

AFRICA IN AMERICA

Organization Formerly Known as AAUW NYC

In New York City, we are coming to the end of the bitterly divisive 2-year term of Dr Nkechi Agwu, president of the first branch disaffiliated in the 130-year history of AAUW.

On June 1st we have elections in the organization formerly called AAUW NYC that is struggling to survive. We have an open slate which means each member has the right to stand for any position. With this letter I am announcing my candidacy for the position of president.

AAUW

AAUW is a professional organization for professional women, now with 100,000 members in 1,000 branches, which for 130 years has strived for women; its mission is now stated as advancing "equity for women and girls through advocacy, education, philanthropy, and research."

AAUW members are members of branches in their state, and have the right to run for election to AAUW branch, state offices, as well as national offices. The president of a branch is accountable to its board of directors; the finances for each branch are accounted for by the treasurer who is charged with preparing a financial statement every month for approval by the branch board of directors.

AAUW NYC Inc

AAUW NYC Inc was disaffiliated from AAUW because of internal and external hostilities in which professionalism, attention to process and financial and ethical decency was let flow away as waste is carried by the river flowing past the United Nations building less than a mile from the AAUW NYC Inc house of this 125-year-old branch.

Our mothers and sisters bought the AAUW NYC Inc house in 1949 and burned the mortgage in its fireplace in 1966. The AAUW NYC Inc house and other assets worth \$6 million are currently being fought over by internal and external hostile forces, when the AAUW NYC Inc house should be being used for programs to recruit and support professional women who hate seeing women and girls fail, and want to help them achieve.



When you elect me president, I will unlock the doors to the AAUW NYC Inc house. I will unlock the minutes of board of directors meetings, executive meetings, financial meetings, membership meetings, nominating committee meetings, bylaws committee meetings, Women of Achievement meetings, and public relations meetings. I will unlock financial records and ensure that financial statements are presented at every board meeting.

When you elect me president, I will restore the professionalism that brought honor and glory to our mothers and sisters who started the AAUW NYC branch in 1886 because they wanted for us, their heirs, the same opportunities given to their sons.

Since the 1960s I have been fighting for empowerment of women and for equity in women and girls

In the 1970s I was active in Women's Liberation in Sydney, Australia. For 2 years, every other Friday night at the Women's Liberation House, I listened to women in abusive relationships and made for them professional appointments.

My first published statement on women's issues was

in the 1960's. I wrote an essay published in Sydney Girls High School yearly journal in which I asked why my mother did all cooking and housework for my father, a working physician (MBBS Univ London, 1944), when my mother was also a working physician (MBBCh Belfast 1940) who additionally cared for me and my 3 brothers. After school I trained



AFRICA IN AMERICA



as a scientist, and emerged from the University of New South Wales in October 1978 with a PhD in Physiology and Pharmacology, the only woman in my class. On the same week I was officially awarded my PhD, I ran for state parliament on a platform of empowerment for women. I lost, and a week later I flew to the United States to work as a scientist in what was the nation's number one physiology department at the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia.

Since 1978 I have been based in Philadelphia and its suburbs. Until 1997, when I started my publishing and medical writing company, I worked in laboratories in Sweden, Germany, Holland and Finland while my primary job was working at the University of Pennsylvania where I published research results in journals and books, organized conferences and raised funds from government and pharmaceutical industry sources. My 3 sons and daughter were born during these years, so my activities outside my work were confined to caring for my family, with continuing help from their fathers and my Quaker community.

My active advocacy for women and girls changed direction during my 4-year stint as Director of the Master of Science Program at the University of the Sciences. I started publishing *Medical Journal of Therapeutics Africa* on Martin Luther King Jr Day in January 2007 in order to celebrate the successes of African professionals, in particular, African professional women. My charge to my authors was to find cover pictures of healthy girls in school.

MY MEMBERSHIP IN AAUW

My membership in AAUW and AAUW NYC followed naturally from my lifelong commitment to giving girls the opportunities that their brothers have. I

signed up for membership immediately after my involvement with publishing articles highlighting successes in African professional women brought me to an evening discussion on Nigeria at the AAUW NYC Inc house.

I became a member of the board of directors in January 2010.

WHEN I AM PRESIDENT, I WILL UNLOCK THE DOORS TO EMPOWER WOMEN

After AAUW NYC branch was disaffiliated by a letter from AAUW written on February 27, I realized that membership of AAUW, and in AAUW NYC, is an essential part of my lifelong advocacy for women and girls. I had filed for election as a Democratic committeewoman in my New Jersey district; I ended this campaign to direct my efforts to rebuilding our branch and joining the fight started by our mothers and sisters whose passion bought the AAUW NYC Inc house and burned the mortgage.

At AAUW NYC, we lost sight of why our mothers and sisters fought so hard to create our branch and to buy and maintain the AAUW NYC Inc house a few blocks from the United Nations. Membership of AAUW is a privilege, a huge honor. I am proud to be a member of AAUW, and I am proud to be a member of AAUW NYC.

