

## FEBRUARY MEETING

### Thea's Song

**Presenter:** Charlene Smith, FSPA

**When:** Saturday, Feb 11th, 2017

**Where:** Assisi Room of the Franciscan Spirituality Center  
912 Market Street  
*Parking available in the lot across the street*

**Breakfast Cost:** \$10

**Breakfast Menu:** Eggs, meat, potatoes, bread, fruit, coffee, tea

*Please note: Anyone with dietary restrictions should notify the person taking reservations.*

Members who do not wish to come to the brunch are welcome to attend the program portion at no charge.

**Registration** .....9:30 AM  
**Breakfast** .....10:00AM  
**Program** .....10:30AM

#### RSVP DEADLINE:

For cancellations and late reservations please inform Robert Richardson by NOON on MONDAY, February, 6th.

Join us in celebrating African American History Month with Sr. Charlene Smith who will share with us the story of beloved Thea Bowman, FSPA.

Thea Bowman, was one of the great treasures of the American Catholic church. As a Franciscan Sister, she managed, in her manifold witness to the gospel, to integrate the resources of her Catholic faith with her identity as an African-American woman.

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# The Current

*a publication of the La Crosse, WI AAUW Branch*

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FEBRUARY 2017



## PRESIDENT'S PERSPECTIVE:

### Moving Forward

*by Michele Strange, AAUW-La Crosse Branch President*

I am sitting here looking out at the snow and thinking about our accomplishments so far this year. Our last speaker, La Crosse City Planner Jason Gilman, was excellent and we had over 40 people in attendance--a record for a January meeting I'll bet. Our programs have all been outstanding.

I look forward to our upcoming meetings. This month's should be interesting, as it highlights the life of Theo Bowman, an African-American Franciscan Sister of Perpetual Adoration, who was a teacher and activist. See more about the program on this page.

Our Kosovo project has proven to be successful. The evaluations from the Kosovo delegates were very positive. One of the delegates, Isuf Jahmurataj, wrote a letter to the editor, which was published in the La Crosse Tribune. You will find it in the email issue for your

perusal. World Services gave us a very generous sum to complete the Kosovo delegation project and we were able to keep any excess that was not spent. All our efforts on the project have resulted in a surplus for our budget. We now have added \$873.37 to our general fund!



Planning for the International Women's Day panel on March 8th is coming together. This year we have 10 co-sponsors for the event. The representatives from these organizations make up

*Continued on Page 2 »*

## NEXT BOARD MEETING

**Monday, February 6, 2017  
6:30pm**

Viterbo University Nursing Building, Room 103. Meetings are open to any member who is interested in attending.

**Contact Michele at:** 781-6962 or *mstrange@eagle.uwlax.edu* to place items on the agenda.

Get all the CURRENT news at our website: [www.aauwlacrosse.org](http://www.aauwlacrosse.org)

## Moving Forward... *(continued from page 1)*

the IWD Committee. Lois Gilbert, who is chair of the committee, has secured four panelists from different countries to present. Please mark your calendars for Wednesday, March 8th, 5-7 p.m. Watch for flyers and bookmarks with all the details.

The next National Conference for College Women Student Leaders (NCCWSL) has been announced on the AAUW website. It will be held May 31-June 3, 2017 at University of Maryland, College Park. Application deadline for scholarships from AAUW-Wisconsin is February 15, 2017. If you know of an eligible student, please fill out the application form and return it to me. I have e-mailed a copy of the requirements and application form to all members. If you need a copy of these, please contact me at [mstrange@eagle.uwlax.edu](mailto:mstrange@eagle.uwlax.edu). Forms should be in to me by Monday, February 6th.

I mention these accomplishments, because I am very proud and humbled to be your president. All the dedication and hard work of our board members and committees sometimes leaves me breathless.

Thank you again for all that you do!

