

Seven MPS Scholars Receive AAUW Milwaukee Scholarships

The College Women's Club Foundation Scholarship Committee honored seven outstanding Milwaukee Public Schools seniors at its annual Scholarship brunch on May 7 at the Italian Conference Center. These seven scholars received scholarships totaling \$42,800. The stellar academic achievement, some against the most daunting challenges, is a testament to Milwaukee's public schools, their faculty and their students.

Deko Mohamud graduated with a 3.69 GPA from South Division High School. She is applying her scholarship to pre-med or biology studies at UW-Oshkosh.

Originally from Somalia, Deko, who has 10 siblings, grew up in a refugee camp in Kenya where her parents often sacrificed basic necessities for her education.

Noting her first-hand experience with war and poverty, Deko wrote in her essay that she intends to become a pediatrician because she grew up not having access to qualified doctors and "I know the importance of health and wellness in my community."

Chloe Nickel, with a 3.89 GPA, graduated third in her class of 142 from Milwaukee School of Languages, and plans to major in dietetics and psychology at the University of Wisconsin, Madison.



2016 scholars (left to right) Alissa Tinney, Tationna Wright, Chloe Nickel, Deko Mohamud, Guadalupe Valdivia-Esparza, and Van Mawi Tiel.

Like our other recipients, Chloe maintained excellent grades while carrying a "most demanding" course load according to her counselor, and participating in a number of school and other activities, such as National Honor Society; swim team, track and soccer; yearbook; drama; Discovery World volunteer; a Milwaukee Dance Works work-study program, and a UW-Madison Plant Genetics Lab internship.

The seed for her desire to become a doctor was planted with the death of her grandmother when she was three. "Without helping people, I don't know who I am," she wrote in her essay, "and doing it every day is the only thing I could ever want."

Neva Nowak (not pictured above) is one of two MPS valedictorians to receive a scholarship from AAUW Milwaukee Branch for the 2016-17 school year. She and another classmate will graduate first in their Rufus King High School class of 303.

At the age of seven, Neva was diagnosed with acute lymphoblastic leukemia. Despite fitting her childhood between lumbar punctures and chemo IV drips, Neva wrote in her application essay, she has been active in drama, comedy, NHS, Link Crew, WI high school model UN, travel abroad programs to Germany and Peru, an inner-city/suburbs exchange, peer mediation, writing tutor and neighborhood volunteer.

Neva plans to pursue biological sciences and, as she noted in her application, "As someone with a strong commitment to helping people, I aim to use my expertise and connections in a career that will allow me to serve others. My dream is to spearhead innovations and discoveries in the area of biological science that actively improve the world."

Van Mawi Tiel ranked second in her class of 215 with a 3.93 GPA at South Division High School where her counselor rated her "one of the top academic achievement students" he has ever encountered.

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President's UPDATE

Michelle Prosek



Hello everyone,

Summer Break!

Well, it is hard to believe but our Scholarship Brunch marks the end of our programming year! We will take a break from programming for June, July and August. There is still much work to do to keep the excitement and energy high, so you will continue to see regular newsletters during the summer. The membership team is also planning a big event for Saturday, August 6th. More targeted information will be coming in the mail as we get closer to that date.

Equal Pay Day

On Tuesday, April 12th, the AAUW-Milwaukee Branch hosted information tables about Equal Pay Day at both Alverno and UWM, just as we have in other years. Thanks to Lyn Hildebrand, Beverly Katter, Kathe Bogdan and Charity Bogdan-Blount, for being available that day. Special thanks to Tully for getting that organized! We look forward to similar events in the coming year.

AAUW 2016 State Convention

The AAUW State Convention was held in Madison Friday, April 22nd, and Saturday, April 23rd, and I am proud to say that we had 12 people there as delegates of the AAUW-Milwaukee Branch. The theme was *Women Take the Lead* and our branch had many successes during the event. First, our President-Elect and State Fund Development Coordinator, Lyn Hildenbrand, drove the successful conclusion of the Catherine Teska fund; its intended use is to support **key research** around women's issues. The goal was to obtain \$75,000 by 2017 to complete

the fund and with proceeds from the 2016 convention, including our Branch's \$2000 major gift, the final amount is \$76,977. In addition to that success, the AAUW-Milwaukee Branch received 1st place from the State for the most new members this year in the 50-99 branch member category! That's right! Thanks to the energy and enthusiasm that our membership team has created for our branch, we gained a total of 15 new members this year!

