

AAUW/CT CELEBRATES 130 YEARS

Saturday, April 30th was a big day for the Shoreline Branch of the AAUW (American Association University Women), one of fourteen chapters in the State. The annual meeting of AAUW/CT was hosted by the Shoreline branch and held at the Madison Winter Club. Madison is home to AAUW's Pro-Tem State President Loretta James of Madison until July 2011 as well as the newly elected 2011-12 State Co-President, Alice Reitz. Other State officers of the AAUW elected at the meeting were Chantal DeArmitt, Co-President from Middletown, Dr. Melinda Rising, College and University Partner Program Liason Officer, and Laurel Anderson, Finance Officer from Trumbull.

Featured guest speaker following the luncheon was Deborah Heinrich (elected district State Representative for the past 6 years). She will now serve in the newly created cabinet-level position in Governor Malloy's administration as Head of Community Non-Profit Human Services. This role will require her to resign her member-elect status. In her new position, she plans to serve the non-profit community in a way that will maximize services and minimize costs that, in turn, should lower costs to taxpayers.

Local branches of AAUW/CT value and seek a diverse membership bringing together alumnae of colleges and universities to advance equity for women and girls through advocacy, action, life-long learning and research. Their mission is also to increase members' effectiveness in their communities by solving social and civic problems as well as by participating in special activities offered by their branch. These include special interest groups open to all members such as literature, art, bridge, art appreciation and destination-oriented day trips, gourmet dinners, hiking and others.

The Shoreline Chapter, originally founded by Mary Littel in 1951, is one of fourteen chapters in the State and has 113 members. Daughter, Vicki Littel, follows her Mother's legacy as an active participant and former Officer of the Chapter. For information relating to membership or activities, please call Alice Reitz, State and Chapter President at 203-245-9208.

The national organization, AAUW, was founded in 1882 and has its headquarters in Washington, D.C. Members of AAUW have a long history of lobbying Congress and holding their legislators accountable for how they vote (The AAUW Action Fund Congressional Voting Record) on AAUW priority issues, which include economic security, work-life balance, education and civil rights. The Voting Record (see VoterEd@aauw.org) covers the 111th Congress and is distributed to every member of Congress. The results of their votes are published and available to all members for sharing with friends, family and prospective AAUW members. This helps to educate the community on the issues and on policy makers' voting records.

In recent years there has been outstanding progress on AAUW priorities. 96 women in the 111th Congress is an historical record; seven women currently among twenty-two cabinet-level positions in Obama's administration; and three women currently serving on the U.S. Supreme Court for the first time ever. An additional milestone was achieved when President Obama signed the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act in January 2009, that reversed the Supreme Court's decision on Ledbetter vs. Goodyear Tire and Rubber in 2007. AAUW was proud to have a front-row seat, by invitation only, at the White House for this occasion empowering women. This action was just one of many AAUW public policy programs being addressed during the 111th Congress and we members of the Shoreline Branch of AAUW are proud to be involved in advancing the future of women and girls in this country.