## Membership News

*by Marilyn Hempstead, VP Membership*

We were fortunate to have two members join at the January meeting, both with the distinction of having earned doctorate degrees:

Sara Sullivan  
608 16th St. South  
La Crosse, WI 54601  
608 385 4889  
U of L Kentucky PhD Psychology  
[cronemom29@gmail.com](mailto:cronemom29@gmail.com)

Pat Markos  
2144 Cliffview Terrace  
La Crosse, WI 54601  
608 780 8623  
UW Madison PhD Behavioral Disabilities  
[pmarkos@uwlax.edu](mailto:pmarkos@uwlax.edu)

Sara is retired from UW-L. She attended the Women's March in Washington, D.C on January 21st.

Pat continues to be employed at UW-L and is rejoining our branch.

Welcome to you both. We are happy you are with us.



## FEBRUARY MEETING

*(continued from Page 1)*

Ablaze with the spirit of love, the memory of struggle, and a faith in God's promises, she impressed her many audiences not just with her message but with her nobility of spirit. No one she encountered, whether school children, college students, cynical journalists, or a convention hall of bishops, could fail to catch a measure of her joy and gratitude for the gift of life. She was a particular inspiration to the black-skinned Catholic community, helping them to assert their place of pride among the people of God, while also encouraging them to enrich the wider church with the gifts of their distinctive culture and spirituality.

Sr. Charlene was born in South English, Iowa, and entered the FSPA in La Crosse, Wisconsin, making her first profession of vows in 1957. She was awarded a Bachelor of Arts degree cum laude, from Viterbo College (now University), graduate degrees in English, Psychology and Information Science from University of Wisconsin-Madison and the Catholic University of America in Washington, DC. With co-author John Feister she wrote the award-winning biography *Thea's Song*, about her friend Thea Bowman, FSPA. She is emeritus member of the Board of Directors for the Thea Bowman Educational Foundation and was its treasurer from 1995-2010. Now retired she continues as consultant for "all things Thea".



*Sr. Thea  
Bowman*



*Sr. Charlene  
Smith*

## Study Group News

### AAUW IN ACTION

See below for meeting info

**Contact:** Erica Koonmen, 366-1509

### HEARTH & HOME

See below for meeting info

**Contact:** Sharon DeCicco, 788-5356

### CONTEMPORARY AUTHORS

3rd Tuesday of the month at 2pm

**Contact:** Alice Ross, 788-4206

### SCHOLARSHIP BRIDGE/CARD GAMES

TBA

**Contact:** Sharon DeCicco, 788-5356

## HEARTH & HOME

*Hearth & Home study group meets periodically to explore new ideas, culinary experiences, fun activities and our area through visits to local businesses or in-home happenings. If you are interested in planning a program for the group or if you would like to head it up, please contact Sharon.*

### *Annual Hearth and Home Valentine's Party*

**Date:** Wed., February 8th

**Time:** 6 p.m.

**Place:** Patt Boge's house:  
219 S. 21st St. La Crosse



Bring a food item that's either red or heart shaped or in a heart shaped dish. Also bring a wrapped red or heart shaped gift (under \$10) to trade.

*All are welcome, you don't have to be a member of Hearth and Home.*

Questions? Call Patt Boge at 784-3952 or  
p.boge@lacrosse.lib.wi.us.

## AAUW in Action

*AAUW in Action is a study group that serves as a springboard for community service activities for our branch that promote AAUW's mission.*

**Next Meeting:** If you are interested in joining us for a meeting, or just knowing what we're planning, please ask to be on our email list by sending an email to Erica at moogs56@hotmail.com

Thank you for all the items for Family & Children's Center Adult Group Homes collected at the January general meeting! **At the February meeting (Feb 11th), we'll be collecting for the Jail ministry: pencils, pads of lined paper & envelopes as well as the YWCA's CASA : journals, children's books, coloring books, crayons & markers.**

Since the March general meeting is in Winona, we won't have a collection that month. However, in April we'll be helping out the **YWCA Teen group with arts & crafts supplies like beading, paper, paints, markers, crayons.**

### Meet our new Social Media Intern: Rachel Cain....



Hi there! My name is Rachel Cain and I am a senior at the University of Wisconsin La Crosse. I will be graduating in May 2017 with a B.S. in organizational and professional communication and a Liberal Arts minor, which focuses on professional writing. An internship with AAUW La Crosse is such an amazing opportunity for me and I am looking forward to gaining experience with a non-profit organization that works for such a great cause. I have spent the last few years of my higher education working to expand my knowledge and understanding of communication as it shifts with technological and organizational advancements. Social media has become such a useful source for businesses to market and communicate with the public, which is why I am interested in focusing in this area. I am looking forward to being a part of AAUW and I hope to enhance the organization's online presence to help raise awareness and community involvement.

