

AAUW International Initiatives Final Report 2014-2015

PROJECTS

1. Program for membership meeting—Report on International Initiatives in Dutchess County May 20, 2015

The Poughkeepsie Branch AAUW International Women's Initiative focuses on women's rights around the world. We will be implementing ways for our members to be more informed global citizens - a requisite of the times that we live in - and how we might positively affect women's issues in the developing world as well as in the United States. Under the auspices of this initiative, we will maintain a focus on education, health and economic inequalities around the world.

Activities:

A. Commission on the Status of Women

On March 13, 2015, eight Poughkeepsie AAUW women: Judy Elkin, Sabashnee Govender, Gwen Higgins, Peggy Kelland, Doris Kelly, Margaret Nijhuis, Erica Salzmman-Talbi, and Christie Van Horne caught the 6:15am train to NYC to attend parallel events for the 59th Commission on the Status of Women. From March 9 – 20, NGO's (non-government organizations) from around the world presented panels and workshops on topics connected to the theme "Beijing +20." The Commission undertook a review of progress made in the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, 20 years after its adoption at the Fourth World Conference on Women in 1995.

B. International Women's Day

We continued our involvement with the planning and executing of the celebration of International Women's Day (Saturday, March 7, 2015) culminating in a march over the Walkway over the Hudson.

C. Bringing Human Rights Home: Inequality, Race and the United States

On December 10, 2014, the newly formed United Nations Association of Mid-Hudson held its first conference at the Wallace Center. Eleanor Roosevelt Center co-sponsored the event which was held in recognition of Human Rights Day. The theme of the conference was "Bringing Human Rights Home: Inequality, Race and the United States." Poughkeepsie AAUW's International Initiative Group were on the organizing committee for the event.

Five AAUW members formed the backbone of the conference. Geeta Desai opened the conference with remarks titled “Crossroads: The UN, USA and Human Rights.” This was followed by four morning workshops, three led by members of AAUW. Wendy Maragh Taylor led a workshop “Language and Cultural Competency”; Gwen Higgins’ workshop was “Bias Awareness” and Carmen McGill stepped in at the last minutes and ran a workshop “Beyond Ferguson. In the afternoon, Christie VanHorne led a discussion on “Race and Health Care.”

Plans for expansion

Have a bi-monthly discussion group on international current events on women’s issues.

 Create action plans based on discussion – petitions, awareness, etc.

Report submitted by Christie VanHorne on 5/19/15