2015-2016 Successes!

I think we can lose the forest for the trees when we are all so busy doing our good work so I'd like to provide a summary of the successes that we have had within our branch, just this year alone!

- 1) Crystallized our online presence at milwaukee-wi.aauw.net;
- 2) Implemented the means to pay dues electronically online using a charge card;
- 3) Held successful Equal Pay Day events at UWM and Alverno;
- 4) Start Smart events at UWM ;
- 5) Confirmed our Start Smart relationship with Alverno;
- 6) Raised over \$500 for Sojourner Truth Family Peace Center through the Huggables Silent Auction in December;
- 7) Donated several baskets of toiletry items to Sojourner Truth with our targeted giving program;
- 8) 15 New members!!
- 9) \$42,500 in scholarships to seven amazing young women who will go into the world and, with a little luck, a little faith and a lot of hard work, be all that we are and all that we are not!

Get Engaged.

If you would like to be a part of our future successes, then I invite you to get involved! We have so many opportunities for you to be involved and engaged in the projects we are working on! And the more brilliant minds we have generating ideas and making them happen, then bigger our success.

Thank you to everyone for a very successful 2015-16 year. Next year will be even better! I look forward to seeing you all in September, if not before then.

Reminders:

- ◆ **Please** remember to SUBMIT YOUR DUES by the end of the month. The branch is required to submit an accounting of all paid memberships in June and we want to have an accurate accounting of our full Branch membership. Remember that you can go online to pay electronically if that is easier! Please see your renewal form for details.
- ◆ **Please** watch for a MEMBER SURVEY scheduled to be released at the end of May or beginning of June. We appreciate your feedback, and will discuss the results during our September Annual meeting!

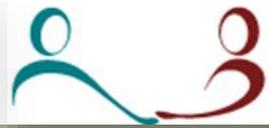
Please reach out if you have any questions or concerns!

Thank you, and be kind to one another.

Michelle Prosek



Benita Clark



Membership Matters



Graciela Pequeno

AAUW MILWAUKEE BRANCH RECEIVES FIRST PLACE MEMBERSHIP AWARD AT WISCONSIN STATE AAUW CONVENTION

There was a loud whoop at our AAUW Milwaukee Branch table when roll call was taken at the annual State Convention in Madison this past April. Twelve members represented us and we were really surprised to come home with the First Place state award in recognition for recruiting fifteen new members to our Branch this past year. (Make that 16 as of this writing!) The award was for the category of branches with 50 – 99 members.

A special thank you to our hardworking Membership Committee, and to the strong support of our President Michelle and the Board of Directors. Also special thanks to Kathe, our administrative assistant, for her continuing assistance in our ongoing mission.

If you have not yet picked up our official introductory AAUW Milwaukee Branch membership recruitment packet available at our membership table at every meeting, do so at our next meeting. You will find this wonderful packet of information very up to date and very helpful to share wherever our Milwaukee Branch is represented. Do share this packet with any of your friends who might be potential members. Remember, every branch member is part of our Membership Committee.

SAVE THIS DATE: SATURDAY, AUGUST 6—THIS SUMMER!!

Tap the directional on your cell phone and come to Estabrook Park for a wingding membership party called “Not Our Founding Mothers’ Cup of Tea.” More information will be forthcoming. **See you there!**

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Van Mawi grew up in a small Burmese village. Because Burma, like many underdeveloped countries, doesn’t provide public schools. Since Van Mawi’s parents couldn’t afford to pay for her education, she didn’t attend school until she was 16 when her family came to the U.S. At South Division, she entered as a non-English-speaking high school freshman and graduated four years later as salutatorian of her class.

In addition to learning English, Van Mawi took the most demanding classes, participated in a number of leadership, sports and academic activities, held a job and did volunteer work.

Van is applying her scholarship at Marquette University toward a communication major in order to improve her English. Then, as she wrote in her application essay, “When I am ready, I will change my major to Engineering.”

