



AMERICAN
ASSOCIATION OF
UNIVERSITY
WOMEN

Branching Out

Tahlequah (OK) Branch Newsletter

September 2008

Elizabeth Eckford is coming to NSU



Elizabeth Eckford, a member of the infamous Little Rock Nine, will speak on Saturday, Sept. 13 at 3 p.m. in the NET Auditorium on the Tahlequah campus. The event is free and open to the public. It is sponsored by the NSU Centennial Lecture Series, Oklahoma Speech Theatre Communication Association, and the AAUW.

In 1957, Little Rock Central High became a battleground in the struggle for civil rights. One of the pervasive images of the Civil Rights Era is that of 15-year-old Elizabeth Eckford, walking alone in front of the school, through a hate-filled mob while being taunted.

Today Eckford lives in Little Rock where she continues her interest in education by sharing her story with school groups. In telling her story, she walks through a painful past. True reconciliation, she says, can occur when we honestly look back on our shared history.

She is the recipient of many awards, including the NAACP's highest honor, the Spingarn Medal, and ACLU's Florena Lasker Civil Liberties Association Bar Association's Sankofa Award. In 1999, Eckford and the other Little Rock Nine, received the Congressional Gold Medal in a White House Ceremony.

Next Meeting
"Where the Girls Are"
presented by Irene
Wickham at Vidalia's
Café at 5:30 p.m. on
September 18th, 2008
Invite Someone

President's Message

Thanks to everyone who brought ice cream, cookies, and other goodies to the ice cream social at the Tahlequah Public Library in August. And a special thanks to Irene Wickham who informed and reminded us of the history of AAUW and the history of our local AAUW branch. Now we need to look forward to the rest of the year as we work to further the mission of education and equity for women and girls.

On September 18, Irene Wickham will present the program "Where the Girls Are" and she will tell us where the real crisis in education is. AAUW's new research report, *Where the Girls Are*, takes a detailed look at the status of girls in education. Come and find out what the key factors affecting achievement gaps among students in the United States today are. I hope to see all of you there along with the prospective members you will bring so that they can join AAUW at a reduced rate. Be sure to pick up your new yearbook when you come.

Jeanna Wing
AAUW Tahlequah
Branch President

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AAUW Educational Foundation, Irene Wickham, EF Chair

In 1885 shortly after AAUW was founded in 1881, nearly 1,300 AAUW members participated in a survey that eventually contradicted a prominent Boston physician's statement that higher education was bad for women's health. That was the first of many influential publications and studies that put AAUW on the map—and have kept us there for more than a century.

In 1958, the Educational Foundation was officially established to administer AAUW's fellowship and grant programs, advancing educational and professional opportunities for women in the United States and around the globe. This year AAUW celebrates the Foundation's 50th Anniversary.

Since that first study in 1885, AAUW has pioneered research and published its findings to continue the fight for equity in education for women and girls. Since 1991, the Foundation has produced trail blazing research on girls and education. The release of "Shortchanging Girls, Shortchanging America" sparked the nation's debate on gender bias. Based on a nationwide poll of students ages 9-15, the report examined the impact of gender on self-esteem, career aspirations, educational experiences, and interest in math and science. The study finds that adolescent girls experience a significantly greater drop in self-esteem than boys experience. The poll also confirmed a growing body of research that indicated girls are systematically, if unintentionally, discouraged from a wide range of academic pursuits—particularly in math and science.

In 1992, the Foundation published the landmark AAUW Report: "How Schools Shortchange Girls"

that detailed how girls receive an education that is inferior to that of boys in a number of significant ways and how this has critical long-term effects on their education and self-esteem.

The most recent 2008 report, "Where the Girls Are: The Facts About Gender Equity in Education" presents a comprehensive look at girls' educational achievement during the past 35 years. This report will be reviewed at the September 18th Tahlequah Branch meeting.

Information about the Program for the Meeting

"Where the Girls Are: The Facts About Gender Equity in Education" is the 2008 AAUW Research Report that Irene Wickham, Educational Foundation Chair, will review at the September 18th Tahlequah Branch Meeting.

This report presents a comprehensive look at girls' education achievement to the relationship between girls' and boys' progress. Analyses of national standardized tests provide an overall picture of trends in gender equity from elementary school to college and beyond. Differences among girls and among boys by race/ethnicity and family income level are evaluated. Together these analyses support three predominate facts about gender equity in schools today:

1. Girls' successes don't come at boys' expense.
2. On average, girls' and boys' educational performance has improved.
3. Understanding disparities by race/ethnicity and family income level is critical to understanding girls' and boys' achievement.

To learn more about this interesting topic, come to this meeting at 5:30 p.m. at Vidalia's Restaurant, 319 N. Muskogee. Bring a friend who might be interested!

