



# of Colorado

## THE 2018 JUDITH SANDERSON LEGACY OF LEADERSHIP AWARD

The **Judith Sanderson Legacy of Leadership Award** is given biannually to an AAUW Colorado member for contributions to AAUW's mission and leadership at the branch, state or national level — or a combination thereof with emphasis on contributions at the state level. The recipient will be honored at the annual State Convention in even-numbered years.

**Purpose:** To honor and recognize outstanding AAUW service and support of AAUW's mission — advancing equity for women and girls through advocacy, education, philanthropy, and research.

**Past Recipients:**

- 2006 – Judy Sanderson
- 2008 – Sue Bodis
- 2010 – Betsy Loague
- 2012 – Lois Florkey
- 2014 – Betty Flaten
- 2016 – Diane Fuchs

**Criteria: *The nominee***

- Has served on the State Board and/or a State Committee for two or more terms.
- Supports the mission of AAUW by guiding and inspiring other women and girls to participate in AAUW programs and activities.
- Promotes excellent working relationships with all members to accomplish AAUW goals.
- Has been an AAUW member for ten years, five of which have been in Colorado.

**Nomination for the Award to Elaine Gardner**

*Submitted by Betsy Loague*

AAUW of Colorado has lost one of its outstanding members. Colorado's legislative "guru", Elaine Gardner, passed away September 20, 2017. The state Lobby Corps was established in 1982 under Elaine's leadership. Along with Bette Hutchinson and Ida Berger, these lobbyists attended each legislative session focusing on pending legislation and issues pertaining to the AAUW Public Policy Program for twenty-five years. Monitoring both Houses of Representatives and Senate, they attended hearings, sometimes testifying, followed the progression of bills, and lobbied legislators. In addition, Elaine published the Legislative Update, a newsletter written to keep members informed of actions by the Colorado legislators, and to share information about upcoming legislation.

Elaine led the annual Legislative Update session at the state's February Legislative meeting, apprising members of bills already introduced and of possible future issues expected for the current session. It was always one of the highlights of the meetings.

Upcoming local November elections dominated much of Elaine's time in September and October as branches requested her help as branch speaker, forum moderator, or member of a panel. Her work at the state house afforded her the opportunity to know legislators throughout the state,

(Continued on page 3)

## TESTIMONIALS AND MEMORIES

### Elaine Gardner's Friends and Associates Speak Up

Elaine was a fixture at the Colorado General Assembly for many years as AAUW Colorado volunteer lobbyist and kept her keen eye on education and gender equity bills -- and on the legislators who deliberated them. Her insights into process and influence laid a solid foundation for me as next-generation AAUW Colorado volunteer lobbyist, and I know that current and future generations of AAUW Colorado volunteer lobbyists will feel a deep debt of gratitude to Elaine as well.

-- AAUW Colorado President  
Amy Blackwell

AAUW-CO has been incredibly blessed by your mother, Elaine Gardner. It is because of her

work and dedication in helping us create an organized lobbying program in Colorado, which advocated for all the values expressed in the national AAUW public policy program, that AAUW-CO is respected at the state capitol. Working primarily with Ida Berger and Betty Hutchinson, they dedicated themselves to following bills going through the Colorado legislature. It was a highlight of every Public Policy Day to hear Elaine give the legislative report. She also helped the Public Policy Committee guide members through a wide variety of election issues related to the AAUW mission.

But Elaine was also a mentor and a friend. She taught me so much about the legislative process at both the national and state

level. And she taught me about the importance of working together so that everyone knew what AAUW-CO stood for and how to move our public policy forward.

I appreciated Elaine's patience as I worked my way through learning how to be an advocate for AAUW and our mission. Her true legacy is the work that we in Colorado continue to do to achieve equity and education for women and girls.

