



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

Website: <http://marquette-mi.aauw.net>

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**January Greetings:  
Looking Back and Ahead**

**LOOKING BACK:**

Forty AAUW members and guests celebrated a lovely conclusion to a highly successful 2018 at our Holiday Dinner. The festive evening featured caroling stars from the Forest Roberts Theatre production of *Scrooge*, catered hors d'oeuvres, and master bakers' treats from our own members. After dinner, encouraged by the charming, Les Bek, AAUW members became our own storytellers for an evening of sharing humorous and tender holiday memories. We owe an enthusiastic round of applause to the hostess committee for helping us usher out the old year with elegance and charm.



Thinking back over 2018, highlights included launching an AAUW-NMU student group, adding five new NMU graduate students to our membership, and growing our Executive Board to 15 members. Our branch hosted a U.P. regional AAUW event featuring AAUW-Michigan President Deb Kennedy and AAUW members from the Escanaba and Iron Mountain-Kingsford branches.

Students from AAUW-NMU joined us in November for an inspiring *Career Night: Empowering Women as They Launch*. Forty women and the media enjoyed an empowering evening of insights and advice from accomplished women in a variety of professions.



Just a few weeks ago in January 2019, several AAUW-Marquette members embraced the New Year with advocacy by participating in the Marquette Women's March. Karlyn Rapport was a keynote speaker.

Sections of her speech were quoted in the *Marquette Mining Journal*. Her complete speech is available on pages 4-5 of this newsletter.

Karen Rudisill, Kathy Davis, and Katherine Larson managed our information table in the Marquette Commons and reported high interest in our AAUW Branch.



*Judy Puncochar and Kat Arkansas enjoying the March.*

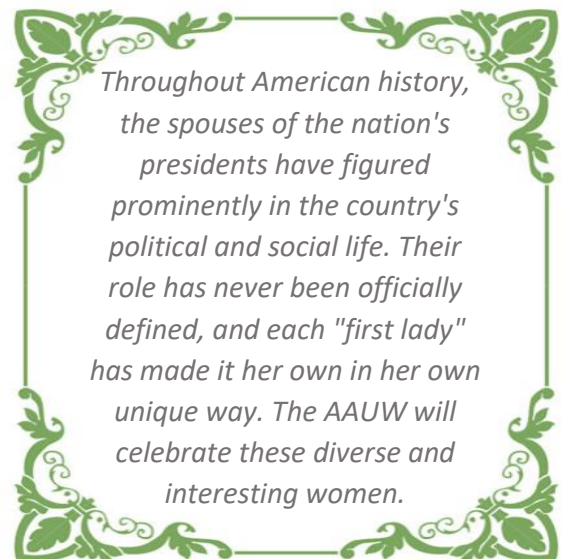
**AND LOOKING AHEAD:**

Our next exciting event features AAUW board member and star performer, Les Bek, in our annual First Ladies' Social. Enjoy a historical look at several remarkable accomplishments of First Ladies, impersonated by notable AAUW actors and possibly some surprise visitors. Please join us on at the Federated Women's Clubhouse for bits of wisdom and amusement at our third First Ladies' Social. The Hostess Committee will provide non-partisan delicious dessert treats.

Keep in touch and talent. We love to hear from you.

Best, *Judy Puncochar, President*  
[jpuncoch@nmu.edu](mailto:jpuncoch@nmu.edu)

**Next Meeting –  
THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 14, 7 PM  
Social Event Celebrating First Ladies**



*Throughout American history, the spouses of the nation's presidents have figured prominently in the country's political and social life. Their role has never been officially defined, and each "first lady" has made it her own in her own unique way. The AAUW will celebrate these diverse and interesting women.*

The Marquette Branch of the American Association of University Women cordially invites members, guests, and visitors to attend its FIRST LADIES dessert and social on Thursday, February 14th at 7:00 p.m. at the Federated Women's Clubhouse, 104 W. Ridge, Marquette.

Attendees are welcome to come prepared to share (in no more than 3-5 minutes) how they were inspired by their favorite (or least favorite) First Lady. Some may choose to share a few facts or personal stories about her, and some may choose to dress as their First Lady.

Past events have drawn representations of Jacqueline Kennedy, Michelle Obama, Elizabeth Monroe, Jane Pierce, Florence Harding, Eleanor Roosevelt, and Abigail Fillmore. Martha Washington inspired one member to share her famous saying, "The greater part of our happiness or misery depends on our dispositions and not our circumstances."

