Alabama West Florida Conference United Methodist Women Presents

48th Annual Day

•hope|joy|peace|trust|power•



"May the God who gives endurance and encouragement give you the same attitude of mind toward each other that Jesus Christ had, so that, with one mind and one voice you may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." - Romans 15: 5-6 [NIV]

Keynote Speaker: Celeste Eubanks



48th Annual Day





Our Purpose

United Methodist Women shall be a community of women whose purpose is to know God and to experience freedom as whole persons through Jesus Christ; to develop a creative, supportive fellowship; and to expand concepts of mission through participation in the global ministries of the church.

Our Vision

Our vision sharpens and energizes the PURPOSE of United Methodist Women to remain vital in the years to come. Inspired by 1 Thessalonians 1:4, the vision describes a United Methodist Women organization that is Turning faith, hope and love into action on behalf of women, children and youth around the world.

Our Annual Meeting

Conference leaders plan an annual meeting to conduct the business of the conference organization. The meeting may also include worship and other programs. *United Methodist Women Handbook 2021-2024*, page 35.

Our Offering

Our offering today is designated to Conference Pledge to Mission.

Visit AWF-UMW.org to make a donation.

TABLE OF CONTENT

Program	Page 4
Biographies	Page 5
Celebrating the Past	Page 6
Opportunities for 2021	Page 8
Spiritual Growth Report	Page 9
Mission u Report	Page 9
Website Report	Page 10
Membership Nurture & Outreach Report	Page 10
Social Action Report	Page 10
Education & Interpretation Report	Page 11
Treasurer's Report	Page 12
Mission Today Report	Page 13
Conference Awards	Page 14

AWF CONFERENCE UNITED METHODIST WOMEN ANNUAL DAY 2021 Saturday, March 6th, 2021

Welcome Zoom Reminders UMW Purpose Music Introduction of Speaker Keynote Speaker Music Debbie Bracewell, President Katy Wrona, Vice President Michele Smith, Mobile District President Jeremy & Amy Messer Katy Wrona, Vice President Celeste Eubanks, Deaconess Jeremy & Amy Messer

Break

Memorial & Celebration of Life Mission Highlight

Transition

Session Opening Prayer Calendar Coordinators Reports Conference Awards Closing Remarks Closing Song

Closing Prayer Going Forth Debbie Bracewell, President Tutti Johnson, Spiritual Growth

Kristine Jones, MN&O

Debbie Bracewell, President Katy Wrona, Vice President Jeremy & Amy Messer

Biographies



Deaconess **Celeste Eubanks**, is the Director of Leadership Strategies for the Alabama-West Florida Conference of the United Methodist Church in Montgomery, AL. A native of Slidell, LA, Celeste was christened and nurtured in the Christian faith at Mt. Olive African Methodist Episcopal Church.

Celeste received her Bachelors degree in Business Administration from the University of Southern Mississippi and her Master's degree in Communication and Leadership Studies from Gonzaga University (Spokane, WA). Upon graduating from USM, Celeste accepted a job

in Mobile, AL working as a software developer for CPSI (a healthcare information systems company), and later transitioned to Human Resources at the same company.

While in Mobile, Celeste became a member of Toulminville-Warren St. United Methodist Church and later joined St. John United Methodist Church and served there until moving to Montgomery. It was while serving at St. John that Celeste answered her call to become a Deaconess in the United Methodist Church – making a lifetime commitment to full-time vocation in ministries of love, justice, and service. Celeste was consecrated as a Deaconess in May 2018 at the United Methodist Women's Assembly in Columbus, OH.

Celeste is an active volunteer with Communities of Transformation and is a Wish Granter with Make-A-Wish Alabama. Additionally, she serves on the Alabama-West Florida Conference Board of Ordained Ministry, the Tuskegee Wesley Board of Directors, and the Quad-W Missional Outreach Board of Directors. Celeste enjoys spending time with her family and friends and loves serving the church and in her local community.



Jeremy and Amy Messer live in Mobile, AL with their 2 children, Aiden and Ansley. They both grew up in musical families and enjoy leading worship through song. Jeremy is a high school band director and serves in the 151st Army National Guard Band. Amy works as an administrative assistant at a local church as well as a virtual assistant for a family counseling practice. She spends her Thursday nights volunteering with the Mobile site of Communities of Transformation. The Messers are members of the worship ministry at Redemption Church in Saraland, AL.