Sue Bodis, Past President CO-AAUW, Legacy of Leadership Awardee 2008, Aurora Branch

In addition to having Elaine as a gracious friend, I had the good fortune of working with her on both sides of the "glass". My earliest association was as an AAUW Branch member with an interest in public policy and an appetite to learn more. Elaine was a marvelous teacher with a great desire and ability to mentor people as advocates, especially around her signature issues of education and the environment. Then I worked with her as a partner in advocacy at the Colorado General Assembly, as I worked side by side as a social justice advocate. Then, after my election to the General Assembly, Elaine often lobbied me. While we usually were in agreement on issues, she was always the consummate



1981  
Sandra Eid, Mary Calhoun-Howe, Betty Boyd, Elaine Gardner  
with Governor Lamm

advocate, succinctly stating her case and always acting professionally. In addition to stating her case, if asked she would tell you what the other side was saying.

Colorado AAUW was very fortunate to have Elaine's passion to create an excellent and respected State Public Policy Program and to have her skillfully representing the organization at the state legislature.

Betty Boyd  
Member of Colorado House  
(2001-06), Senate (2006-2013),  
AAUW CO Public Policy Co-Chair,  
Lakewood Branch Member

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#### *Thoughts about Elaine Gardner*

When I first joined AAUW I mainly knew Elaine's work through her yearly legislative update at Public Policy Day. And what an update! She not only gave the essentials of the bills she and her cohorts were following but, in the days before term limits when she had known some of the legislators for over 15 years, she could give extensive commentary on the political implications, strategies being used (not by her!) to get votes or twist arms, and, as a friend was fond of saying, "where the bodies were buried." This was all done with layman's explanations and good humor.

Elaine was also a treasured resource for branches, especially Foothills, and church groups

#### *(Nomination, continued)*

and because of this relationship she was a valued source of statewide information. If legislative activities were involved Elaine wanted to be involved – it was her passion!

Elaine joined the Foothills Branch in 1972 and became a LIFE member ten years later. She served the branch in many positions, frequently as Legislative/Public Policy Chair. Most members are unaware of her strongest focus - that of education. She was always involved in branch fundraisers for the Educational Foundation and encouraged members to promote Association/National educational programs both actively and financially. It was one of the reasons she had joined and continued to support the organization. Financial support of the Legal Advocacy Fund could be considered a third passion within AAUW's mission. Elaine chaired this fundraiser for many years and initiated a "Blessings" sheet consisting of a list of items, from material possessions to individual accomplishments, with a suggested monetary value attached (from \$.25 to \$5.00). The totaled amount on members sheets were suggested donations for LAF. It became a fun activity as members figured up their individual "worth."

Health problems had sidelined Elaine's involvement in recent years but after each meeting, be it National, state, or branch, she wanted a report. Age had not dulled her mental capacity and she still wanted to be kept up-to-date on the latest information. During the winter of 1987, the editors of the state newsletter instituted a "Daisy Award," in recognition of a member's contribution to Colorado AAUW, and to their branch. In recognition for her work with the Lobby Corps, Elaine Gardner became the first "Daisy" recipient and her accomplishments were highlighted in an article in the bulletin.

After all these years Elaine still deserves the title of "Daisy", as well as "Legislative Guru". She was the master and her dedication has been the guide for those who have followed. Her leadership has been missed the past few years, but her passing leaves a tremendous void in the hearts of members who cherished and loved her as a friend.

– Betsy Loague





when our Colorado ballot was filled with proposed Constitutional amendments and other proposals. She would sort out the issues, give pros and cons and, when AAUW had a position, carefully explain – and cajole. She was always particularly interested in education issues and often moderated school board candidate forums for Foothills.

When Elaine, Betty and Ina retired from the Capitol, Betty Flaten and I made a feeble attempt to continue AAUW's efforts and soon found how difficult it was to keep up with even a minimal amount of testifying and emailing. Our admiration for Elaine soared as we soon realized that it was essentially full-time effort during the session. Two years and we gave up! So her 25 years of lobbying – wow!!

