



On behalf of the AAUW-Big Rapids branch, I am pleased to nominate Susan H. Grant for the AAUWMI Martha Griffiths Equity Award. Susan first learned about AAUW in the 1970s while living in Florida, where she was actively involved in the campaign to ratify the Equal Rights Amendment. Susan moved to Big Rapids from Florida in 1977. Joining AAUW-Big Rapids was one of the first things she did upon arrival. As a representative of the branch, Susan was instrumental in the local community's campaign to induct Big Rapids' most famous former resident, women's suffrage leader Anna Howard Shaw, into the National Women's Hall of Fame. In recognition of her leadership role in this effort, Susan had the honor of accepting Shaw's award at the induction ceremony in Seneca Falls in 2000, fifteen years after community organizers first submitted Shaw's name for inclusion in the Hall.

Susan's childhood ambition was to be an attorney, but she was told that girls couldn't be lawyers. In 1978 she defied the naysayers and headed to law school. She earned her J.D. from Wayne State University in 1981. When she began practicing law in Big Rapids with the Legal Aid office, she was the only woman attorney in town. She went into private practice in 1986 with an established firm and later started her own practice. Because she enjoyed trial work, she decided to run for office when a judicial vacancy developed. In 1996, she was elected 77th District Court Judge for Mecosta and Osceola Counties. Judge Grant served three six-year terms and was the first woman judge in the area.

To cap off her judicial career, Judge Grant established the West Michigan Regional Sobriety Court during her final term. Judge Grant was uniquely qualified to develop this court since she also holds a master's degree in Guidance and Counseling. She utilized this training as participants completed the two-year program. Judge Grant retired from the bench in 2015 and served as a mentor to the female judges who have followed in her footsteps in Mecosta and Osceola Counties.

Never one to sit idle, Susan continued to serve her community as a part-time, contract attorney for the Mecosta County Department of Health and Human Services handling child protection cases until this past year when she retired from that position. Over the years, Susan has also served as a volunteer, sponsor, and/or board member for numerous community organizations including the WISE women's shelter, Mecosta Osceola United Way, Zonta Club of Big Rapids, Project Starburst (food pantry), Artworks of Big Rapids, the Corewell Health Big Rapids and Reed City Hospital Auxiliary, the Corewell Health Foundation Big Rapids/Reed City Board of Directors, Voca Lyrica (women's chorus), and the United Church of Big Rapids, where she recently led the search committee that called the congregation's first female pastor, who was installed late last year.

Susan has spent her life bucking the patriarchy, promoting gender equality, and seeking equity for all. Her AAUW sisters of the Big Rapids branch enthusiastically endorse her nomination for the Martha Griffiths Equity Award.

Leah M. Monger
AAUW-Big Rapids President