



AAUW-IL, Inc.
AGENT OF CHANGE AWARD
History

The Agent of Change Award was instituted in 1984 by the board of directors of the then Illinois State Division, now AAUW-IL, Inc. The award was to be presented annually to a branch member or American Association of University Women member who had served as a catalyst to bring about positive societal change. The State District Directors are charged with selecting the Awardee from nominations submitted by AAUW-IL branches.

All efforts that relate to AAUW's missions will be considered, with special emphasis placed on activities that relate to current AAUW priorities and initiatives. For example, individuals who have actively promoted change in the areas of education, equity or public policy should be among those considered as nominees for this prestigious award.

RECIPIENTS

1984	Vivian Wright (Aurora)	For action efforts in advocacy
1985	Mary Reljic (Chain of Lakes)	For production of the play Peace Child
1986	Irene Blatnik (Lockport Area)	For lifelong commitment to women's equity;
1987	Lenore Hylander (Barrington Area)	For establishing before-school and after-school enrichment clubs
1988	Loretta Pearson (Lockport Area)	For mentoring and encouraging young women in career choices
1989	Patty Crowley (Chicago, Inc.)	For social activism: founding the Christian Family Movement in 1949, the first established program on race which spread worldwide; for founding Deborah's Place, a women's shelter
1990	JoAnn Miller (Wheaton/Glen Ellyn)	For mentoring/career shadowing project for girls in science and math
1991	Marion Karras (Oak Brook)	For spearheading the Child Care is Good Business Project
1992	Helen Westlake (Wheaton/Glen Ellyn)	For rallying opposition to textbook censorship

1993	Phyllis Ziegler (Glenview) LaDonne Neudecker (Centralia)	For adult day care project For women mentoring girls in choosing careers project
1994	Charlotte Crawford (Downers Grove)	For action on gender equity
1995	Dr. Marcelline Barron (Aurora)	For work on the Initiative for Educational Equity
1996	Donnie Calvin (Wood River)	For work on Expanding Your Horizons workshop for 7th and 8th grade girls
1997	Dr. Delinda Chapman (Springfield)	For dedication to AAUW's mission and principles, especially diversity and women's issues
1998	Joelle Godfrey (Bolingbrook)	For work on the design and establishment of AAUW-IL website; for encouragement of diversity
1999	Dr. Irene Beck (Chicago, Inc./ Downers Grove)	As one of the Founding Directors of AAUW-IL
2000	Sheila Luecht (Crystal Lake)	For her work as an AAUW public activist to bring changes to her community
2001	Naseem Ahmed (Carbondale)	For securing grants allowing Central Asian and African women to observe women's shelters and study violence directed at women in Illinois under the sponsorship of the Carbondale Branch
2002	Mary Jane Hollis (Aurora)	For work that expanded opportunities of citizens of diverse race, ethnic, gender, age, and economic levels to foster greater understanding and cooperation and participation among Aurorans
2003	JoAnn Horowitz (Lombard)	For 46 years of faithful and exemplary service to AAUW-IL, working for the passage of ERA, serving as state parliamentarian under 11 administrations, and leading in five branches: Chicago, Lombard, Wheaton/Glen Ellyn, Chicago, and Northwest Suburban
2004	Jan DeYoung (Monmouth) Lila Blum (Monmouth)	For the 30th Anniversary of the Celebration Exhibit - AAUW Art Presenters Program
2005	Ruth Sweetser (Lombard)	For continued dedication to increasing awareness of AAUW's mission throughout Illinois
2006	Laurel Prussing (Champaign/Urbana)	For political activism in Illinois and her community

2007	Jo Ann Armenta (Elgin Area)	For helping to provide basic education to adults with little/no formal education through the Latino Literacy Project and building bridges between the Latino and broader community, showing diversity is achieved through understanding
2008	Marla Kim Benziger (Deerfield Area)	For leadership in planning and executing statewide activities celebrating the first annual Jane Addams Day
2009	Grace Foote Johns (Bloomington-Normal)	For expanding AAUW partnerships and visibility through creative mission-driven programming and outreach
2010	Connie Baker (Elmhurst)	For "Dare to Dream: Get Educated" Conference for Latina middle-schoolers and their mothers
2011	Mary Lillesve (Jerseyville)	For outstanding leadership in restructuring the Girls Empowered by Math and Science (GEMS) Conference
2012	Jan Lisa Huttner (Chicago, Inc.)	For founding WITASWAN and SWAN DAY to support women filmmakers and artists
2013	Margaret Keen (Elgin Area)	For facilitating the Elgin Branch activities with other community groups. She was a judge in a science fair for 1000 young innovators
2014	Nancy Dietrich (Champaign-Urbana)	For creating new branch interest groups to encourage membership/visibility and working with the University of Illinois YMCA to create a lecture series on "Few Women in Stem? Why and What to Do"
2015	Anna Moeller (Elgin Area)	For her advocacy as a legislator and her time and energy. Anna Moeller works tirelessly and enthusiastically for her constituents as an Illinois representative – Elgin
2016	Andrea (Andi) Danis (Aurora)	For her commitment to Mutual Ground, a non-profit organization that provides programs that focus on safety, healing, and prevention for domestic violence and sexual assault victims. Andi's commitment to this organization started when she wondered, "How can the mission of AAUW ever be implemented without a person being safe and protected?"
2017	Carol Heisler (Crystal Lake Area)	For initiating the Local Engagement Grant & TRIO Stipend, and reinvigorating the work of the Gender Equity Fund to strengthen the AAUW mission

2018	Sheryl Hall (Rockford Area)	For tripling the amount of money donated to the area scholarship awards and her work on the International Women's Baseball Center, which brought attention to the branch
2019	Paula Purdue (Chicago)	For her work on getting the Equal Rights Amendment passed in Illinois
2020	AJ Conroy (Chicago)	For her work on a variety of equality issues, including the Equal Rights Amendment, and WorkSmart Programs in Chicago, Title IX issues in Chicago Public Schools, and Chicago's Equal Pay Day Rallies over many years
2021	Joy Bowling (Aurora)	For 40 years of dedication to increasing voter registration and turnout and her wide-ranging commitment to community activism
2022	Deanie Brown (Springfield)	For advancing diversity, equity and inclusion, and upholding Title IX