

THE EUGENE/LANE BRANCH
AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITY WOMEN



DR. LUELLE CLAY CARSON, FOUNDER

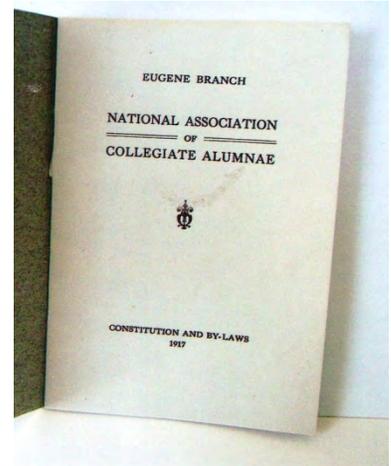


OUR BEGINNING AND OUR FUTURE
100TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

HISTORY

OF THE AAUW EUGENE-LANE BRANCH

“In 1907, Dr. Luella Clay Carson, Dean of Women at the University of Oregon called alumnae together in her room at commencement time to form a society that would ally more closely the women of the University so that they might work for the good of their alma mater throughout the state. She and many others were anxious to have an association that would admit Oregon women to the American Collegiate Alumnae and also desired a parent association for local alumnae societies.” Following that first general meeting, plans for forming the American Collegiate Alumnae (later to be renamed the Association of University Women) as soon as enough women from accredited schools were on campus. Although Dr. Carson left to become the president of Mills College in 1909, this early group was the foundation of our American Collegiate Alumnae Branch in 1912 under the auspices of the new Dean of Women, Miss Ruth Guppy and seven officers with degrees from other colleges but who were associated with the University of Oregon.



Graduates of the University of Oregon could only be Associate Members at that time as the University was not accredited, lacking the required dormitory situation. In 1918, the University of Oregon was placed on the accredited list of the national organization after the dormitory problem was solved and the University of Oregon graduates could become active members. The national group became The Association of University Women in 1922. (Sources: Old Oregon, by Ruth Dozier, June 1943; and the Eugene Register-Guard, “Dr. Carson’s Story Told,” November 12, 1953.)

Although the early minutes in the Oregon Collection (archived in the Knight Library) only cover the years from 1913 to 1918 and 1932 to 1939, the list of things accomplished is impressive. The first year they created a loan fund for women through the University and arranged for local dentists to give talks on tooth care in various grade schools. In 1915, they raised \$500 toward a women’s building on campus, and in 1927, they invested \$1,000 toward a new fine arts building. Our group sponsored Saturday matinee movies for children at the Heilig Theater and helped with the W.P.A. nursery. We sponsored one public kindergarten in conjunction with the University for five years and worked continuously toward making public kindergartens available statewide.

We did more fundraising for the Fine Arts Museum, to bring in special art exhibits, and we promoted legislation to support our Health Department and protect our food safety. When a scandal about the unsanitary conditions in Portland dairies erupted, we lobbied for statewide milk inspection. Our fundraising activities included sponsoring the very popular Moroni Olson plays, lectures by well-known speakers, the annual tour of homes, and teas. In 1927 a larger fund, \$1200,

to be applied to a fellowship for an Oregon girl wishing to study for an advanced degree, was established at the state level to be funded and directed by the mutual cooperation of all the state branches. Our portion of \$200 was raised and a candidate chosen by a state committee. The program continued for several years and then passed to the management of the National program. In 1928, after a visit by the National AAUW Director, the branch moved into a study group format: international studies, psychology, elementary schools, the books group, preschool, music, art, and drama. These became the forerunners to some of our current interest groups. The study groups met and worked with research material provided by the national program, reporting back to the other members. Some of the international speakers were foreign students attending the University and a few of the reports are included in the archived material.

The study group format existed into the 1970s, by then narrowed to four areas, Community Outreach, International Relations, Arts, and Education. Each local chairman was matched by one from state and another from national. The research and material was provided by national with a different topic for each biennium.

Over the years, the records show other contributions to community needs: kindergartens, Girl Scouts, the collection of Pioneer Material for the Historic Museum, selling Tuberculosis Stamps, contributions to the Iron Lung fund, the Displaced Homemakers and Widow Services, and numerous other causes. During the two World Wars, Red Cross and War Relief work was done. During the Second World War, members of AAUW sold Savings Bond Stamps.

In 1949, at the national convention held in Seattle, the color barriers for membership in AAUW were dissolved.

In Eugene, our branch was meeting in people's homes. We arranged a yearly luncheon in Gerlinger Hall for women graduating from the university. We also began giving a Senior Recognition Award to an outstanding woman student who made significant contributions to campus life as well as achieving academically.

In the 1960's our branch and an early education group lobbied to include kindergartens in basic school support funding. It was successful in 1981, with seven years for smaller districts to comply. During that same time period, our branch lobbied successfully for permanent elementary school libraries, and then helped staff the libraries until librarians could be hired. That program was the victim of Measure 5 in 1990, which slashed local school funding based on property taxes. Our organization, with the Library Association, established a library at the Lane County Jail.

We collaborated with the schools on a national mother-daughter program designed for Junior High, to increase communication between the two and encourage an interest in science. Several of our members worked with the groups in local schools.