CELEBRATING THE PAST YEAR

ANNUAL DAY 2020

Our 2020 Annual Day was held in the Dothan District at Enterprise First UMC on February 14-15th, 2020. Rev. Sarah Shaver was an amazing speaker who gave a great presentation on the theme "In His Service."

There was a lot of great feedback about her message and her hands-on activity of creating a prayer chain. The event wouldn't have been possible without the help of the unit at Enterprise First UMC. We were thankful for Bishop Graves and the District Superintendents who celebrated with us and held communion for our congregation on Saturday morning. We were able to celebrate the life of our sisters who passed away in 2019.

We didn't know then that the fellowship time with amazing cinnamon buns would be our last in person gathering we would have that year. Looking back, I believe it made that time even more special. We look forward to celebrating our Annual Day in person in 2021!

Katy Wrona, AWF-UMW Vice President

COOPERATIVE MISSION u 2020 Report - There's Far More Here

So, we're not giving up. How could we! Even though on the outside it often looks like things are falling apart on us, on the inside, where God is making new life, not a day goes by without [God's] unfolding grace. [...] **There's far more here than meets the eye.** The things we see now are here today, gone tomorrow. But the things we can't see now will last forever. 2 Corinthians 4:16-18 The Message (MSG)

We have known and felt what it is like when "things are falling apart on us." We have experienced a great unraveling that has shifted, quite literally, everything. Could there be, as 2 Corinthians put it, "far more here than meets the eye?" Mission u, like many activities in our lives, has moved online. While virtual, we are still creating spaces for spiritual community, lifelong friendships, lessons that change us and our communities, and spiritual practices that arrive when we need them most. In a time when it looks like things are falling apart on us, God's grace is still unfolding, and life is being made new.

Indeed: There's far more here than meets the eye. Will you join us? At our upcoming Mission u, we will examine anxiety, the culture of violence that impacts children in and out of schools, and how we as God's people can deepen our moral witness and respond faithfully.

Blessings, Laurel Akin, Mission u 2021 Dean

SPIRITUAL ENRICHMENT RETREAT 2020 Report

Our 2020 SER event was held as a virtual event due to the COVID-19 pandemic. We were grateful to have Bishop Graves give two wonderful messages on our theme "In His Service". We enjoyed music from around the conference, greetings from UMW officers around the conference, short devotions, and prayer meditation workshop. Although it was a brand-new process, many from around the conference enjoyed the SER videos on our new YouTube channel.

DISTRICT 2020 Reports

Dothan District

United Methodist Women continue to be an active and viable source of "Faith, Hope, and Love in Action" throughout our communities. Our <u>purpose</u> is to grow in our understanding of and willingness to participate in the global ministries of the church. Our guiding scripture for this year, "Those who have served well gain a good standing and considerable confidence in the faith that is in Christ Jesus." 1 Timothy 3:13 (CEB) gave us hope to make the best of 2020. While the COVID pandemic slowed down our activities, it did not stop us. In February we hosted the AWF-UMW Annual Day at Enterprise First UMC in February. After the "stay in place" orders, our District Team continued to meet via Zoom which gave us the opportunity to connect and to plan activities. In September we hosted a Zoom Spiritual Day event that combined our focus on "A Living Wage for All" and spiritual growth through social action. In October we continued our transformative education with a 4-part mission study on *Finding Peace in an Anxious World.* We opened this study to all the districts in our conference. We supported educational opportunities through our Mattie Kolb Scholarship to a deserving woman in the district. Our goal through our United Methodist Women activities is to grow spiritually, become more deeply rooted in Christ, and to put our faith into action. Our work will continue—even through the unknown challenges of a pandemic.

Mobile District

The Mobile District of United Methodist Women in 2020 fulfilled the purpose in many ways. Here is a brief synopsis we had 16 active units that contributed funds toward or pledge to the conference. These contributions allowed us to help women, children, and youth locally and globally. We had units hold zoom meetings, in person meetings, no bake bake sales, share a virtual cup of tea, and an inperson bazaar. We as a district supported Dumas Wesley, Sybil Smith village, local schools through backpack programs, and a linen closet. We had several readers involved in the reading program. We also supported UMCOR which is an annual event sponsored by Christ UMW. Several of the local United Methodist Women participated in SER both locally and conference wide. We also supported our local churches with our presence on Sunday mornings and all other bible study events. The Mobile District is very active and hopes that 2021 will bring us back to together in person soon.