Calendar

SEPTEMBER
September 18th, 5:30 p.m.
Program: "Where the Girls Are"
Place: Vidalia's Café

OCTOBER
October 16th, 5:30 p.m.
Program: "Woman to Woman Voter Turnout"
Place: Vidalia's Café

NOVEMBER
November 20th, 5:30 p.m.
Program: "Global Connections - One Shared World"
Place: Vidalia's Café

DECEMBER
December 14th, 1:30-5:00 p.m.
Program: "Homes for the Holidays" Tour
(Fundraiser for Educational Foundation and local needs)

December 18th, 5:30 p.m.
Christmas Party - Bring Treats
Place: Home of Jeanna Wing
BRING ITEMS FOR HELP-IN-CRISIS

JANUARY
January 15th, 5:30 p.m.
Program: Movie Night: "Iron Jawed Angels"
Place: NSU

FEBRUARY
February 19th, 5:30 p.m.
Bunco - LAF Fundraiser
Place: To Be Determined: Potluck Dinner

MARCH
Date To be announced
Legislative Day at the Capitol
Place: State Capitol

March 19th, 5:30 p.m.
Women's History

Urge Your Senators to Support Paid Leave for Federal Workers Take Action!

Thanks to the hard work of AAUW members and coalition partners, the House passed (278 - 146) the Federal Employees Paid Parental Leave Act (H.R. 5781) on June 19. See how your representative voted. This important legislation will provide federal workers up to four weeks of paid leave for the birth or adoption of a child, and will be a significant step towards paid paternal leave for all Americans. Now that the Senate is back from their recess, it's time for them to act.

A new report from the Center for Economic and Policy Research found the U.S. to have the least generous parental leave policies of the 21 high-income countries surveyed. The report, "Parental Leave Policies in 21 Countries: Assessing Generosity and Gender Equality," found the U.S. finished last among the countries studied when it comes to generosity of paid leave. A February 2007 study by Harvard and McGill University researchers found that the U.S. is one of only five countries out of 173 in their survey - along with Lesotho, Liberia, Swaziland, and Papua New Guinea - that does not guarantee some form of paid maternity leave. As the nation's largest employer with over 2.7 million employees nationwide, the U.S. government should be leading the way in family friendly workplace policies. Instead, it lags far behind.

While federal workers are eligible for 12 weeks of unpaid leave through the Family and Medical Leave Act, many

cannot afford to take the time off while not receiving a paycheck. The Federal Employees Paid Parental Leave Act will allow federal workers the ability to take care of and bond with their newborns and newly-adopted children, which is critical to the health and well-being of the child and the parent, without the increased burden of the loss of wages. The Joint Economic Committee estimates that it costs nearly three times as much to replace an employee than to provide them with four weeks of paid parental leave. In addition to reducing turnover, paid parental leave can lead to increased productivity, better morale, and reduced absenteeism.

AAUW's member-adopted Public Policy Program has long supported flexible workplace policies to address the family responsibilities of employees. Such protections and improvements are critical to women's equal opportunity and economic security.

Take Action!

Urge your senators to support the Family Federal Employees Paid Parental Leave Act (S. 3140) so that America's federal workers don't have to choose between keeping a job and caring for a new child. Click on the "Take Action" link in the upper right corner or copy and paste the following URL into your Internet browser. Then follow the instructions to send your message.

<http://capwiz.com/aauw/issues/alert/?alertid=11567996>

For more information, read AAUW's position paper on family friendly workplaces visit the new FMLA section of AAUW's Legal Advocacy Fund Resource Library for information, frequently asked

questions, statistics, and resources..

Washington Update is AAUW's free, members-only weekly e-bulletin. It offers an insider's view on the legislative process, the latest policy news, resources for advocates, programming ideas, and updates from the Public Policy and Government Relations Department. To stay up-to-date on all issues important to our mission, all AAUW members, including college and university partners, are encouraged to subscribe to Washington Update by emailing VoterEd@aauw.org. AAUW's blog, AAUW Dialog, provides timely commentary on current news and events and the way they relate to AAUW's mission. Share your thoughts and stay up-to-date on all the latest news by visiting the blog regularly at <http://blog-aauw.org> or subscribing to the AAUW blog RSS feed.

Read the 2007-2009 AAUW Public Policy Program.

Become a member of AAUW, and join a powerful network of educated women.

I want to strengthen AAUW's voice with policy-makers!

Contribute now.

The 2009 AAUW Convention is scheduled for June 26-28, 2009 in St. Louis, MO. Please remember to plan for convention in your 2009 budget, put it on your calendar, and join us in St. Louis! Check the convention webpage often for updates.



American Association of University Women

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The American Association of University Women promotes equity for all women and girls, lifelong education, and positive societal change. In principle and practice AAUW values and seeks a diverse membership.

The AAUW Educational Foundation provides funds to advance education, research, and self-development for women and to foster equity and positive societal change.

The AAUW Legal Advocacy Fund provides funding and a support system for women seeking judicial redress for sex discrimination.

There shall be no barriers to full participation in this organization on the basis of gender, race, creed, age, sexual orientation, national origin, or disability.

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Promoting education and equity for all women and girls.