By the 1970s our membership included women from other nearby towns, so we applied to change our name from Eugene Branch to better reflect our group. During that time period, we co-

sponsored the forum, *Wages, Welfare or What*, with the League of Women Voters. We also committed to the local goal of raising \$35,000 in the Educational Fund for scholarships and research. We reached that goal in 2001,

In 1981, the Legal Advocacy Fund was established to support the protection of the legal rights of those facing discrimination. We have supported two cases involving Oregon women faculty members.

In 1980, math professor Anna Penk was the lead plaintiff in a class action lawsuit against the Oregon State Board of Higher Education for sex discrimination. They lost the case and appeal. However the case sparked debate which ultimately led to a law against discrimination in institutions of higher education.

In 1994, Vickie Dugan, former women's softball coach at Oregon State University, sued the university for sex discrimination and retaliation. She had protested against the university attempt to drop women's softball as a university sport as well as cooperated in a federal investigation of the University's Title IX compliance. She won the case and a financial settlement. Some of our members attended the hearings.

During the 1990s, we continued efforts to reform campaign finance and worked to encourage women to become more knowledgeable about legislation and to use their vote.

The years 2006-07 found members Peggy Shippen, Carol Miller and Janice Strupp attending meetings with teachers and administrators presenting "Teaching Tolerance" free educational materials designed to help teachers build communities that welcome diversity and teach tolerance. One element of the program is the nationwide school *Mix It Up At Lunch Day* on Oct 30, when students are encouraged to move out of their comfort zone and connect with someone new over lunch. Several of the area schools participate. The material was also presented to a large classroom of University students in the elementary teaching program.

Under the leadership of President Peggy Shippen, in 2008, our branch in cooperation with Lane Community College established the Kappy Eaton Scholarship for girl students wanting to continue their education at a four year college or university. The first recipient, Ashley Ordway was chosen in 2009. Our branch also helped finance her trip to the College Women Leadership Conference. We have since provided funding for two more women with a third already selected.

In addition to contributing to the national AAUW Education Fund, Legal Advocacy Fund and Kappy Eaton Scholarship, we are sponsoring a Kid Sports girls basketball team and have contributed to science camps for mid-school girls.

WHO WE ARE TODAY

The early three pronged purpose of our early organization: lifelong learning, advancement of women and girls and positive societal change are still the basis of our bonds. The themes of our regular meetings generally fit into one of those categories and are open to public for the large portion of the time. We invite presenters with knowledge of special fields to speak at our monthly meetings: community service groups, educational leaders, members of the arts, environmental leaders and others to increase our knowledge and stimulate new ideas.

In addition we engage in activities and causes that satisfy us individually. We have smaller groups with similar interests that get together independently to learn, to play, to socialize or to study and share. (Sometimes a good laugh.)

Through the years we have supported women reaching to extend their abilities and performed as watch dogs to defend the rights of women and children throughout the country. To those ends we have contributed to: the AAUW Educational Foundation, which helps women advance their education, self-development, and research, to the Eleanor Roosevelt Foundation, the Legal Advocacy Fund, and more.

Statewide our Public Policy Committee keeps our members informed of issues being legislated, the effects of the legislation and of the bills we will be asked to vote on as well as of national movements.

In addition to efforts on the national and state level, we contribute locally. We give a Senior Recognition Award to a graduating woman who has an excellent Academic Record and has contributed significantly to campus life. With the Katherine (Kappy) Eaton scholarship fund through Lane Community College we have helped several women wanting to move on to attend a four year University. We have also helped send a college student to Leadership training in Washington D.C., and helped finance different science and math workshops for girls to explore their talents and interests.

We sponsored a girls' middle school basketball team through the Kid Sports program for the last two years to supplement the programs limited in public schools. Those of us who travel collect toiletries along the way to distribute through the Looking Glass Foundation for homeless youth.

Most of us are also active in other community organizations within our interests and we collaborate with other groups to accomplish important goals when the opportunity arises.

Our current interest groups include a book group, two bridge groups, an Out and About group, an Out-to-Lunch Bunch and a Readers' Theater group.

Our group is organized in accordance with those of the National American Association of University Women bylaws and policies with a board of directors and officers elected by the membership.

PAST PRESIDENTS, 1962-2012

1962-63 Katherine Eaton	1988-90 Kay Burg Fry
1962-65 Elizabeth Gullion	1990-92 Evelyn Perkins
1965-67 Loretta Pond	1992-94 Patricia Skipper
1967-69 Linda Axtel	1994-96 Maxine Hudgins
1969-71 Karen Alvarado	1996-98 Marguerite Emery
1977-79 Marguerite Emery	1998-00 Jeannine Guardalabene
1979-80 Sandy Kribs	2002-04 Gwyneth O'Connell
1980-82 Ginny Ehlen	2004-06 Jon Ann Lawrence
1982-84 Kay Warner	2006-08 Peggy Shippen
1984-86 Marni Reinmuth	2008-10 Janice Dresser and Marian Spath
1986-88 Carole Iskra	2010-12 Josephine Brew

1913 Officers- Eugene Branch A.C.A.