We are excited to work with Rachel this semester and welcome the opportunity to learn from her too! If you have any content suggestions for our Instagram or Facebook pages, please let Erica know.

## Scholarships & Grants

By Robert Richardson, Co-Chair

The Scholarships and Grants Committee determines Grant Recipients based on direct alignment with our AAUW mission. The committee receives consideration requests from members and discusses all possible recipients.

In this issue of The Current, we continue meeting our grant recipients.

### HOPE Academy



Hope Academy, a part of the Family and Childrens Center, provides teen parents (ages14-21) the opportunity to complete a high school credential and raise a healthy child. The academy goal is for all of the graduates to make healthy choices and understand that no consequence is beyond repair. Last year we gave three of these graduates/mothers a \$1000 scholarship to further there education.



At Western Technical College, AAUW supports two distinct programs/opportunities.

### Fresh Start - Break the Cycle Project

This funding assists single parents with child care support while they attend classes at Western. One of the major obstacles for single parents to begin or complete their post-secondary education is having enough money for child care while attending school. These parents also need a healthy support system, as well as resources to enhance their parenting skills for their future success. The purpose of Fresh Start is to provide single parents with the opportunity to complete their education at Western Technical College. The Western Foundation will assist students with child care funding at accredited/licensed daycare centers.

### WTC Student Emergency Fund

This funding supports students who face an emergency need such as a broken car or flat tire and can no longer travel to class because the individual cannot pay for the repair. It also supports emergent needs such as childcare, housing, healthcare, etc. The student must be referred by a Western counselor in order to receive this support. The money is given to the agency to pay the need, not the student.

## Public Policy

by Linda Myers, Chair

### Looking Back, Looking Forward

#### Pay Equality:

In 2016, AAUW contributed to the passage of new equal pay laws in six states. Women in CA, MD, DE, MA, NE, and UT now have statutes in place to help close the gap on earnings.

#### AAUW in the State House:

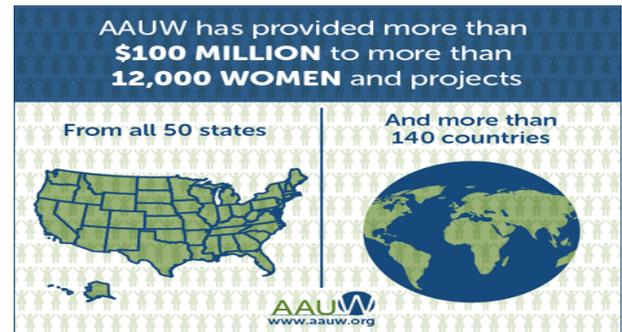
At least 19 new members of state legislatures or state senates across the country are AAUW members!

#### Call to Action Answered:

Over 200,000 messages were sent from AAUW supporters to all 435 US House and 100 Senate offices on critical issues affecting women.

#### The year ahead:

It is so important to keep the power of advocacy moving forward in 2017! Listen to Lisa Maatz, AAUW Vice President, Government Relations, address the 2016 election and priorities for the new year and beyond. Her 90 minute conference call with members can be found on the AAUW Advocacy webpage: Five Takeaways from Election 2016.



## Name Grant Nominations

Please send Jan Eriksen nominations for the 2017 Name Grant or give them to her at the February meeting. Nominees can be any member who has made significant contributions to the branch and who has not previously received the Name Grant. A list of previous honorees can be found at the back of the directory. Funds will be sent to the national AAUW Education Foundation in the name of the Name Grant recipient(s).

The honor will be given at the April 8 meeting.