Not every First Lady relished a public role, and in that spirit some attendees will prefer to simply enjoy our company. There will be lots of conversation, celebration, and dessert prepared by the hostess committee for all. Please join us.

For more information contact Les Bek 869-5298 or [ljbek@chartermi.net](mailto:ljbek@chartermi.net).



## UPDATE:

### NMU Scholarship Campaign

Congratulations! We are half way through our membership year, and at nearly 70% of our \$5,000 goal! Thank you to all who have donated!

Since 1980, the AAUW – Marquette Branch has provided scholarships for women at Northern Michigan University who demonstrate financial need in their pursuit of educational goals.

As the need for our scholarships continue and the cost of higher education increases, your donation to our campaign plays a vital role in providing the gift of academic opportunity.

Your donation is an investment in the futures of young women, and their higher education and career goals. The impact of our scholarship is changing lives and opening doors.

A gift is never too big or too small. Thank you for considering being a part of this important effort.

Mail contributions to Meredith Kulisheck, 617 W. Hampton, Marquette, MI 49855.

Make checks payable to AAUW-Marquette Branch, memo NMU Scholarship.

Questions? Contact Les Bek, AAUW NMU Scholarship Campaign Committee; [ljbek@chartermi.net](mailto:ljbek@chartermi.net); 906-869-5298.

## Thank you!

## PUBLIC POLICY

Let's celebrate the brief reprieve after 35 days of a partial government shutdown. The government will be funded through February 15. Let's hope adults can come to the table and make progress on border security and immigration reform. Government contract employees were not paid during this period and are not covered by Trump's promise to cover lost wages.

**Here we go again....The Paycheck Fairness Act is scheduled to be reintroduced.** Passing the Paycheck Fairness Act is a critical step to closing the gender pay gap. The proposed law includes key provisions to address loopholes in the Equal Pay Act of 1963, ensuring that employers pay women and men equally for equal work.

The [Paycheck Fairness Act](#) would address five items:

1. **Prohibit employers from using salary history** to ensure salaries are not based on prior pay disparities, which could follow workers from job to job.
2. **Protect against retaliation for discussing pay with colleagues**, including stopping employers from being able to fire employees for sharing information. Greater transparency about salary is critical to help identify disparities.

3. **Ensure equal pay for equal work**, requiring employers to prove any pay disparities that exist between men and women are a business necessity and job-related.
4. **Equalize discrimination claims based on gender, race, and ethnicity**, so plaintiffs who file claims under the Equal Pay Act have the same robust remedies as those who make claims under other laws.
5. **Support employers and employees to achieve fair pay practices**, including providing technical assistance to employers, requiring wage data collection, and offering salary negotiation training programs to give women the tools to advocate for higher wages.

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### Why do we need the Equal Paycheck Fairness Act?

Women working full time are paid, on average, only 80 cents for every dollar paid to a man. This amount has changed less than a nickel during the 21st century [according to AAUW's Simple Truth about the Gender Pay Gap report](#).

It has been 10 years since the Lily Ledbetter Fair Pay Act was signed. The [Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act](#) makes it easier for workers to seek redress for discrimination on the job and to sue when they discovered a pay discrepancy. Previously, a short window of time was available for new hires to sue against discriminatory pay rates. The Paycheck Fairness Act was the step forward needed to fill in the loopholes of The Equal Pay Act of 1963. The Paycheck Fairness act was first introduced 10 years ago and it still has not passed. Maybe this time we will achieve success.

To recap, the Paycheck Fairness Act (PFA) prohibits retaliation against workers discussing or disclosing wages, prohibits employers from relying on previous salary history to determine future pay, and ensures women receive the same remedies for pay discrimination as those based on ethnicity and race. The Paycheck Fairness Act provides technical assistance to businesses, requires wage data collection, and supports salary negotiation skills training.

According to the Institute for Women's Policy Research (IWPR) the poverty rate for all working women would be cut in half if women were paid comparably to men.

**Equal Pay Day is April 2, 2019.** Please email Karlyn at [krapport@chartermi.net](mailto:krapport@chartermi.net) with ideas regarding how we might bring the public's attention to this pay inequity on Equal Pay Day.