Besides the "serious stuff," Elaine loved a good laugh and we had many at Branch meetings, various events, and over lunch. She modeled civic involvement at its best and



*Elaine Gardner, Ida Berger and Bettie Hutchinson are retiring as Colorado AAUW's dedicated lobbyists at the end of the current legislative session. Colorado President Betty Flaten, second from right, joined AAUW members at Public Policy Day in thanking them for their many years of dedicated service.*

taught us all a lot. This award should have been given to her years ago! I hope she knew how much we appreciated her.

Melinda (Lindy) Reed, AAUW CO  
Public Policy Co-Chair, Foothills  
Branch until 2017  
Lakewood Branch member

I did not get to know Elaine personally but I knew of her dedication to AAUW and her commitment to the betterment of women and girls. Elaine attended the same Public Policy meetings that I did and everyone always listened in awe at the thoroughness of the information she reported on. She spent hours becoming informed on issues, updates and support of legislative actions that affect women in addition to the hours spent on site at the Capital. She encouraged others to be aware and to contact their legislatures. She was an example of what

each one of us can do to make a better place for our gender.

Diane Norten, Douglas County &  
eNetwork Branches, Past State  
President

Elaine Gardner was the founder and "mother" of AAUW Colorado Public Policy. The accolades and recognition we receive today for our advocacy and stellar Public Policy Day began in the 1970's when Elaine became the volunteer lobbyist for our organization. Her commitment to AAUW issues, her determined but always professional approach, and positive attitude made her one of the most respected lobbyists at the Colorado Legislature. Senators and Representatives of both parties welcomed her comments, thoughts and testimony on issues pertaining to women, girls, and families. For over twenty-five years she

was a familiar and dedicated face at the Capitol.

Elaine's legislative reports were eagerly awaited by branches and the state organization. She summarized the monumental list of bills and legislation with clarity, thoroughness, and a wry sense of humor. Many individuals came to Public Policy Day just to hear Elaine's legislative update. She knew all the stories at the Capitol and was sometimes a resource for newer legislators unfamiliar with the history of proceedings.

There was only one Elaine Gardner and her dedication to AAUW Colorado is legendary and a most important element of our state organization's success.

Betty Flaten, AAUW CO Program  
Co-Chair, Legacy of Leadership  
Awardee 2014  
Foothills Branch Member, now  
Lakewood & Boulder Branch  
Member

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*My memories of Elaine Gardner:*

I was a young member of AAUW with a small child and found AAUW to parallel my values of equal rights for women and children with education being a key to bringing about a more universal acceptance to those values.

To that end, I became involved with AAUW at a state level within the Public Policy arena. That is where I encountered Elaine Gardner. And what a joy it was to get to know her. Not only did Elaine embody those

values, she worked tirelessly to impact legislation addressing them. She knew talking to the "tribe" was not a way to effect change and forward movement.

Elaine knew her work was not to be completed in a week, a year or even two or three years. She realized this was, at best, generational. I do not remember her ever degrading an individual for their beliefs or lack of awareness; rather she saw them as a challenge. She was extremely well organized and went about her lobbying efforts in a focused and non-combative manner. And never losing sight she was working on issues that were impactful to every member of American and Colorado society, not only members of AAUW.

As my life progressed I found myself in a position whereby I was responsible for addressing public policy issues on these same issues: equal rights for women and children. The lessons I learned from Elaine served me well in my work over the years. To that end, I will always remember Elaine as a dedicated advocate, a tireless worker and a woman of high principles. She made a difference of far greater significance than she would ever acknowledge.

Gail Wilson  
Public Policy Committee,  
Littleton South Metro Branch,  
formerly of Colorado Springs  
Branch

We all know what a wonderful job she did as our head lobbyist for so many years. But, one of the fun things I remember about her is how, at Public Policy Day, she would lead us in exercises. It was a nice break from all the sitting of the day. She truly was a remarkable, knowledgeable and sincere lady. I feel privileged to have known her.

Georgina Burns  
Public Policy Committee  
Colorado Springs Branch

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I am so honored to have known Elaine Gardner. She was a constant worker for AAUW. One of her biggest contributions was the formation and leader of our Lobby Corps. She put our legislative agenda on her back and worked tirelessly at the Colorado state legislature to ensure that the legislators knew who and what AAUW was and what we stood for. Colorado AAUW could not have had a more knowledgeable lobbyist. In addition, she was highly respected. When she spoke to legislators and in committees, she was heard. How blessed we were to have had Elaine as a vital member of Colorado AAUW.