Montgomery-Opelika District

United Methodist Women in the Montgomery-Opelika District put their faith into action in 2020, despite COVID, by donating generously to the global, national, and regional missions of the United Methodist Church, to UMCOR, and to their congregations' mission outreach, including food banks and one or more domestic violence intervention centers. UMW members participated virtually in the Bishop's Conversations on Race, in church study groups on racism in church and society, and how to fight racism today. They listened to Faith Talks with missionaries, wrote encouraging letters to missionaries, and heard former missionaries speak (in person before COVID) at the Call to Prayer and Self-Denial. Some UMW circles met regularly on Zoom, learning about such urgent issues as helping at-risk young women in high school stay in school and avoid a path to incarceration. Two congregations, Opelika UMC and Auburn UMC, contributed financially to help the non-profit One Voice Shelter Coalition purchase, renovate, and transform a former assisted living facility into a beautiful homeless shelter for working women, which opened this week as seven women and two young children moved in! UMW district and Conference officers participated in leadership development.

Pensacola District

The year 2020 gave the Pensacola District United Methodist Women a challenge but we moved forward by following our UMW Purpose and Vision. We not only met our pledge to the National Organization and our conference but surpassed it. Through the generosity of these women, we put our faith into action by participation in the global ministries of the church, our National UMW social action issues plus support of our local ministries. As United Methodist Women we give thoughtfully in order to make a difference in the lives of women, youth and children around the world.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR 2021

SUBSCRIBE TO Alert NEWSLETTER

Our Alabama-West Florida United Methodist Women newsletter is published 4 times a year, to *ALERT* you of upcoming events and enlighten you of past events. Please reach out to me, either by phone 334.477.3463, by text message at 334.477.3463, or by email debbracewell@gmail.com if you wish to begin receiving a copy or have not received a copy. This can be emailed to anyone; it is always sent to District Presidents and Local Unit United Methodist Women presidents around the conference as long as I have a correct email address. It can be mailed via USPS for \$8.00 per year. As we focus on our AWF-UMW theme for 2021 of "Hope, Joy, Peace, Trust, and Power," I'm looking forward to helping communicate.





We know the *Alert* is at least 50 years old as a publication. From the volume numbering it may be as old as 52 years. If any of you have older copies of the *Alert* or an earlier Conference newsletter, let us know as we are trying to scan and save materials for historical purposes.

"May the God who gives endurance and encouragement give you the same attitude of mind toward each other that Jesus Christ had" (Romans 15:5-6 [NIV])

SPIRITUAL ENRICHMENT RETREAT 2021

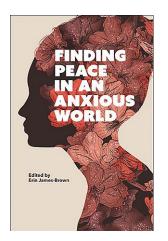
On October 8th-9th, 2021, we will meet at the Blue Lake Assembly Grounds with a focus on "Hope, Joy, Peace, Trust, Power." For the first time, we are moving to a two-day event, Friday & Saturday! Watch for all the details in the coming months for the opportunity to retreat and be in fellowship with our UMW friends from around the conference!

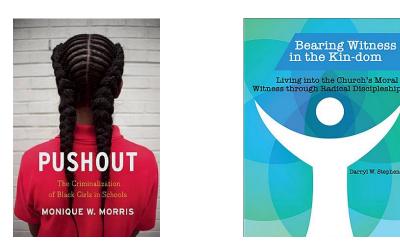
2021 COOPERATIVE MISSION u

July 23rd & 24th, 2021 Registration information coming soon! Check out AWF-UMW.org for more information!

Our 2021 Mission u will offer the following studies:

- 1. Finding Peace in an Anxious World, edited by Erin James-Brown
- 2. Pushout: The Criminalization of Black Girls in Schools by Monique Morris
- 3. Bearing Witness in the Kin-dom: Living Into the Church's Moral Witness Through Radical Discipleship by Darryl Stephens





NELL CHANCE AWARD 2021

This award is named for Nell Chance as a way to remember her and the many ways she believed in our mission as United Methodist Women. She was a moving force in the mission work of United Methodist Women of the Alabama West Florida Conference for many years and a passionate believer in our mission to women, children and youth. Nell was a member of Monroeville United Methodist Women and the United Methodist Church in Monroeville, Alabama. During her adult life, she served in many positions not only in her local unit, but district, conference and jurisdiction as well.

