AAUW Awards American Fellowship to Doctoral Candidate at University of Washington

WASHINGTON – The American Association of University Women (AAUW) awarded a 2012–13 American Fellowship to Coleen Carrigan. She is a doctoral candidate in Anthropology at the University of Washington (UW) and a Research Associate for the UW ADVANCE Center for Institutional Change.

The oldest and largest of AAUW’s fellowship and grant programs, American Fellowships were first awarded in 1888 at a time when women were discouraged from pursuing higher education. AAUW American Fellowships are given to highly qualified women scholars who are completing doctoral dissertations, conducting postdoctoral research, or finishing research for publication.

As a feminist anthropologist, Carrigan engages interdisciplinary scholarship to interrogate the historical and cultural dimensions of women’s labor. For her dissertation, she investigates the production of computer technology and the social mechanisms by which gender differentiated outcomes in technology fields are reproduced. Carrigan combines feminist anthropology and feminist science and technology studies to elucidate the causes of women’s underrepresentation in computer science and the consequences of denying women of all ethnicities the opportunity to influence the design and application of technology. Her research is meant to inform strategies that eradicate the barriers excluding women from computer science and transform the powers of technology to advance social justice. “I am deeply honored to be recognized by the AAUW, an organization that works tirelessly to promote and advance the rights of women.” Dr. Rachel Chapman, Carrigan’s advisor in Anthropology, describes her as “motivated by a serious devotion
to the rights and value of laborers and a longstanding commitment to seeking justice for workers, especially women workers. This passion drives her, waking and sleeping, in her intellectual, academic, political and professional efforts, and she has been developing her tools and experience to accomplish a phenomenal doctoral project that seeks to improve women’s lives.”

In her undergraduate and graduate studies, her internship at the U.S. Department of Labor Women’s Bureau, her professional experience as an executive at a technology-based company, her community affiliations and six years as a Research Associate at the UW ADVANCE Center for Institutional Change, Carrigan is committed to making interventions that promote women in non-traditional fields. Toward that end, she co-wrote six successful grants totaling $7.13 million dollars to diversify science and engineering and has led sixteen workshops on gender equity nationally. She is fluent discussing sensitive topics related to social justice and skillfully navigates systems of power on behalf of women’s equality. Receiving the AAUW Dissertation Fellowship provides critical support in the timely completion of her dissertation and facilitates her ability to make significant contributions to feminist anthropology and women’s advancement in non-traditional fields.

“The funding we provide to the AAUW American Fellows affords them the ability to become leading thinkers in their fields. It’s also a recognition of their great potential because they are receiving support from one of the nation’s most respected women’s organizations,” said Gloria Blackwell, AAUW director of fellowships, grants, and international programs. “I congratulate the 2012–13 class of AAUW American Fellows, who now belong to this dynamic community of exceptional women who are breaking new ground, providing important perspectives, and helping humanity.”

One of the largest sources of funding for graduate education for women, AAUW has provided more than $90 million to more than 11,000 fellows and grantees since awarding its first fellowship to Ida Street, a pioneer in the field of early American Indian history. Read our press release about this year’s awards on our website.

To find out more about this year’s exceptional class of awardees, visit the online directory. To reach an award recipient, call 202/728-7602 or e-mail fellowships@aauw.org.

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The American Association of University Women (AAUW) empowers women and girls through advocacy, education, philanthropy, and research. Our nonpartisan, nonprofit organization has more than 150,000 members and supporters across the United States, as well as 1,000 local branches and 700 college and university partners. Since AAUW’s founding in 1881, our members have examined and taken positions on the fundamental issues of the day — educational, social, economic, and political.

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