Sincerely, Candace Crumb,  
Colorado Springs Branch

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Elaine did so much for AAUW for so long it is difficult to even quantify. She was an active and involved member, always working for AAUW's mission of

equality for women and girls long before her lobbying days. With the inception of Colorado AAUW's Public Policy Committee and Lobby Corps her work really began. For so many years she was a constant advocate for public policy issues for AAUW through lobbying at the State Legislature. Our organization owes much of our respect today from the informed and tireless efforts of Elaine. Everyone listened when Elaine spoke whether they agreed with her or not. During our annual Public Policy Day meeting we all looked forward to her Legislative Update. I even remember having her get everyone up out of our chairs for a short exercise time to get us moving again after lunch. So thank you Elaine for everything you did to further the mission of AAUW. You are greatly missed.

Sally Mathewson  
State Public Policy Committee  
Co-Founder of Legacy of  
Leadership Award  
Colorado Springs Branch

Elaine Gardner epitomizes the essence of the Colorado AAUW Legacy of Leadership Award. Throughout her many years of involvement in AAUW, her high level of dedication and leadership contributed to her branch and to the State, particularly in her role as chief AAUW lobbyist in the Colorado Legislature.

For 25 years, she initiated, coordinated, and directed AAUW's Lobby Corp, setting the standard for effective and efficient lobbying nationwide. Her special legislative summaries presented at the annual Public Policy Days were not to be missed. Elaine's intelligence, wit, and sense of humor brought life to legislation.

The work of the Lobby Corps reinforced the important connection between our AAUW mission statement and public policy in Colorado. Thank you, Elaine, for truly being a Colorado AAUW trailblazer!

Sherry Hitztaler  
Co-Founder of Legacy of  
Leadership Award  
Douglas County & Lakewood  
Branch

I had the privilege of meeting Elaine Gardner through the AAUW and working with her on

public policy. Elaine was one of the few women in the AAUW who always made me feel welcome and was interested in my education, work, and viewpoint. She taught me to navigate the legislative process of the Colorado capitol and to develop my advocacy skills. Elaine volunteered endlessly as an AAUW lobbyist in the Colorado Legislature for more than 30 years. She enjoyed her family and ventured into other projects such as serving on the scholarship committee for I.O.O.F. Lodge. She was devoted to women's rights, social justice, and making the world a better place for everyone.

Connie Paeglow  
AAUW Denver Branch Past  
President  
AAUW CO eNetwork Member

Elaine was a mentor to me, and was largely responsible for my career with Colorado AAUW.

#### Foothills AAUW - Membership Roster 1996 – 1997

Elaine Gardner was on the membership roster for many years:

- 1996 - 1997 as Legal Advocacy Fund Chair
- 2003 - 2004 Legal Advocacy Fund
- 2006 2007 Legal Advocacy Fund
- 2011 - Member of Leadership Team
- 2011 - 2012 - Recorder for Foothills Branch

Foothills Travel Group presented slide show program on Penguins during her travels

Elaine had a long time affiliation with the Colorado House and Senate to report findings to Foothills Branch.

Sylvia Wedmore, Foothills Branch



Her encouragement and friendship were so valuable as I started my leadership role there and in my community, leading to a successful professional position. I recall a trip that I drove her to Durango over Red Mountain Pass, a new and alarming experience for her.

I was so sad to hear of her passing.

Sherryl Hall Peterson  
Gunnison Branch, Past State  
President

Elaine Gardner dedicated many years of her life leading Colorado AAUW's lobby corps and lobbying at the Colorado statehouse. She spent untold hours in working to protect public education and equity for women and girls in Colorado. She maintained communications with those of us interested in such issues.

It was inspiring to witness her hard work for each and every one of us. She is so deserving of the Legacy of Leadership Award!

