



Donors Make a Difference

The American Association of University Women and the YC Foundation Open Doors with Education

by Michael Grady

Each quarter, The Courier profiles local philanthropists helping the Yavapai College Foundation keep higher education accessible in our community. Today, we meet Anne Barton, a YCF Board member and past president of the American Association of University Women.

Anne Barton's mother studied English at the University of Virginia in the 1930's. "She told me whenever a woman stood up to ask a question, the men would rattle the benches to drown her out." Barton, 75, sighs. "I had it easier than she did. Women today have it easier than I did. But there's still a lot of work to be done."

Barton and her fellow AAUW members have partnered with the Yavapai College Foundation to keep that momentum. "We're here to support women through education. Today, you see women breaking through in corporate careers, politics and law. Look at all the women taking part in YC's police and [Emergency Medical Technician] programs. Non-traditional fields are opening up to women and community colleges are leading the way."

Supporting women means assisting every kind of female student: the high school grad, the second-career seeker, the working mom. "One of our scholarships, the Mary Alice Moulton Scholarship, helps fund a student's child at YC's Family Enrichment Center." Barton explains.

“That does two things: it helps the mother with childcare while they study, and it gives the child a terrific preschool education.”

The AAUW also produces awareness programs to advocate and inspire. “My favorite is the Sister-to-Sister program,” Barton says. Junior and seniors from local high schools are partnered with an AAUW member for a day of activities at Yavapai College. “We get them talking about what they’re doing, what they want to do. We can tell them what to watch out for, and why it made a difference to go to school.” Rock-It Day, a program for girls with STEM-based interests (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math), includes seminars at YC and Embry Riddle. The AAUW also partners with schools and local Girl Scouts to host the Reality Store, a role-playing event where young girls balance hypothetical career choices with the costs of everyday life. “The big thing is options. We want these young women to see that education gives them options.”

The American Association of University Women boasts 220 members in its Prescott chapter. Many, like Barton, are retired professionals and talented fundraisers. They will host the annual Literary Luncheon on Friday, October 25, and a Mardi Gras celebration this spring. “A lot of these women were ‘firsts’ in their careers.” Barton says. “If you go around a meeting and ask ‘what did you do?’ You’ll hear the most interesting professions. We were fortunate to have the education that led us all into interesting work. ‘Pay it forward’ is kind of an overused phrase. But that’s exactly what we’re trying to do.”

For more information on the AAUW, or the Oct. 25 Literary Luncheon, please visit:
www.yc.edu/aauwauthors