## FROM THE TREASURER

*Kristin Foehner*

### Financial Report as of January 20, 2017

Checking Account .....\$10,486.83

CD's .....none at this time

Scholarship Bridge.....\$1003.02

Join us in  
Washington, DC!

2017 AAUW NATIONAL CONVENTION  
JUNE 14-17 • WASHINGTON DC



Every two years, 1,000 women leaders from across the country gather to discover new ways to empower themselves and their community. AAUW's national convention is a unique opportunity to learn new skills, gain insight and inspiration, and connect with other women leaders.

Early bird registration, with reduced rates, goes through March 31st. This year's convention dates are Wednesday, June 14- Saturday, June 17.

Our program is also full of fun and engaging networking opportunities. And you can take in the best culture and entertainment on exciting pre- and post-convention tours.

Find information about the 2017 convention at <http://convention.aauw.org/>



## La Crosse Branch Cameos

*"Cameo: a short descriptive literary sketch that neatly encapsulates someone or something."*

In an effort for each of us to get to know fellow branch members, we'll be featuring members in the monthly issues this year, answering these questions:

1. How did you find & join AAUW?
2. What significant changes/ improvements have you seen in AAUW over the years (older members)  
What would you like to have the opportunity to contribute to the branch? (for newer members)
3. What do you think is the most important issue facing women today?
4. What's on your bucket list?
5. What's something we don't know about you?



### **Bev Bodine**

**1)** I originally became aware of AAUW in the 70's when a friend in Iowa introduced me to the organization. I have been a member in Cedar Falls, Iowa, Storm Lake, Iowa, West Suburban Milwaukee and here. I found the La Crosse branch at one of the Art Fairs.

**2)** Accepting membership from those with associate's degrees was a step forward. I would like to see the degree requirement

dropped entirely so that everyone could become a member.

**3)** Equality - same as always.

**4)** More travel, especially to New Zealand and Australia. There's almost nowhere I would not go!

**5)** When I lived in Iowa, my then 11 year old son and I went on RAGBRAI, the Register's Annual Great Bike Ride Across Iowa.

### **Robert Richardson**

**1)** In 1990, I accepted my appointment as professor in teacher education at UW-La Crosse. I was charged to teach "Transescent Education" (i.e., Middle School Education). I needed to include in my courses critical information about the harassment of girls and the silencing of young women. All the research of merit was published by the AAUW. I decided that if I was going to use all the AAUW information, I wanted to participate in the AAUW. Hence, I joined.

**2)** I have noted that the AAUW has continually benefitted from exemplary executive leadership at the local, state, and national levels. Consequently, the AAUW focus and outreach continues to expand. And, the leadership development opportunities continue to expand for AAUW members. Also, AAUW expanded beyond research investigating the harassment of girls to harassment and bullying applicable to boys and to inclusive populations.

**3)** Women (young, middle aged, and old) must stand en masse in front of the man named Donald and prevent him and his "secretaries" from reversing progress in equity, equality, justice, and human rights. Women must work to keep the voice of women strong and ever-present in the ears of the politicians, business leaders, educators, and medical decision-makers..

**4)** Among the 10,000 things I want to do, I can identify several that I "envision" often. I hope to go curling outdoors with my team high in the Alps at the Grand National Bospiel. I seek to discover why I feel compelled to reside in Helsinki. I strive to ensure that Silvana and I continue to enjoy each day and each other's company and that I continue to grow in understanding, appreciation, and physical fitness. Finally, and assuredly, I stand ready to object to the power-brokers in Madison and Washington D.C.

**5)** You do not know how many neck ties I own and wear. It's almost exactly one of the following: 100, 300, 500, 700, or 900...





## Guest Column: Delegation From Kosovo Loved La Crosse Visit!

*By Isuf Jahmurataj, Senior Legal Officer, Republic of Kosovo Ministry of Justice*

I made a study visit to the United States last month thanks to the assessment and will of the U.S. Embassy to Kosovo, the U.S. Congress, Open World Program, World Service and American Association of University Women chapter in La Crosse, WI. I was part of a six-member official delegation of the Republic of Kosovo comprised of judges, prosecutors, victim defenders and me, as a senior legal officer in the Ministry of Justice.