Mary Wylie, Lakewood Branch

The Aurora branch is very happy with what Elaine Garner did for years in establishing the "Lobby Corps." Her accomplishments in this important work kept the local branches in tune with what the state legislature was doing, promoting or opposing bills affecting our interests as Coloradans and the interests of



MARGE BEHM, ELAINE GARDNER, AND BETTE HUTCHINSON

all women. She was great in working with both the branches and the legislature.

Pam Jones, Aurora Branch  
President

Elaine Gardner was a wonderful and very special lady. I first met her back in the 80's at the first Colorado AAUW conventions I attended. She was a delightful person to visit with, and we all



MARIE MCILVENNAN, ELLIE GAGER, LINDA ROBERTSON, ELAINE GARDNER, CAROL COON, BILLY MILLER, AND CO STATE PRESIDENT JOAN PETERSON (AURORA BRANCH), AT THE CELEBRATION OF THE FOOTHILLS BRANCH'S 40TH ANNIVERSARY. BETSY LOAGUE, AS "MISTRESS OF CEREMONIES," HAD JUST PRESENTED THEM WITH AAUW KEY FOBS.

admired her dedication to AAUW. She was respected by all at the State House for her professional representation of our policies. At one time she visited the Gunnison Branch to present a program on the activities of her job, and an update on the session just finished. She was great!

We will all miss her and remember her fondly.

Bobbi Harper. Gunnison Branch,  
Past State Treasurer

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Elaine was such a vivacious personality. When she came into a room she filled the room in such a good way!!!

Kathy Anthony  
Lakewood Branch

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To Stephen, Cheryl, Mark and Rebecca; and Andrew, John, Peter and Michael,

Women and girls are fortunate to have had your mother and grandmother here in Colorado in AAUW and as our volunteer lobbyist and director. We are still fortunate to have the legacy of her leadership and new leaders who knew her and carry on our mission actively. AAUW Colorado's annual Public Policy Day, the first Saturday of February, is my favorite event of AAUW. It is most enlightening each year and stretches my knowledge on subjects I would

otherwise know nothing about.

The AAUW National organization publishes biennially our Public Policy priorities and within Colorado there is a continuing all volunteer committee who do a lot of the footwork for our organization, [aauw.org](http://aauw.org) and [aauw-co.aauw.net](http://aauw-co.aauw.net).

Elaine was our volunteer Lobby Corps Director for 25 years that I was not a part of this organization. I met her much later and knew her only as a member of the neighboring

Foothills Branch. When I accepted a Lakewood branch position to be a contact for Public Policy announcements and had questions, I was advised to call Elaine Gardner. I did, and she provided me nurturing counsel so I could fulfill the position I had accepted.

I can still hear her voice and that was in 2011-13. I know her voice and example will guide me always.

Stormy McDonald  
AAUW Colorado President Elect

The following AAUW mission statements, as they changed dynamically through the years to meet changing societal needs, were what guided Elaine's contributions to AAUW for women all over the world.

- AAUW program enables members to assume a responsible role in meeting societal needs, to continue their intellectual growth and to secure broader opportunities for women. (1975)
- Membership in AAUW enables women to continue their intellectual growth, to further the advancement of women and to discharge their special responsibilities to society. (1981)
- AAUW promotes equity for women, education and self-development over the life span, and positive societal change. (1986)
- AAUW promotes equity for all women and girls, lifelong education, and positive societal change. In principle and practice, AAUW values and seeks a diverse membership. There shall be no barriers to fill participation in this organization on the basis of gender, race, creed, age, sexual orientation, national origin or disability. (1998)
- AAUW advances equity for women and girls through advocacy, education and research. (2009)
- Advancing Equity for Women and Girls through Advocacy, Education, Philanthropy and Research. (Current)





# LOBBY CORPS MONITORS EDUCATION ISSUE

Directing its attention to the Legislative Priority TO SUPPORT LEGISLATION THAT PROVIDES EQUAL AND HIGH QUALITY EDUCATION IN COLORADO DURING THIS PERIOD OF BUDGET CONSTRAINTS, the state Lobby Corps monitored legislation during the summer which has to do with school finance and higher education in the state.