Call our Senators and ask them to co-sponsor the Paycheck Fairness Act. The more co-sponsors we have prior to the introduction of the bill, the greater the possibility of its passing. US Senator Debbie Stabenow (202) 224-4822 and US Senator Gary Peters (202) 224-6221.

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### Some steps backward under this administration...

The Supreme Court reinstated a ban on transgender people enlisting in the military until lower court rulings are appealed. AAUW opposes this ban. The decision was 5-4.

The global gag rule is in its second year prohibiting US funding to abroad non-profits offering access, referrals, or information regarding abortions even if they use their own funding to provide services.

Ending on a happier note: Thanks to all who worked on the Women's March in Marquette staffing the AAUW information table, organizing and publicizing the event, and braving the cold to attend and march. Special thanks to Marge Forslin for thinking of me and giving me the opportunity to speak at the Marquette Women's March on AAUW public policy priority issues.

A special thank you to those who contacted the Department of Education to oppose the Department of Education's rescinding the guidance that helped schools address sexual assault and sexual harassment in our public schools and universities. Thank you President Judy Puncocar for your timely reminders and AAUW links to make advocacy an easier task.

Hope to see you at our February 14 meeting where we celebrate First Ladies. We can use some fun and celebrate our accomplishments.

*Karlyn Rapport*  
Public Policy Representative

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### *Kind words for Holiday Dinner Planners*

*Dear Ladies,*

*That was certainly one of the loveliest holiday evenings we have had. The room has never looked so pretty and sophisticated. The daring menu was a success, the corsages were a sweet touch, and what a lucky thing that some entertainment fell through--the personal anecdotes were a highlight of the evening. It is wonderful to have these new young women among us, and terrific to see a few of our "old timers," Miriam and Marilyn!*

*Congratulations and thanks on behalf of all of us.*

*Sincerely, Meg*

## Keynote Speech by Karlyn Rapport

January 19, 2019

Women's March in Marquette



*Karlyn Rapport (left) braving the cold to deliver the keynote address to participants at the Marquette Women's March, January 2019. Lillian Biolo Thomson (center) and Dede Atwell Gorkowski (right) are the young women, the next generation, Marquette Senior High School students ready to follow Karlyn's speech with some contemporary, provocative slam poetry they wrote for the occasion!*

In 1992, the Women's Center got 3 busloads to go to Washington, D.C. for the March for Women's Lives. Given the makeup of the Supreme Court at that time, we feared a Pennsylvania law being brought before Court might overturn Roe v Wade. As the bus travelled through the U.P., we stopped along the way picking up women and their daughters at Rapid River, Gladstone, St Ignace. It brought tears to my eyes when they climbed on the bus. When we reached the outskirts of D.C. we were swept into a sea of buses. 700,000 marched that day.

Miraculously, my dear friends Sara and Bob McClellan former Marquette residents found our UP contingent. They brought Sara's 90-year old mother Mary Greer with them. Mary flew up from Florida to join the march. She wore a white dress she said she wore as a young girl when she marched with Alice Paul in 1913. I'm telling you this to point out we stand on the shoulders of women and men who have fought for women's rights, for human rights. We have fought some of these same battles before in 1913 1992, in 2016. And today a wave is flooding the streets of Washington D.C and cities across the globe; a wave that will push the world forward. The picture of a wave is apt for women's rights. We have



pushed forward and then there is a backlash which pushes us back. We need a wave to push us forward

We have moved forward electing women to Congress, to governorships to the state houses of representatives and senates. We now have 127 women in Congress including 25 women senators. Now we see racial diversity. Congress looks more like we the people who elected them.

The pay gap has narrowed. Now women earn 80 cents on the dollar men earn unless you are a woman of color. Then the figure is 61 cents compared to the dollar men earn. At this pace we can close the gap in another 40 years. We need a wave forward. We need this Congress we elected to pass the Paycheck Fairness Act providing protections against sex-based pay discrimination. This act will help families lift themselves out of poverty.

We have seen the Affordable Care Act provide access to women's health care and specifically to contraception, which reduced the number of unintended pregnancies and abortions. Now ACA is being be torn to shreds. Now employers can dictate whether their female employees' contraception is a covered benefit for their medical care. A preliminary injunction was issued Monday temporarily blocking Trump administrations rules allowing employers to opt out of providing contraceptive coverage for their women employees based on the employers' religious or moral objections. Nobody is worried about men using condoms or getting vasectomies. Make no mistake-- these assaults on reproductive freedom are sexist. We need to press forward. Attorney Generals across the nation are challenging these assaults to women's health care.