The award is open to all ages who are currently active in United Methodist Women. A brief letter should be submitted by individuals or mission teams giving biographical information and explanation of how this person has demonstrated the standards set by Nell Chance. A photo of the nominee, if available, included with the letter will be most helpful. The letter should be sent to Membership Nurture and Outreach Coordinator by December 31.

AWF United Methodist Women do not share personal information online

We believe personal online information should be limited. Safety precautions online must contain the wisdom of self-protection and security of our counterparts as we work together for good for all. When you share your whereabouts to the social media world, you are putting yourself at risk. Many people on social networks are not aware that a tweet or status update may also expose their current location. When you share your location, this is risky because it advises any potential thieves that you may not be home.

In like manner, when someone visits our website and sees there is a meeting scheduled at Blue Lake or First Church, etc., and your address has been shared in a newsletter, that lets any potential thieves know you may not be at home. The best method of being accessible to your counterparts and mission team members is to always ask them to find your contact information in the conference and/or district directories.

We use a special method of protecting your e-mail address on AWF-UMW.org. While officer names are listed beneath areas of responsibility on the webpages, clicking "Contact Us" is received and forwarded as appropriate. We know you are a busy person do not need to be distracted by unnecessary and unwanted e-mail contacts.

REPORTS OF THE MISSION COORDINATORS

MEMBERSHIP NURTURE & OUTREACH

NURTURE is so important when we are isolated and feeling anxious. What we can do to stay in touch with our UMW sisters?

- * Keep the leadership team informed about needs and concerns of membership.
- * Include time and space for women to share their concerns and experiences with one another at gatherings (online and in person) of United Methodist Women members.
- * Actively stay in touch with and support members through life's joys and struggles.
- * Organize ways to stay in touch through letters, phone calls, video calls, outside visits

SOCIAL ACTION

For more than 150 years, Methodist women organized for mission have worked in the name of Jesus to take positions on social justice issues and change legislation, systems, structures and practices considered unjust and oppressive. These bold foremothers advocated to end lynching, improve women's health, raise women's status in society, organize for fair wages and benefits for workers and families and adopt the Charter for Racial Justice. Today, we continue to build on this foundation as we work to interrupt the school -to-prison pipeline and ensure energy that is just for all. As United Methodist Women of the 21st century, we are called to be bold in our witness, working to dismantle systems of oppression and build, together, a better world. United Methodist Women national office staff are ready to support you as you move forward with one or more campaigns in your conference.

EDUCATION & INTERPRETATION

Empowering women to understand, interpret, and participate in the mission of United Methodist Women as well as to engage in fundraising are the highest priorities of the E&I coordinator. Showing our mission dollars at work through words and pictures helps members form emotional bonds to the ministries and understand why we give. Many of you have creative fundraisers to augment unit pledges. To provide more ideas, Jessica Tulloch, the National United Methodist Women staff coordinator, created a Dropbox repository for E&I Coordinators to archive useful resources for fundraising and program ideas. Please contact your district E&I or me for more information.

Promoting transformative educational opportunities is another responsibility of this position. While the global pandemic necessitated physical distancing, reading books at home and sharing with friends and family through email, phone, video calls or social media can be a way to relax and engage in the world without leaving home. During the first few months of the stay-at-home orders, I found it difficult to focus on my reading. However, because I participate in a Reading Program book club. I was motivated to complete a book each month. Keeping to a routine brought balance in my life. The club readers were able to pass books between members and borrow books from the public library with their curbside pickup program. Some ordered books as well as listened to the Faith Talks live on Zoom or later as a podcast. District participation in the Reading Program has a lot of room for improvement. Only 5% of members participated in 2020, compared to 8% of members in 2019. I challenge each district to reach a goal of at least 10% of members reading at least one book in 2021. To make it easier, the 2021-2022 Reading Program Catalog will cover 2 years and have expanded options for reading selections. Listening to 3 Faith Talks, a monthly podcast available at unitedmethodistwomen.org/faithtalks, will now count as 2 books for Spiritual Growth in the Reading Program. All of the Mission studies also count as bonus books (2 books in a designated category). To encourage reading to others, children and youth selections will also count for the program. There are also audio books for some of the selections for those who may prefer or need that option. By reading to someone or recording one of the shorter Reading Program books for a member who can no longer read a book, you would be sharing the joy of learning and earning credit for 2 readers. Be creative in growing your readership while educating others.