As president, I will bring back to the AAUW NYC Inc house the excitement and commitment of our mothers and sisters whose hard work bought the AAUW NYC Inc house. I will bring back the excitement that Marian Anderson exuded when she was honored with the annual Woman of Achievement award in 1958.

As your president, monthly financial statements will be prepared by the elected or appointed and board-approved treasurer.

- AAUW NYC has been operating without a treasurer since August 2010
- Financial statements have not been presented during the monthly board meetings
- Minutes of board of directors meetings and committee meetings have not been presented at board meetings

The mission for equity for women and girls can only be moved forward when we pay attention to process, federal and state laws for non profits, and AAUW national, state and branch bylaws. As your president, I am committed to professional behavior at all times.

As your president I will follow state and federal laws for non-profit companies by refraining from endorsing candidates for political office in the United States, or in other countries.

- From AAUW website, March 3, 2011: "The Legacy Ambassador Award, which was presented to General

AFRICA IN AMERICA

Muhammadu Buhari, was done so at the sole discretion of the New York City branch without input from the AAUW national organization."

•From SaharaReporters.com, March 3, 2011: "On March 1, 2011, Nigerians woke up to a breathless announcement of a "Prestigious Award" being bestowed upon the person of the Presidential candidate ... Major-General Muhammadu Buhari (rtd.)."

•New York State AAUW bylaw: "A member may be suspended or dropped from membership for any conduct that tends to injure AAUW or to affect adversely its reputation, or that is contrary to or destructive of its mission according to the AAUW policies and procedures."

AAUW is a professional organization for moving forward the mission of women and girls, not for moving forward the ambitions of men, or women, to become presidents of foreign countries.

As your president, all board and committee appointments will be made with Board of Directors approval, as is required by New York State AAUW bylaws, AAUW bylaws, mandatory branch bylaws and AAUW NYC bylaws.

•Any board member with a track record of abuse against women will be encouraged to resign. Men have no right to be abusive to women, no more right than women have.

•I will appoint a woman PRO (public relations officer) after board approval of one or more candidates, and that PRO must have a track record of honoring



AFRICA IN AMERICA



contracts, and will not be paid for PRO services.

- All members will interact with each other as required, any board member refusing to interact with other board members in a way that damages the mission of AAUW will have her position assessed by the board and be asked to step aside if differences cannot be reconciled.

- Any board member judged by civil or criminal court to have stolen from or abused any other board member will be asked to vacate the position.

- All paid positions, including housekeeper and assistant to the PRO will be approved by the board and will be open to all.

- Any board member preparing business cards with the AAUW logo to have the design approved by the board before printing the cards.

In my presidency, all board of directors meetings will start on time, and they will open with my reading the AAUW mission statement followed by sitting in silence for 2 minutes.

When I am president, I will not permit any meeting to descend into screaming and yelling and physical attacks. Other members will be directed to escort the disruptive member out of the meeting.

During an appallingly unprofessional board meeting on April 13, 2011, for which I prepared minutes, I witnessed board members scream and yell and physically attack each other. Unprofessional behavior has no place in AAUW, not then, not now, not ever. AAUW has processes in place for solving disputes, and process was not followed on that day.

I did not respond to a defamatory mass email which Lookman Sulaimon sent to the AAUW NYC membership in an attempt to derail my candidacy for elected office at AAUW NYC. Mr Sulaimon, who was elected assistant treasurer in June 2010 and recent-

AFRICA IN AMERICA



I am asking you to vote for me for president on June 1st, 2011 elections at the house that Eleanor Roosevelt opened so that women in New York City could have a base from which to fight for equity for women and girls through decency and honor and professionalism. I promise to work hard as your president to rebuild bridges, to open the AAUW NYC Inc house to all women who understand that their only limits should be their imaginations, and that they can do anything they can imagine.

I want to be your president to honor my late mother, Dr Patience Uprichard Dodgson, who always told me never to let a man pull me back. I want to be your president to honor my daughter, Miss Patience Dodgson, who first made a political speech when she was 6 at a Quaker Meeting, and whose future as she gets ready for college is as bright as my mother wished for her. I want to be your president because I want all women to have access to the opportunities I had, and Dr Patience had, and Miss Patience has.



ly appointed public relations officer, was arrested on September 26, 2010 for 1 count of sexual harassment, 1 count of making threats against life and 1 count of auto theft. Mr Sulaimon's criminal trial was adjourned until March 20, 2012, according to the New York ecrims database. New York City police returned my car in December, 2010. Kings County Civil Court has awarded me 2 financial judgments against him, these are public record. Mr Sulaimon's verbal indiscretions resulted in me receiving threats to my safety. These threats coupled with knocking me down and locking me out of where I was living led to my requesting and receiving restraining orders against him which are in effect to this day.

But mostly I want to be your president because I know how important AAUW is and has been and will be for women and girls, and because I want to restore honor and glory and sanity to the branch which is in the most powerful city in the world and needs to be once again the jewel in the crown of AAUW.

By Susanna J Dodgson BSc(Hons), PhD

Dr Dodgson has published MJoTA since its first issue, January 15, 2007.