

**Remarks Made at the 90<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Women's Right to Vote  
Women's Equality Day Celebration  
Old Supreme Court Room, Arkansas State Capitol  
August 26, 2010  
Dr. Diana Glaze**

Good afternoon ladies and gentlemen. Welcome to one of the most historical events of the year – the 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary of our right to vote. First, I would like to introduce Deb Wade, the present President of AAUW and Barbara Yarnell, the immediate past president of AAUW.

Fifty-nine years ago I spoke in a seventh grade classroom and read a paper about the person I most admired, Susan B. Anthony. Nobody else chose her, no other student chose a woman. Today I stand in the Supreme Court Room of the State Capitol in Little Rock, Arkansas and speak again about Susan B. Anthony: a woman who wrote the Suffrage amendment in 1878 and, although it was introduced in to Congress every year since 1878, never lived to see it pass.

I am Diana Glaze and I am a life member and past state president of the American Associate of University Women. I have been a member for 48 years. I was an educator of 33 years and then I worked as Director of Activities for the Arkansas Retired Teachers Association for 12 years.

I want to tell you a little about AAUW and its activities since 1881 when it was first founded. The first meeting was in 1882 with 65 representatives from Cornell, Michigan, Wisconsin, Oberlin, Smith Vassar, Wellesley and Boston University. In its early years it worked to provide housing for female students and pressed both for the hiring of qualified female professors and the structuring of an equitable pay scale for these professors. Other issues were child labor, compulsory education, establishment of juvenile courts, and funding for public schools. Education and equity for women and girls have been the focus of AAUW for 129 years.

**1920's Life after the Suffrage Amendment is Passed**

1. AAUW gave Marie Currie \$156,413 toward her purchase of her first gram of radium.
2. A committee on Education policy resulted in the appointment of an Education Secretary and pioneered work in nursery schools.
3. Adult education began
4. AAUW exhibits were circulated as a means of public education well before museums. By the 1950s these exhibits drew more than 250,000 attendees.
5. Alice Paul proposed the ERA in 1923, but it failed. It was introduced to Congress every year after that.
6. Two governor's wives, Miriam Ferguson of Texas and Nellie Taylor Ross of Wyoming were elected Governors.

### **1930's Although People Were Struggling to Survive...**

1. A Social Studies Commission addressed the interest in consumer social and economic problems caused by the Depression for housing, individual liberties, consumer problems, and mental health.
2. Hattie Caraway of Arkansas was the first woman elected to the US Senate.
3. Frances Perkins was the first woman cabinet member. She was the Secretary of Labor.

### **1940's Patriotism**

1. Inaugurated the Refugee Aid Fund to assist women fleeing European dictatorships. After the war, it became the Reconstruction Aid Fund.
2. Thousands of gift parcels and school supplies were sent by women's groups to European countries and later, Korea.
3. Women registered themselves and their skills to be used in the war effort.
4. Before VE Day, AAUW launched a program to bring women from liberated countries to the US for study. By 1960, grants enabled 500 women from 34 countries to study in the US.
5. Three-hundred thousand women served in the army and the navy in non-combat jobs.
6. Margaret Chase Smith was elected to Congress and served Maine for 24 years.
7. Eleanor Roosevelt was appointed to the United Nations and served on its Commission on Human Rights.

### **1950's McCarthyism and Communism, Pay Equity and Education**

1. Issued a communist threat statement analyzing the communist threat to freedom and democracy and warning of the risk of losing liberties by the same means adopted to defend them.
2. The first federal legislative proposal for pay equity was passed in a year when a woman made an average of 65 cents for every dollar earned by a man. (Still working on it in 2009 when the Ledbetter Act was passed.)
3. Separated Commission on Education into Elementary and Secondary Education Commission and Higher Education Commission. Improvement of public education and teacher training; Higher Ed studying problems women face in getting into college finding financial support and need for female college professors.

## **1960's Civil Rights**

1. Civil Rights Act which prohibited discrimination against women by companies with more than 25 employees.
2. The Voting Rights Act was passed.
3. Shirley Chisholm was the first woman of color to be elected to the House of Representatives.
4. Equal Pay Act – first federal law to prohibit sex discrimination.
5. Presidential Executive Order of 1967 prohibited bias against women in hiring by federal government contractors.
6. Nancy Hall was the first elected woman constitutional office in Arkansas as Treasurer, followed by Jimmie Lou Fisher, who never drew an opponent, and the current Treasurer, Martha Shoffner.

