

AAUW Honors Canton Woman As Agent Of Change

For more than 20 years, the American Association of University Women has biennially honored a St. Lawrence County woman whose work as employer, employee or volunteer is noteworthy in one or all of these three areas: her work has advanced the cause of women's rights; her work exemplifies the importance of equity for women; her work has brought about significant change in the community.

It is with great honor that the AAUW-St. Lawrence County Branch announces the 2011 AAUW Agent of Change: Margaret Kent Bass of Canton. Ms. Bass came to St. Lawrence in 1993 as an assistant professor of English and director of multicultural affairs in 1993. She left in 1995 to teach at the University of Iowa, returning in 2000.

AAUW presented Ms. Bass with her award their fall membership meeting Tuesday.

She is an associate professor of English and Caribbean and Latin American studies at St. Lawrence University. She is also interim vice president and dean of student life and co-curricular education. In addition to oversee-

ing the university's student life programs, she also oversees the Higher Education Opportunity Program, Collegiate Science and Technology Entry Program, McNair Scholar program, Presidential Diversity Scholar program and Jeffrey Campbell Fellows program.

Ms. Bass is a powerful advocate and visible leader in equity and education; a trail blazer for women's rights, an advocate for racial justice, and a modern day Sojourner Truth for LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender) rights. She is the first to take a stand, to offer her voice and influence for those who might not be heard.

She started the SLU faculty Caucus of Color 10 years ago, seeing the need for colleagues to find a safe place to express themselves. She also made a successful effort to diversify the SLU student body, particularly during her time as an interim Dean of Student Life when she fostered a cooperative, diversified and productive atmosphere at St. Lawrence University.

She has assisted students from various ethnic, social and cultural backgrounds in making a smooth transition to college life in the north

country. She has worked with student organizations in developing multicultural programming, has provided leadership training for cultural groups, has advised the Black Women's Residence, has worked in the development and programming of Presidential Diversity Scholars, has provided constant support for gay, lesbian and transgender students and organizations on campus in particular and in the north country in general.

Ms. Bass has also devoted herself to diversify the student body and the faculty of the four colleges of St. Lawrence County. She has influenced institutions of higher education and helped community members to understand what is needed in order to find, to bring, support, and retain a diverse pool of professionals.

She has served as convener and chair at various iterations of the Associated Colleges attempt to support diversity in the region, as well as for the SLU grant that helped at least a dozen faculty members of diverse background to work towards attaining tenure in our institutions, and find mentors outside their immediate departments or institutions.