Elaine Gardner, Lobby Corps Coordinator, became part of a coalition as AAUW's representative to improve school finance. The purpose of the group is to gather, analyze and disseminate information about the current system and alternative approaches for allocating state support for education. The coalition expects to increase the awareness of citizens about school finance and to assist the legislature in dealing with the issue.

In a desire to assist members in determining the stand of state candidates on the education issue, the Lobby Corps has prepared a list of questions that may be used in a candidate forum:

## ON HIGHER EDUCATION

What do you see as the future of small colleges in Colorado?

How do you feel about enrollment "caps" at state universities?

At present the School of Pharmacy and College of Engineering and Applied Sciences pay higher tuition rates than other undergraduates. How do you feel about differential tuitions at state schools?

## ON GENERAL FINANCE

What should be the tax base for school finance? Property tax? Sales tax? Income tax? In what proportions?

Should the state limit or otherwise restrict local districts' expenditures for education?

Currently the state grossly underfunds mandated programs for the handicapped. Will you vote for the state to increase gradually its share up to 80% of the cost?

Members who wish more information on the education priority or who are interested in being a part of the Lobby Corps may write or phone the Lobby Corps Coordinator:

Elaine Gardner 424-6054  
6131 Robb St., Arvada, CO 80004

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WINTER, 1990

## Lobby Corps Faces Busy Legislative Session

This is an election year. Every speech, every decision, every vote made by your representative is directed at you and your vote. Your letters, your calls, your personal visits will make a difference in the outcome of issues.

Many bills are coming before the legislature which are a part of the division's focus. To be most effective, the Lobby Corps will have to concentrate on just a few. As yet, there are no bills on women's reproductive health issues. The Comprehensive Health Education Bill is very much like last year's effort. Prevention programs (pre-school through grade 12) are important and cost-effective in both dollars and human suffering. This bill is at the top of AAUW's list to work for passage.

The General Assembly always faces education proposals. This session will consider the subjects of choice (open enrollment), programming for the handicapped preschoolers, tenure (tied to recertification), funding of the School Finance Act, and Learn Fare (cutting welfare benefits to parents whose children drop out). An interim committee on higher education has recommended several bills including encouragement of private donations by the matching of state money to the endowed chairs programs, development of uniform accounting procedures, reduction of administrative costs, and fiscal accountability. Overhauling the state's prisoner education program is the subject of another proposal.

Legislators are very concerned about the possible passage of a tax limitation amendment next November. As an alternative they are considering a proposal to allow a "50% homestead exemption" on residential property to extend the right of initiative concerning tax rates to local governments, school districts, counties and cities.

Another initiative which may be on the general election ballot would force school boards, city councils, and other local governmental bodies to operate under Colorado's Open Meetings law.

The State Supreme Court has decided to review the GAVEL lawsuit against thirty-nine Republican legislators for determining the state budget in a political caucus. The court will decide whether or not the speech and debate clause of the Colorado Constitution provides absolute immunity from suit to legislators when they are accused of violating the GAVEL Amendment to the Constitution.—Elaine Gardner, Lobby Corps Co-Coordinator

## Lobby Corps Plans For Busy Session

In the 1992 session of the General Assembly, the Lobby Corps will focus on the priorities set by delegates at the state convention last April. These include equity for women, education, health and human services, and environmental concerns. AAUW members monitor and lobby on bills of interest to Colorado AAUW.

Remember that this is an election year. Most legislators will resist voting for a tax increase, and they are really concerned about the possible passage of a tax limitation proposal which will be on the November ballot.

Going into the September special session, Colorado was short \$350 million in school funding for the transitional eighteen-month fiscal year because of increased Medicaid and prison costs. The legislators were unwilling to raise any taxes to pay for this shortfall. After several attempts, they passed a compromise bill. It freezes property taxes thus preventing a \$54 million property tax decrease for next year, and it allows a 1% inflation factor for the first six months of the transition period plus 3% more for the twelve-month period beginning July 1, 1992. Still to be resolved in this upcoming session is the question of tax increases to pay for schools and reforms to cut the dropout rate and to achieve greater learning.

