

**AAUW Leadership Statements on *Behind the Pay Gap*
April 2007**

“By looking at earnings just one year out of college, you have as level a playing field as possible. These workers don’t have a lot of experience and, for the most part, don’t have care-giving obligations, so you’d expect there to be very little difference in the wages of men and women. But surprisingly, and unfortunately, we find that women already earn less — even when they have the same major and occupation as their male counterparts.”

“The persistence of the pay gap among young, college-educated, full-time workers suggests that educational achievement alone will not close the pay gap. We need to make workplaces more family-friendly, reduce sex segregation in education and in the workplace, and combat discrimination that continues to hold women back in the workplace.”

“Ideally, women and men should have similar economic opportunities and equal opportunities to enjoy meaningful unpaid work, such as parenting. Improving women’s earnings could have positive consequences for men who would like to spend more time with their children but who can’t afford to reduce their work hours.”

– **AAUW Director of Research Catherine Hill**

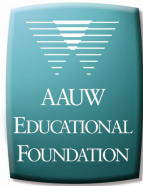


"Skeptics like to claim that there is no real pay gap. Worse, these critics prefer to blame women for any disparities, saying the pay gap is due to the 'choices' women make. New AAUW research says that a significant portion of the pay gap remains unexplained even after adjusting for such life choices. Regardless, the very idea that women would purposely choose to earn less money for equal work is ridiculous...I think it’s fair to say we can give women more credit than that."

"Women have made significant educational gains – they even tend to get better grades than men. Women are working hard to balance the roles of work and family. Despite all this, the gap still exists. When women don’t earn equal pay, they’re not the only ones to suffer – their families do too."

"Many years of family-friendly legislation, including the Equal Pay Act and Family and Medical Leave Act, and policies such as flex time and telecommuting, have increased options to create a win-win situation for women and their employers – yet wage discrimination persists. AAUW will continue to urge Congress to ensure that current equal pay laws are enforced and that appropriate measures are taken to more thoroughly address the wage gap. We will advocate for creating work settings that are supportive of all workers with family responsibilities, regardless of gender."

– **AAUW Director of Public Policy and Government Relations Lisa Maatz**



“The choice of major is not the full story. As early as one year after graduation, a pay gap is found between women and men who had the same college major.”

“AAUW is dedicated to improving gender equity in the workplace as well as in education. The findings from *Behind the Pay Gap* are telling and disturbing. They show that equity for women remains an issue today.”

– **AAUW Educational Foundation President Barbara O’Connor**



"The American Association of University Women and the AAUW Educational Foundation's mission is to advance equity for women and girls through advocacy, education, and research. In support of this mission, the Foundation has released its compelling *Behind the Pay Gap* research report, and the Association has initiated Campus Action Projects encouraging young people at universities across the country to implement innovative programs that will build greater awareness of the gender pay gap."

– **AAUW President Ruth Sweetser**