Our delegation visited Washington, D.C., and La Crosse — two very nice places.

In our contacts with professors, diplomats and judges, we were introduced to federalization, the judicial system in the United States and in what keeps the United States of America together. It was a very good organization of the Open World. We were lucky to visit the most beautiful places in Washington.

While watching through windows of the airplane, I was engulfed by a feeling of excitement for the visit that I would make to La Crosse, a place in which we would participate in training to assist victims of domestic violence, gender-based violence, sexual harassment, human trafficking and compensation of victims. As soon as we arrived at the La Crosse Regional Airport, AAUW La Crosse members, who would be the hosts where we would stay during the training in La Crosse, were waiting for us. We started to feel the hospitality right away with their faces and smiles. They were holding a board saying, “Welcome Kosovo.”

During the stay in La Crosse to address the topic of victims of violence, gender-based violence, we had numerous discussions with a lot of officials from many competent officials and institutions such as judges, prosecutors, victim defenders, safe houses, hospitals, universities and the La Crosse Tribune.

I was deeply impressed by the treatment of victims with a high priority and in an organized way by competent institutions. A very important part was the aspect of treatment and provision of psychological, legal and social advice to victims by organizations and volunteers. The visit made me learn that it is not important at all what is one’s position, one’s age or one’s financial strength, but it is important to have a human soul because that is the only way you can do very good voluntary work to improve the life in the community and protect crime’s victims.

I had a special impression about the volunteer work of AAUW La Crosse, which planned and implemented volunteer efforts in the community. That’s why I have a high appreciation for AAUW and its members, because the feeling to help others is the highest level of social emancipation.

In addition to very good professional experiences, I cannot leave out the aspect of American hospitality, respect and way of life. I knew many of the U.S. values from the movies, but it was this visit that gave me the possibility to make my dream a reality and get acquainted with culture, tradition, hospitality and the warmth of the American state and people, particularly the ones of La Crosse.

No matter where we were, be it on the road, bars or shops, we received warmth, respect and friendly smiles all the time. The greatest impression I had was with the families where we stayed and who offered us the greatest warmth as if we were in our homes. Knowing people and colleagues in institutions that we visited was very important. It shows that now I have friends in Washington and La Crosse – and they have friends in Kosovo. That is very important for future cooperation in various fields.

I will always remember this visit as a success story, and it will remain my best experience in my life. All these experiences will have an impact on the quality of work I do in drafting legislation in the field of justice for my country, the Republic of Kosovo.

Increasing life quality in the world belongs to people. Therefore, we have to work and exchange experiences to increase democratic values for a better world, which is full of human values. People in the Republic of Kosovo have aligned themselves with the democratic world and are unified on high human and universal values that have been embraced by the democratic world. Therefore, I hope and I want this exchange of experiences in La Crosse not to be the last one, but a good beginning to increase further social and universal values that are promoted by the democratic world.



American Association of University Women  
La Crosse Branch  
P.O. BOX 2112 • LA CROSSE, WI 54602-2112

**THE CURRENT** *a publication of the La Crosse, WI AAUW Branch*

### AAUW’s Mission

*AAUW advances equity for women and girls through advocacy, education, philanthropy, and research.*

*For 130 years, AAUW members have examined and taken positions on the fundamental issues of the day: educational, social, economic, and political. Our commitment to our mission is reflected in all aspects of our work.*

## Newsletter Contact & Deadlines

**Newsletter Editor** .....Erica Koonmen (moogs56@hotmail.com)  
**Webminder** .....*Position Open!*  
**Newsletter Design** .....Tegan Jerde-Koonmen (jerdet@gmail.com)

**Newsletter content submission deadline:**  
Please send all content for *The Current* to Erica by the 20th of the month.

**Problems receiving the CURRENT? Let us know at:**  
[aauwlacrosse@hotmail.com](mailto:aauwlacrosse@hotmail.com)