The medical care delivery system is under attack because of escalating costs. Several comprehensive bills will address this problem. A "right-to-die" bill is also being drafted. Air quality is an issue because Colorado must bring its plans into compliance with the federal Clean Air Act. Financing the state's needs will be a difficult problem for this General Assembly because of concerns about both the national and state economies. --- Elaine Gardner, Lobby Corps Co-director

## Gardner Predicts Difficult Session

Colorado voters have spoken. They said to the state, county, school and special districts, "Do more with less money."

Because of the passage of Amendments 1 (tax and spending limitations) and 8 (lottery funds diverted to outdoors), there will be serious budget choices to be made by the General Assembly during this session. A great deal of confusion arises from differing interpretations of these amendments. Expect to see litigation on many issues.

Once again a legislator has promised to introduce a bill restricting access to abortion. Most likely this will require parental notification and a mandatory waiting period. Many of the anti-choice candidates were defeated in the November election, but pro-choice advocates must stay vigilant to protect the legal rights which women now have.

The legislature may be forced to rewrite all or parts of the school finance act. Allocating less money per pupil and maintaining equitable funding will be difficult. Another issue facing government is the urgency of health care reform. Bills to improve access and to contain costs will be presented. Another bill will require certification of both medical technicians and machines used to screen for breast cancer.

The criminal justice system is looking at changing sentencing guidelines for non-violent offenders. Several bills are being proposed which will restrict access to weapons by juveniles and make parents responsible for children's actions.

There will have to be significant changes to reduce costs in all areas including health, corrections, social services, and both higher and K-12 education. --- Elaine Gardner, Lobby Corps Co-Coordinator

Winter 93 Bulletin



## Gardner Outlines 1994 Legislative Session

During the 1994 session of the Colorado Legislature, the AAUW Lobby Corps will focus on just a few bills. Concentrating on a limited agenda has proved in the past years to be the most effective use of AAUW's resources.

Lobbying efforts will be directed toward equity for women and girls, equitable funding for public education, accessible health services for women, and reproductive choice. These public policy priorities were set by delegates at the state convention last April.

The Interim Committee on School Finance is writing a new bill to fund schools. The proposal does away with school district categories used in the present school finance act. Instead, the new proposal uses a weighted pupil formula to distribute state monies to districts. Many bills which did not pass last session will be reintroduced. Expect to see bills which will:

- restrict young women's access to reproductive choices,
- increase the penalty for stalking,
- codify state laws concerning marital maintenance,
- reform divorce laws and encourage use of arbitration,
- amend the campaign reform act,
- ban corporal punishment in the schools,
- control the distribution of pornography and obscene materials,
- add programs for intervention and prevention of youth violence,
- establish a state network of trauma centers,

Health care reforms are being proposed on both the state and national levels. Colorado lawmakers may postpone a specific decision until after President Clinton's health plan has been reworked and passed by Congress. ColoradoCare is just one of the proposals to change the medical care delivery system in this state. AAUW does not endorse any specific bill, but AAUW does support health care reform that addresses the specific needs of women.

As in past years, financing the state's needs will be a problem. This has been made even more difficult by some of the restraints in Amendment One. --- Elaine Gardner, Lobby Corps Coordinator

*Public Policy Day Program, Registration Information and Form on page 5.*

*For information on Fifth Annual YWCA Legislative Breakfast, see page 6.*



## Gardner Previews 1998 Legislative Session

The 1998 state legislature will be facing tax reform to change the way Colorado's schools are financed. There is pressure to shift funding from property taxes (the local school district's share) to statewide sales and corporate taxes as the main sources of school financing. Any restructuring of the tax system will require a vote by the people in November of 1998.

Surplus taxes collected by the state (above the limits of the TABOR amendment) will be the subject of a bill because the lawmakers do not want to return next summer for another special session on this issue.