Another responsibility of the E&I is promoting the Mission Today criteria. Our challenge for 2021 will be to encourage more units to complete their Mission Today Report. **Mission Today** unit participation for 2020 was 53%, down by 6 points from 2019. I am looking forward to 2021 and seeing our United Methodist Women involved in transformative education, supporting the mission and actively involved In God's Service.

Joyce Genz, AWF - UMW Conference E&I

TREASURER'S REPORT

For the Year 2020				
MISSION GIVING (PLEDGE)	Pledge	Paid	Balance	% Paid
Bay Pines	14,000.00	10,854.94	3,145.06	77.5%
Demopolis	15,000.00	12,373.94	2,626.06	82.5%
Dothan	14,000.00	11,242.68	2,757.32	80.3%
Marianna/PC	11,000.00	11,091.44	-91.44	100.8%
Mobile	20,000.00	21,575.55	-1,575.55	107.9%
Montgomery-Opelika	8,000.00	6,744.41	1,255.59	84.3%
Montgomery-Prattville	11,000.00	8,713.62	2,286.38	79.2%
Pensacola	22,500.00	26,953.37	-4,453.37	119.8%
Events – Offering	2,700.00	2,096.00	604.00	77.6%
TOTALS FROM DISTRICTS	118,200.00	111,645.95	6,554.05	94.5%
Paid to Date to National	100,470.00	101,885.51	-1,415.51	101.4%

BEGINNING BALANCE CHECKING 1/1				10,116.00
INCOME				
Pledge from District via Local Units	94%		111,645.95	
Restricted to National			10,356.32	
Conference Specials – Agencies			7,588.88	
Conference Specials – Assembly			1,335.70	
Interest on Savings			276.75	131,203.60
EXPENSES:				
Conference A&MD paid out		2,580.89		
District Budget		2,804.55	5,385.44	
Sent to Agencies			7,588.88	
Sent to National – PLEDGE	101%		101,885.51	
Sent to National – Supplementary			10,356.32	
Savings Income			1,774.19	
TOTAL EXPENSES				(126,990.34)
TRANSFER TO/FROM SAVINGS				(4,354.26)
ENDING CK BALANCE				9,975.00
SAVINGS / CD (Restricted)	Beginning	Income	Transfers	Ending
SAVINGS / CD (Restricted)	55,368.33	492.63	4,354.26	60,215.22
TOTAL Checking and Savings				70,190.22
Prepared by	Jean R. Creswell	, AWF-UMW Treasur	er	12/31/2020

For the Year 2021 - MISSION GIVING					
	Pledge	Budget		Pledge	Budget
Baypines	14,000	2,283	Montgomery- Prattville	10,000	1,579
Demopolis	14,000	2,150	Pensacola	20,000	3,000
Dothan	12,000	1,717	Conference	2,700	24,019
Marianna/PC	11,000	1,650	TOTAL	110,450	40,972
Mobile	20,000	3,539			
Montgomery- Opelika	6,750	1,035	Pledge to National	93,883	

2020 MISSION TODAY UNITS

District	Bronze	Silver	Gold	Participant	Total	# of Units	% of Units Active
Baypines	4	0	0	0	4	12	33%
Demopolis	1	1	1	7	10	15	67%
Dothan	0	3	2	3	8	10	80%
Marianna/ Panama City	2	1	1	7	11	12	92%
Mobile	2	1	3	4	10	17	59%
Montgomery/ Opelika	1	1	0	0	2	11	18%
Montgomery/ Prattville	2	1	1	0	4	14	29%
Pensacola	1	4	1	2	8	16	50%

CONFERENCE AWARDS

Circle the winning districts as they are announced:

Many Colors, One Spirit	Special Mission Recognition	Reading Program
Baypines	Baypines	Baypines
Demopolis	Demopolis	Demopolis
Dothan	Dothan	Dothan
Marianna / Panama City	Marianna / Panama City	Marianna / Panama City
Mobile	Mobile	Mobile
Montgomery / Opelika	Montgomery / Opelika	Montgomery / Opelika
Montgomery / Prattville	Montgomery / Prattville	Montgomery / Prattville
Pensacola	Pensacola	Pensacola