Alissa Tinney, with a 4.0 GPA, is the other MPS valedictorians who received an AAUW Milwaukee Branch scholarship this year. After ranking first, academically in her class of 213 at Milwaukee High School of the Arts, Alissa plans to major in biology or physics at Wellesley College in Massachusetts.

Alissa participated in and served in leadership positions in a number of extracurricular activities during high school, and is a community volunteer.

At the urging of an eighth-grade teacher that she consider a career in engineering, Alissa took AP classes in calculus and physics and an advanced calculus class at Marquette University with the objective of becoming an astronaut candidate for NASA.

Alissa wants the challenge, she wrote in her essay. She also wants “those after me to see what it looks like to try reaching far away dreams.”

Guadalupe Valdivia-Esparza graduated from Milwaukee School of Languages with a 3.7 GPA and plans to major in biomedical science and become a physician specializing in neuroscience.

Guadalupe was 13 when her family moved from Mexico to the U.S. where she has excelled academically, athletically and as year-book editor while volunteering in her community and holding down a job.

In a letter of recommendation, her English teacher wrote Guadalupe “is the embodiment of the American Dream. ... “She is a brilliant and thoughtful young woman who has so much to contribute and who has wonderful foundational skills to support her along the way.”

Guadalupe plans to use her scholarship at either Marquette University or the University of Wisconsin.

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Reported by C. Tully, Milwaukee Branch Public Policy Chair



Urge Your Senators to Co-Sponsor the STEM Opportunities Act!

On Equal Pay Day, Senator Mazie Hirono (D-HI) introduced the Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) Opportunities Act, which aims to improve inclusion of women, minorities, and people with disabilities in STEM careers. The gender pay gap affects women in all fields—but women in STEM continue to face barriers that limit opportunities for employment and equal pay.

This legislation would break down the barriers for women and minorities in STEM by helping federal science agencies and higher education institutions to share best practices on inclusion. In addition, universities and nonprofits would be allowed to

receive competitive grants and recognition for mentoring women and minorities in STEM.

STEM fields serve as important sources of innovation and economic growth, but the STEM workforce currently is not reflective of the diversity of our nation. This legislation would help inclusion of women, minorities, and people with disabilities in STEM careers by breaking down the existing barriers in higher education and employment.

There is already a companion bill in the House (H.R. 467) but there are no Wisconsin congregational sponsors.

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Tationna Wright attended Milwaukee High School of the Arts and graduated with a 3.64 GPA. One of 11 children being raised by her mother, Tationna is the first person in her family to attend college.

In addition to serving as an inspiration to her siblings, she wrote in her application essay, *I'm not just attending college for me. I'm going for everyone who believes it is not possible. I need to show them that it is possible."*

Tationna's scholarship is being applied to her tuition at the School of Music at College of Saint Rose in upstate New York.

*A*s committee co-chairs, we would like to acknowledge and thank the other scholarship selection committee members for their work in selecting these outstanding scholars.

*Bettina Arnold
Ellie Moseley
Sharon Munson
Janet Nortrom*

We also thank office assistant Kathe Bogdan for maintaining the scholarship materials, processing the applications and providing vital support throughout the year.

June Albert and Jerrienne Hayslett
Scholarship Committee Co-Chairs

DATES to remember

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THIS SUMMER!!

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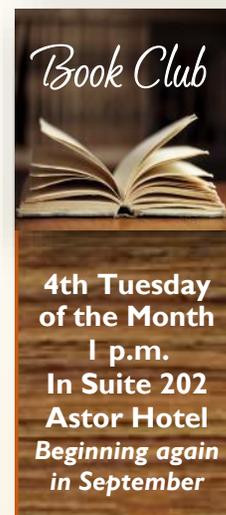
SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 10, 2016

The second Saturday in September (*avoiding the Labor Day Holiday*) will be the next time the Milwaukee Branch gathers. It is the **Annual Meeting**, and it is important to put this date on your calendar.

...and just 3 weeks later....

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 1 is the **Membership Drive** which will include a very personal and unique fashion show. Watch for exciting details in future newsletters.

Be alerted to details regarding the annual visit to Boswell's Books on North Oakland Ave. to hear Boswell's staff recommendations for Book Club selections for 2016-17.



Any member and guest are invited to join this group which will most likely meet sometime in June. Bring a friend or two. You are also encouraged to join the Book Club at any time.