

Delaware's "TASTE OF SUCCESS" PROJECT
2009 AAUW National Convention, St. Louis, MO

AAUW ANNUAL
SCIENCE/MATH HONORS LUNCHEON

- TITLE:** Excellence in Science and Mathematics Luncheon
- WHO:** Honorees are 11th grade women from every high school — public and private — in Delaware who excel in science and math. (The schools must have a junior class of at least 35 students.)
- WHAT:** A celebratory luncheon is followed by an inspiring, young, female speaker currently working in a STEM field; later an optional tour of university laboratories is available; honorees are given a certificate and long-stemmed carnation
- WHEN:** Annually, on a Sunday afternoon, 1-3 p.m., in March or April
- WHY:** To recognize academic excellence, encourage higher education and careers in STEM fields, and promote equity
- WHERE:** At a student center of Delaware's flagship university, the University of Delaware
- SPONSORS:** AAUW branches from both ends of the state co-sponsor with assistance from the Office of Women's Affairs at the University of Delaware
- HOW:** Each January, a letter is sent to every high school in the state, both public and private with a junior class of at least 35 students, requesting nomination of its top junior woman in science and math. (In 2009, 47 schools participated.) Upon receiving the students' names from the schools, the AAUW committee invites the students and their families to the event and solicits sponsors to defray expenses of the students' complimentary lunches. Family members pay for their own lunches, and a small "profit" is built in, thereby ensuring that a contribution can be made to the Educational Foundation from proceeds. In 2009, the event's 10th anniversary, AAUW sponsors each paid \$75 for their own and a student's lunch, and it is hoped that \$25 from each sponsor will go to the Educational Foundation. Sponsors are thanked with a photo thank you note from the event. Press releases are sent to local newspapers and Delaware's congressperson. Occasionally, the local, Gannett-owned newspaper covers the event. Each year, most of the honorees have attended with at least one family member; some bringing several. Those who cannot attend are mailed their certificate and an event program with a letter of congratulations.
- HISTORY:** The Honors Luncheon began in 2000 in response to AAUW's gender equity initiatives and honored students from New Castle County. At the same time, it became a replacement for a labor-intensive book sale for Newark Branch, the event's Delaware originator. Coastal-Georgetown Branch joined in sponsorship in 2005 to make it a state-wide effort. In 2009, two other Delaware branches were monetary sponsors, as were some outside groups including honorary and professional societies and a business. In ten years, 371 young women have been honored and thousands of dollars have been raised for the AAUW Educational Foundation.
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