Many Colors, One Spirit - points are awarded by the conference to the districts based on percentage of attendance to the following:

- AWF UMW Conference Spiritual Enrichment Retreat
- AWF UMW Conference Cooperative Mission u Event
- AWF UMW Conference Annual Day

Special Mission Recognition - points are award by the conference to the district based on percentages of membership in attendance at the following events:

- District Spiritual Enrichment Day District Annual Day
- District Officer Training
- District Mission Studies

Reading Program - winner is based on the most readers in the district during the year.

SAVE THE DATE - NEXT ANNUAL MEETING

Tentative Date: March 5th, 2022

District: Marianna -Panama City



HANDBOOK 2021-2024 UNITED METHODIST WOMEN HANDBOOK 2021–2024 www.unitedmethodistwomen.org

response

In your mail box, digital, or selected articles at:



www.unitedmethodistwomen.org/response

PROGRAM BOOK

Every group needs a copy.

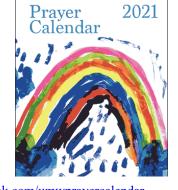
Selected programs online:



www.unitedmethodistwomen.org/program-book

PRAYER CALENDAR

Available from UMW Mission Resources or online daily:



www.facebook.com/umwprayercalendar

LEGACY FUND We are making history. Consider your legacy. Ask any UMW Officer or see:

www.unitedmethodistwomen.org/150

JOYCE GENZ, AWF-UMW E&I, will be happy to help you with any of the above resources. The material on the resource table is for display only, if you need assistance in ordering please contact Joyce at Visit the Resource area during times listed on the back.

THE AWF-UMW CONFERENCE TEAM

DEBBIE BRACEWELL KATY WRONA DEBBIE BELL JEAN CRESWELL DEBBIE BRACEWELL PEGGY CUNNINGHAM **MEMBERS** JOYCE GENZ **KRISTINE JONES ORA GILLESPIE TUTTI JOHNSON** DAVID GRAVES SUPERINTENDENTS GERARDINE STIFFLER CAROLYN HEMSTREET **CAROLYN MCINNIS** DEANIE DEFELIX MICHELE SMITH MARGE STEPHENS MARSHA CLAYTON SHARON HOGAN

PRESIDENT VICE PRESIDENT SECRETARY TREASURER COMMUNICATIONS NOMINATIONS CHAIR COMMITTEE ON NOMINATIONS **EDUCATION & INTERPRETATION MEMBERSHIP NURTURE &** SOCIAL ACTION SPIRITUAL GROWTH **AWF BISHOP** ALABAMA-WEST FLORIDA BAYPINES DISTRICT PRESIDENT DEMOPOLIS DISTRICT PRESIDENT DOTHAN DISTRICT PRESIDENT MARIANNA/PANAMA CITY DISTRICT MOBILE DISTRICT PRESIDENT MONTGOMERY-OPELIKA DISTRICT MONTGOMERY-PRATTVILLE PENSACOLA DISTRICT PRESIDENT

CONFERENCE PRESIDENTS

HELEN McGONIGAL	Deceased	1973 - 1976
SUE JONES	Deceased	1977 - 1980
JANE WEEKLEY		1981 - 1984
ELOISE McGUCKEN	Deceased	1985 - 1986
ANNE DALTON		1987 - 1989
RUTH ANN POWERS	3	1990 - 1992
JEAN SUBLETTE		1993 - 1996
NELL CHANCE	Deceased	1997 - 2000
DOROTHY BOOKER		2001 - 2004
LINDA SHERRY		2005 - 2006
BETH BOWDIN	Deceased	2007 - 2010
BETTY HELMS		2011 - 2014
LYNN HAMRIC		2015 - 2016
Debbie Bell		2017 - 2020

THANKS TO THE FOLLOWING

MUSICIANS SPEAKERS AWFUMC CONFERENCE LEADERSHIP TECHNOLOGY VOLUNTEERS PAST UMW CONFERENCE PRESIDENTS PAST UMW CONFERENCE OFFICERS NATIONAL UMW STAFF FOR LEADERSHIP AWF-UMW ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANTS ALL WHO CAME