Title IX has changed the playing field in all aspects of life. Title IX protected all students from sex discrimination, boys, girls, LGBTQ...Title IX includes resources and support for students who experienced sexual harassment and sexual violence. Now Secretary Betsy DeVos is rolling back guidelines to 2001. The definition of sexual harassment now excludes what many students experience. She is putting in place practices that will make it much harder for a student to come forward and find a remedy for the hell they are living through. The proposed changes make our schools less safe. We need to tell the Department of Education this rollback places students in grave danger. The end of

public comment period is January 28. We need a flood of letters now.

It may surprise you to know that women are not protected by the U.S. Constitution. The only right the U.S. Constitution affirms equally for women and men is the right to vote. To my deep regret, my generation was not able to pass the Equal Rights Amendment. ERA states "Equality under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any state on account of sex." Thirty-five states ratified, we needed 38. Two more states have recently ratified ERA, Illinois and Nevada. Virginia may be the next. Then Congress needs to vote to extend the old deadline for ratification. Our step by step progress can be reversed by this president or the next, this Congress or the next. ERA will provide a strong legal defense against a rollback of women's rights including Roe v Wade. ERA is the safe harbor we are searching.

Women's rights are human rights. Our Statue of Liberty states, "Give me your tired, your poor, your hungry masses yearning to be free." Now we treat those seeking the asylum of our shores by cruelly separating children from their parents. We put these immigrants who are seeking a better life in holding tanks with the prospects of deportation back to the terrors they hoped to escape. We are the ones inflicting lifelong trauma.

This is the 29<sup>th</sup> day of a government shutdown causing great harm to millions of our fellow Americans.

We need a tidal wave. We must do better. Our country is better than this. We can no longer afford for us to be wringing our hands, complaining to our friends, thinking our lip service will be transformed into our hopes for the future. We cannot afford for people to say "I don't have time". This march brings attention to issues that must be addressed. We voted for candidates who speak to our values. Now more than ever, our elected officials need to be held accountable. Call them. Meet with them. Follow their voting record. Tell them what your position is on issues important to you. Put your time and your money where your heart is. Support people and agencies who are doing the work you value. All of us working together can change the tide.

Thank you for the privilege of speaking to you today. It warms my bionic heart to present the next generation who inspire us and will help move us forward. Dede Atwell Gorkowski and Lillian Biolo Thomson.

## Leave Title IX alone

To the Journal editor:

Equal access to education means equal opportunity for young people. It's important; equal opportunity unleashes the full strength of all our citizens, not just the those who have historically been part of a favored group.

Equal access to education includes freedom from sexual assault and harassment, plus meaningful and accessible sources of redress when assault does happen. Up till now, Title IX has protected those rights. But now that protection is in grave danger.

The danger comes from Betsy DeVos' Department of Education, which has issued a proposed rule that would gut Title IX protections in at least five major ways.

The rule's pinched redefinition of sexual harassment would permit many categories of offensive and even violent behavior to be excluded.

The rule's demand that harassment be "pervasive" would mean that students would have to endure a long series of offensive assaults before being allowed to seek relief.

The rule would set up a labyrinth of which officials would or would not be required to act on a complaint, forcing traumatized students to navigate a bureaucratic rat's maze to get help.

The rule would demand that schools ignore most off-campus activity, including the online world where so many students spend so much of their time; victims would have to try to cope with sharing classrooms side-by-side with people who had assaulted them in these settings.

The rule would allow—and in some instances compel—schools to use procedures that would make it harder for victimized students to come forward, harder for them to prove their injuries, and harder for them to receive help.

Instead of allowing schools to use the standards which federal courts use in deciding Title IX cases, the rule would demand a much harsher standard.

This rule is dangerous and unfair; it should be stopped. The Department of Education is required to listen to our voices through a notice-and-comment period which allows the public to express our dismay. But the deadline looms. Comments must be received by January 28.

It's not hard. Just submit comments in Microsoft Word format through the Federal Rulemaking ePortal under [www.regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov), putting the Docket ID number, ED-2018-OCR-0064, at the top of your document. Comments can also be mailed to Brittany Bull, Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue SW, Room 6E310, Washington, DC 20202, again to be received by Jan. 28.

Speak up. Our youth depend on us.