



NEWSBRIEF

Volume 61, Number 2
Special Edition, December 2017

This edition is a brief one to focus on important matters facing our branch – a fuller edition of the newsletter will be published in January.

C-U Branch Board Seek Input on Branch Financial Decisions

Your elected board members have engaged this fall in a number of discussions regarding our branch finances and corresponding consideration of our philanthropic priorities. Many of us consider year-end giving, so it seemed like a good time to seek your input on a couple of matters.

Our membership number over the past few years has gradually declined, not unlike other branches across the state. In addition to considering ways to interest new members, the board has considered the impact of declining numbers on abilities to support local scholarships. Since 1970, our branch has helped area women whose education has been interrupted to return to school and complete their degree. We have done this through scholarships to the U of I and Parkland whose amounts and number have been increased through the years. We decided to discontinue the scholarship at the U of I last year since it had become increasingly difficult to find qualified applicants. We now fund a \$600 scholarship for a woman to attend AAUW's National Conference for College Women Student Leaders (NCCWSL) instead. We continue to fund three \$1,000 scholarships to Parkland each year, each named in honor of branch members, Janet Southwood/Bette van Es, Amy Kummerow, and Phyllis Cline.

These scholarships total \$3,600 per year and have been funded through generous contributions from our members and from family members and friends of the women honored with the named scholarships at Parkland. Some people contribute funds through the branch, and others contribute directly to Parkland Foundation. The branch maintains a scholarship budget item, and Parkland Foundation maintains separate balances for each of the three scholarships. During the last few months the Board has been discussing our financial situation regarding the scholarship funds. Although there are sufficient funds to continue the scholarships for the next few years, we are concerned that the scholarships as presently distributed are not sustainable in the long run.

AAUW's mission statement dictates advancement of "...equity for women and girls through advocacy, education, philanthropy, and research". We have always considered our local scholarships to be philanthropy on the local level. We believe that our members support our local scholarships. The



question is in what fashion we will be able to do so. We have discussed rotating the named scholarships, awarding only one per year or awarding just the one(s) that have sufficient balances at Parkland. Presently, our branch scholarship funds are used to supplement any scholarship fund that does not have an adequate balance.

As part of our discussion about our local scholarships, the Board is debating what our philanthropic priorities should be. We know that many members have given to national in the past to support the fellowships and grants and legal advocacy funds. We have learned from National AAUW that their fellowship and grants and the legal advocacy funds are fully funded, and AAUW is requesting that gifts be made to the AAUW Fund, which supports the most urgent needs facing women and girls today and in the future. We want to support national AAUW's efforts but are concerned that this is becoming increasingly difficult due to our local scholarship obligations.

What can you do? First, we would like your input on these questions about the future of our local scholarships – what are your ideas or thoughts about the future funding of local scholarships? And, you can make a gift, either designated for local scholarships (donations can be sent to the VP for Finance, Pam Erickson at 518 County Road 1900 N, Champaign, IL 61822) or make a gift to national (<https://ww2.aauw.org/donate-gift/>) to support the critical work at local and national levels.

Please contact Laura Keller @ kellerla@comcast.net or 217-840-8408 with your questions and/or opinions. The Board will take your ideas into our future discussions. Thank you.

2017-2018 Champaign-Urbana Branch Board

Front Row: Laura Keller, President; Nancy Dietrich, Secretary.



Back Row: Pam Erickson, Finance; Gail Tittle, Membership; Brenda Wilson, Programs.

Not shown: Sallie Miller, Website; Deborah Richie, Newsletter; Carol Veit, International; Elaine Peppers and Bette van Es, Local Scholarships.



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Please send news items,
comments or corrections to:
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