

AAUW Creates Opportunities For Women

The 91st anniversary of the passage of the 19th Amendment was Aug. 26, when women achieved the hard-fought right to vote. Since 1971, America has observed this date as Women's Equality Day.

While women gained suffrage all those years ago, equity is still an issue today.

As one of the oldest women's organizations in the country, the American Association of University Women has been working vigorously for 130 years to create educational, political and economic equity for women.

AAUW believes Women's Equality Day is a time for all of us to remember that

women weren't given the vote; they fought fiercely for that right. And women's votes are a vital tool they can use to shape the policy issues that affect them everyday.

Women won the right to vote with the 19th amendment to the U.S. Constitution, ratified in 1920, although many women of color did not win full voting rights until 45 years later under the 1965 Voting Rights Act.

Yet the right to vote is threatened. Instead of advocating a 21st century voting system that is inclusive, conservative legislatures in 30 states are attempting to turn the clock back to the 19th

century when only privileged white males were allowed to vote.

Newly imposed ID requirements target students, people of color and women.

As many as 32 million women of voting age do not have documentation with their current legal name.

The Equal Pay Act of 1963 and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibit employment on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, including pregnancy, and national origin.

The Equal Pay Act deals specifically with pay discrimination on the basis of sex.

Title VII covers all employment actions. Both have been

central to expanding women's economic opportunities.

Yet recent rulings by the conservative majority of the Supreme Court have weakened employment discrimination laws, placing women's rights in the workplace in jeopardy and actions by conservative senators have undermined efforts to restore these acts and strengthen employment protections for women, including filibustering the Paycheck Fairness Act in 2010.

The St. Lawrence County Branch of AAUW will continue to educate voters about issues of concern to all Americans.

Membership in the St.

Lawrence County Branch is open to anyone who supports the mission of AAUW.

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

AAUW's commitment to educational equity is reflected in its public policy advocacy, community programs, leadership development, conventions and conferences, national partnerships, and international connections.

For more information about AAUW locally, contact President Becky Gerber at 268-9957 or gerberri@potdam.edu or Public Policy Chair Kathleen

Stein at 386-3812 or kstein1@twcny.rr.com.

AAUW, with its nationwide network of more than 100,000 members, more than 1,000 branches conducting programs in communities across the country, and 500 college and university partners, has been a leading advocate for equity and education for women and girls since 1881.