Two bills regulating teachers have been the topic of many intense meetings. One requires more frequent evaluations by supervisors, and the other sets out simpler procedures for teacher dismissal than are now in effect.

Concern about the shortage of high-quality child care has led to the writing of a bill to establish a voluntary credentialing system for childcare workers. Sponsors say that encouraging career development for caregivers would increase skills and competencies needed to assist children to achieve at their best.

There will be bills to fine tune welfare reforms made during the last session, bills to weaken or eliminate affirmative action, and bills to expand the hate crime laws to include age, disability, and sexual orientation. Access to justice for victims of family violence did not pass last year, but it will likely be re-introduced.

In the health arena, there will be bills to require from HMO's and insurers more benefits for patients with diabetes, osteoporosis, and the need for breast reconstruction after mastectomy. A bill to make a crime of child abuse for female genital mutilation has been defeated in the last two sessions. It may again be introduced.

Remember, this is an election year. It promises to be very lively. --- Elaine Gardner, Lobby Corps Coordinator

## Gardner Previews 1999 Legislative Session

As a result of the November elections, there will be a more conservative shift in the state House and Senate. With Bill Owens as governor, Republicans are expected to promote their agenda. This agenda will most likely include a reduction of state income taxes, further restrictions on women's reproductive choice, expanded benefits for charter schools, and other educational reforms.

The general assembly is expected to revisit some of the pro-business legislation from earlier sessions which was vetoed by Governor Romer. There is also talk of eliminating the personal property tax. A shift in tax policy could be ill advised because the state still faces a lawsuit which might require millions of dollars to bring school buildings in tax-poor districts up to par with those in tax-rich districts.

Governor-elect Owens has said, "There will be changes in terms of education reform, but those changes will be evolutionary rather than revolutionary." He plans to push for laws to make public schools more accountable by rewarding those that decrease costs while putting money into the classroom rather than into overhead.

These expected changes will require vigilance on the part of AAUW's Lobby Corps and assistance from branch members across the state. The state Public Policy Committee will be alerting members to make contacts when needed with their representatives and senators. It will be an exciting year. --- Elaine Gardner, Lobby Corps Director

## Gardner Previews 2000 Legislative Session

Education, child care and health are important issues which AAUW will follow at the state legislature during this session.

Funding K-12 education is an increasingly serious problem. Last session funding was increased by 3.5%. In 1998 it was increased 3.8%. School districts are forced to play catch up because, for the preceding ten years, the legislature has not given schools enough money to cover even the inflation factor. Colorado is currently rated near the very bottom of the states for adequacy of funding for public schools.

Disappointing results on statewide fourth grade reading and writing tests have led Governor Owens to request \$20 million extra dollars to pay for educational reforms. This money is to cover teacher training for reading, tracking the progress of individual students (rather than classes) and for more testing. He wants to use part of the tobacco settlement money to pay for his Read to Achieve literacy program. The governor has also requested that the legislature allot money for the school finance bill that will cover both the inflation factor and the increase in enrollment for each school district.

There will be bills that support alternatives and choices for parents including tax credits and vouchers for home schools, charter schools, and private schools. There will be bills to give greater protection to children in day care centers by funding more state inspectors and a system of certification for workers.

From a health care task force comes a bill to give greater protection to children. It will create a confidential electronic tracking system of immunization records. There would be incentives to increase the number of children in Colorado who are immunized. It is estimated that 30% do not now receive appropriate shots.

Hand gun control will be reintroduced. There will be requirements for criminal background checks for all sales, for safe storage, and for a ban on "straw purchases" in which eligible people purchase guns for criminals or minors.

Many people think that this session promises to be very contentious because lawmakers will be looking forward to the November election. Lobby Corps will keep AAUW members up-to-date through the *Legislative Update* (available by e-mail and the CO AAUW website as well as by post) and Calls to Action. --- Elaine Gardner, Lobby Corps Director



MARILYN GRAYBILL AND ELAINE