## **1970's Some Equity Laws Were Passed**

1. Survey showed lack of adequate daycare is cited by 71% of female respondents holding back women from careers.
2. Title IX passes prohibiting sex discrimination in schools receiving federal funds.
3. Ella Grasso of Connecticut is elected Governor on her own merits.
4. Patricia Sewell Lattig was elected mayor of Oklahoma City – largest city in 1971 with a woman mayor. In 1979, Jane Byrne of Chicago and Diane Feinstein of San Francisco are elected.
5. In 1972 with five million letters of support, Congress passed the ERA. By 1973, 30 of the 38 states needed ratified it. In 1982, it was 3 state short. In 2010, it is still 3 states short.
6. Equal Credit Opportunity Act of 1974 prohibited businesses from discrimination because of sex or marital status when extending credit. Commercial and business loans were exempted until 1988 when Reagan signed the Women's Business Ownership Act.
7. In 1973 the Pregnancy Discrimination Act passed.
8. Equal Opportunity Commission was established to address sex discrimination in the workplace.

## **1980's Women Make Progress**

1. Sandra Day O'Connor became the 1<sup>st</sup> woman appointed to the Supreme Court.
2. Voting record summaries based on women's issues were released.
3. In 1988, AAUW gave 5,000 fellowships to women from 100 countries with \$40 million in endowed funds.
4. Geraldine Ferraro was selected by a major political party to run for Vice President.
5. Patricia Harris was the first woman of color in a presidential cabinet.
6. Jean Kirkpatrick was named Ambassador to the United Nations.

7. Women had 49% of Masters degrees awarded and 33% of doctorates. Fifty-three % of college students were women with ¼ above the age of 29.
8. Julia Hughes Jones becomes the first AR female State Auditor.

### **1990's Research and New Emphasis on Voting**

1. A report published, "Shortchanging Girls, Shortchanging America," was the most comprehensive examination of self-esteem levels, career aspirations, and math and science interests of boys and girls.
2. After seven years of support, the Family and Medical Leave Act passed.
3. Another report, "Hostile Hallways," showed that 85% of girls and 76% of boys experienced sexual harassment in schools.
4. Elementary and Secondary Education Act passed with numerous gender equity provisions intact.
5. Antonia Novella is the first Hispanic in a Presidential Cabinet as Surgeon General.
6. Voter education campaign that made contact with one million voters who did not vote in 1994 elections and had Get Out the Vote activities in 50 congressional districts.
7. Sharon Priest became the first Arkansas woman Secretary of State in her own right.

### **2000's Technology**

1. Materials were developed to help educators assess computer environment for boys and girls.
2. Websites prang up with hundreds of pages of information.
3. Millions of supporters were in a successful fight to protect Title IX.
4. Passage of the Ledbetter Act that deals with timeframes to report pay inequity.
5. Hillary Clinton presents a major presidential challenge. Candidates get a lot of support and contributions through the Internet.
6. Annabelle Clinton Imber is the first AR woman Supreme Court Justice.

### **2010's The Struggle Continues**

As with many women's organizations, AAUWS continues to work for education and equity.

1. AR AAUW awarded a grant to form a Coalition to reestablish a Commission on the Status of Women.
2. AR AAUW awarded a grant to do voter education targeting two needy counties. (There is a meeting immediately after the Women's Equity Day Celebration in the Secretary of State's Office.)
3. There will be a Political Forum October 3<sup>rd</sup>, Sunday, at 2 PM at the Main Branch of the Central Arkansas Library System, in the Rivermarket. Everyone is invited.
4. Group to work on ratification for the ERA.

Times may have altered drastically since 1882 or 1920, but our early suffragette's idealism, example and charge to us are just as timely today. Clearly, we can step into the future and into our next 90 years with great confidence – the confidence that has accrued through 90 years of outstanding contributions. And as women and members of our various organizations, we know that our greatest work – in education in women's issues and in community service – is yet to be done.

The struggle is not yet over. We have the power with our vote to make life-changing decisions, not only for us, but for our grandchildren. In the year 3000, someone will be doing this talk about what has happened in these 90 years and I hope that *that* history will be full of the rich history we have presented the first 90 years. I hope the struggle will be over and everyone will live in a free and democratic society without restrictions on anyone's freedom. It will be a time when life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness will be a reality for all peoples.

I would like to end with a quote by the second person I most admire, Eleanor Roosevelt.

“It is today that we must create the world of the future.”