meetings of Interest

The **Carlisle Branch** is offering a program in No Child Left Behind on Tuesday, March 22 with Mary Kay Durham, Superintendent of Carlisle School District. There is a bring-a-friend to dinner at 6:30 PM followed by the program at 7:30 PM in the Side Rooms, Holland Union Building, Dickinson College. Contact

Mary Brandt for more information, [marym@pa.net](mailto:marym@pa.net) or 717-249-1367

The **Makefield Area Branch** offers a program called Complementary Medicine: Acupuncture, Aromatherapy, Chiropractic and Massage Therapy with Panel Coordinator Dr. Lisa Ducker, D.O., and panelists

Dr. Frances D. Wain and Ms. Monica Rottloff, CMT. The meeting is on Wednesday March 16 at 7 PM at the Yardley-Makefield Library. For information contact Beverly Giardinelli, [bev333G@aol.com](mailto:bev333G@aol.com) or 215-295-2344.



**Association News—Just When You Think You’re Making Progress...**

In comments to the National Bureau of Economic Research on January 14, 2005, Harvard University President Lawrence Summers suggested that innate genetic differences limit women’s ability to succeed in technical subjects like math and science. Further, he argued that the highest faculty positions at elite colleges and universities require more time, energy, and commitment than women—who are considered the primary caretakers of family—are able to give. In sum, Summers’ offered the impression that while discrimination might play a role in thwarting women’s advances in the math and science arena, genetic makeup and rigid societal roles might largely impact women’s success. On January 18 and 19 AAUW officially responded calling on Dr. Summers to re-examine the evidence on women’s achievement in math and science as well as the real and often discrimination-based challenges female faculty face in gaining tenure. In their letter AAUW President Nancy Rustad and AAUW EF President Mary Ellen Smyth explained to Dr. Summers that in “1885 a prominent Boston physician argued that

women should not attend college because it adversely affects their health, a claim that prompted some of AAUW’s first research refuting women’s biological limitations in education and the workplace”. They went on to comment that “unfortunately in 2005, Harvard’s president is suggesting that women don’t succeed in math and science because of their genetic code”. Rustad and Smyth cited that he “further contended that those who do have success—in these and other disciplines—and have ambitions of careers in academia often do not succeed because of their unwillingness to accept the rigors of life in the Ivory Tower, not as a result of discrimination in the hiring and tenure processes”. Rustad and Smyth stated that “surely the story behind these numbers is more than just an unwillingness of women to commit to the challenges of academia pointing out that many of these women run up against discrimination that is nearly impossible to overcome, and minimizing this reality is unacceptable and particularly disturbing from a key decision-maker in higher education like Dr. Summers”. On January 19 Dr. Summers wrote a letter of apology saying essentially that his

comments were taken the wrong way. He stated that he “did not say nor does he believe that girls are intellectually less able than boys, or that women lack the ability to succeed at the highest levels of science”. On February 3 Rustad, Smyth and Michelle Warholich Wetherhald, President of LAF sent a letter directly to Dr. Summers restating some of what was in their earlier letters and commenting that they were “discouraged and disappointed by his observations, and that they could not help but wonder what message was being sent to girls when the president of one of America’s most prestigious universities suggests that Barbie was right after all: For girls, math is tough”. They state that Dr. Summers “letter of apology and letter of January 29 to organizations that advocate gender equity were encouraging” and among other things they offered to serve on the task forces Dr. Summers is assembling, sent a copy of *Tenure denied: Cases of Sex Discrimination in Academia and A License for Bias: Sex Discrimination, Schools, and Title IX*, and the LAF offered to collaborate on a campus outreach program. We’ll see what happens next. (See the AAUW website for the full story.)

**Educational Foundation (EF)/Legal Advocacy Fund (LAF) Corner**

**EF**

AAUW’s EF released an online resource this January. “Gains in Learning, Gaps in Earning: A Guide to State and National Data” notes the remarkable strides in education during the past three decades, but highlights how these gains have yet to translate into full equity in pay. Women with four year degrees typically

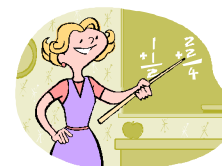
earn 71.5 cents for every \$1 for their male counterparts.

Former EF fellow Stephanie J. Castillo is one of the filmmakers of the award-winning documentary, “An Untold Triumph” about the U.S. Army’s 1st and 2nd Filipino Infantry Regiments which includes a retelling of the Bataan Death March. PBS has tentatively scheduled the documentary to air on

Monday, May 9 at 10 PM.

**LAF**

A jury found that Bishop State Community College in Alabama violated Title IX by failing to adequately address a student’s complaints of sexual harassment by a former instructor. LAF-supported plaintiff Kimberly Howard was awarded \$285,000 in damages.



**AAUW-PA News—New 21st Century Recognition Program**

AAUW turned over administration of the 21st Century Recognition Program to the states and they could decide to keep the program, change it, or eliminate it. PA decided to change the program renaming it the **PA STAR (State Top Achievement Recognition) Program**. It is similar to the previous stars program in which branches are eligible for up to five

stars in recognition levels. The application is two pages asking for information about how a program/event/series of on-going activities met goals in Membership, Visibility, Community Outreach or Action and Public Policy; and additionally some information on financial contributions. For branches of less than 20 members you can choose to partici-

pate in a subprogram called the **Cassiopeia Branch Recognition Program** in which you summarize in 200 words or less a sample of your finest event/community service/special program, etc. Applications were sent to Branch Presidents and are available from the AAUW-PA PVP, deadline for submission is May 1 and winners will be announced at the July Leaders Meeting.



**AAUW Pennsylvania Newsletter  
for Branch Program VPs**

103 Green Spring Circle  
Lansdale, PA 19446

215-362-3805  
dotmclane@comast.net

**The American Association of University Women promotes equity for all women and girls, lifelong education, and positive societal change. In principle and in practice, AAUW values and seeks a diverse membership. There shall be no barriers to participation in this organization on the basis of gender, race, creed, age, sexual orientation, national origin, disability, or class.**

**State Website [aauwpa.org](http://aauwpa.org)**

**Association Website [aauw.org](http://aauw.org)**

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**Get With the Program**

**Adelante Book of the  
Month Club**

The Adelante Book Club selection for March, Women's History Month, is *Stone Heart: A Novel of Sacajawea* by Diane Glancy (2003).

**Public Policy Priority**

The featured priority is:

*"Supporting initiatives for education reform that encourage gender fairness and diversity, including enforcing Title IX."*

**Women & Social Security  
(from AAUW website)**

AAUW strongly opposes private accounts in place of Social Security benefits, which are the sole, guaranteed source of income for many elderly women. President Bush has been urging privatization of Social Security for those who choose these private accounts, but he has promised that this will have no effect on those currently or approaching retirement. However, the numbers simply don't add up. If individuals divert funds from the FICA taxes they currently pay, there will be less money to pay for exist-

ing retiree benefits.

Women need greater retirement income in addition to Social Security because they are half as likely to receive pensions and earn less over their lifetime than do men. Any Social Security reform must maintain the guaranteed benefits for these women and consider the inequality of pension benefits and retirement security for women.

See the [aauw.org](http://aauw.org) for further information.



***"Stone Heart: A  
Novel of Sacajawea"***

**By Diane Glancy**