

## NOLA IN JUNE!

The lure of a convention in New Orleans, LA (NOLA) did not disappoint as several hundred women and men were drawn to our National Convention. Chris Winter (Danville-Alamo-Walnut Creek) and I arrived early enough to take a morning walking-tour of the French Quarter that provided us with a brief history of the “Big Easy.” The charm of the wrought iron balconies, cozy galleries, interesting grocery stores and restaurants (from Paul Prudhomme to Emeril Lagasse’s) made your head swim!

And speaking of food, wonderful restaurants were everywhere. From the Court of the 2 Sisters to Café du Monde to Anaud’s to Oyster City – from oysters on the half shell to beignets to shrimp and grits to Kings Cake and Bananas Foster, the food was non-stop and so mouth-watering! So were the pralines!

But back to business! Under the new structuring of the organization, we no longer have votes or discussions during the business sessions. Instead, we heard reports of various directors/chairs and exemplary women speakers. “One Member, One Vote” allows all members to have a say in AAUW business whether or not you attend convention. On-line voting for public policy, bylaws and new officers and directors was completed at the Convention with the results announced just before we adjourned. Patricia Ho from MA is our in-coming president. Julia Brown (member of Oakland-Piedmont, now living in New Mexico) was elected Vice-President. Carolyn Garfein, outgoing president, will soon become our neighbor as she returns to CA to live in Lincoln near Sacramento. Some of you met her at the CA Annual Meeting in April.

We celebrated the 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary of AAUW fellowships and grants as well as the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of President John F. Kennedy’s signing of the Equal Pay Act. This act says it should be illegal to pay men and women differently for the same work. The reality is that it’s not happening yet – women receive 77 cents for every dollar men are paid. The law needs updating which is proposed through the Paycheck Fairness Act. This Act would close loopholes in the Equal Pay Act by strengthening remedies for pay discrimination, prohibiting retaliation against workers who disclose their wages, and requiring employers to show that pay disparity is truly related to factors other than gender. It’s time for Congress and the President to move forward and get this Act enacted!

Tech Trek, our CA baby started in 1998, is being introduced in five states this summer. Also being expanded is "Tech Savvy," another program introducing girls and their parents to the importance of math and science. It is funded by Plaxair, an industrial gas company, and will create pilot programs at 10 new sites.

AAUW awarded our first fellowship in 1888 when institutional support of women's high education was practically unheard of. Now, 125 years and \$100 million later, we have helped more than 12,000 women reach their educational goals. The AAUW Funds Celebration honored three women with awards:

Linda Alepin, board chair and founder of Global Women's Leadership Network, received the Eleanor Roosevelt Award. The program is part of the Santa Clara University Leavey School of Business. She is from Los Altos.

Olympia Snowe, former U. S. Senator from Maine, was awarded the AAUW Achievement Award for her work as a leading policy maker in Washington. She is the third-longest-serving woman in the history of Congress and often focused her efforts on building bipartisan consensus on key issues.

Melissa Harris-Perry was awarded the AAUW Alumnae Recognition award. She was a 2001-02 AAUW American Fellow. Among many accomplishments, she hosts her own MSNBC news show.

As always, there were many workshops and skill-building sessions from which to choose and opportunities to renew friendships and to make new connections. My thanks to Concord Branch for funding my registration expenses. It is very much appreciated. The next Association Convention will be in San Diego, at the Sheraton San Diego Hotel and Marina, June 18-21, 2015. Plan on meeting me there!

Joanne Brown