



Vision

of Virginia

Winter/Spring 2021

AAUW advances gender equity for women and girls through research, education, and advocacy. AAUW, founded in 1881, is open to all graduates who hold an associate or higher degree from a regionally accredited college or university.

In principle and in practice, AAUW values and seeks an inclusive membership, workforce, leadership team, and board of directors. There shall be no barriers to full participation in this organization on the basis of age, disability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, geographical location, national origin, race, religious beliefs, sexual orientation, or socioeconomic status.

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**Women
Make the
Difference!**

2021 AAUW of Virginia Conference — March 13-15

It comes as no surprise to any of us that *Women Make the Difference!* in so many ways. Mark your calendars and join us virtually at the **2021 AAUW of Virginia State Conference from March 13-15, 2021**, as we explore how women have made the difference to the fabric of our society. This is especially noteworthy against the backdrop of 2020—a year like no other. Our resilience, strength, determination, flexibility, focus, charity, creativity, and yes, often times, our sense of humor, have enabled us to make the difference against unimaginable challenges.

The agenda over the course of the three days will be chock full of engaging, mission-related speakers; opportunities to ask questions of the speakers; and even some opportunities to win door prizes. The schedule for each day is as follows: On Saturday, March 13, our sessions will be held from 10:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. and from 3:00 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. Sunday, March 14, and Monday, March 15, we will be in session from 3:00 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. each day. **Registration will be required for each day you plan to attend.**

More detailed conference information begins at page 17.

A TOWN HALL FOR NEW MEMBERS OF AAUW OF VIRGINIA

March 9, 2021 – 7 p.m.

**with Leslie Tourigny and Suzanne Rothwell
AAUW of Virginia Co-Presidents**

Join us for a virtual town hall on Tuesday, March 9, 2021, at 7 p.m. for a briefing on the activities of your state board and to answer questions. ***This event is especially for new members (those who have joined AAUW in the past three years) and those who feel like they are new members.***

Register: https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_7TCVMvEESOG-AKuKrZ0INA

AAUW of Virginia Elected Officers

- ◆ **Co-Presidents**
Suzanne Rothwell
Leslie Tourigny
- ◆ **Vice President for Program**
Nadine James
- ◆ **Vice President for Membership and Branch Development**
Cheryl Spohnholtz
- ◆ **Vice President for Finance**
Marsha Melkonian
- ◆ **Co-Vice Presidents for Public Policy**
Susan Burk
Denise Murden
- ◆ **Vice President for Communications**
Patsy Quick
- ◆ **Recording Secretary**
Deborah Dodd

<https://aauw-va.aauw.net/contact-us/>

<http://aauw-va.aauw.net/>

VIRGINIA VISION

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From your Co-Presidents



For quite a while, it looked as though 2020 would never end, but it finally did.

We all approached 2021 with great anticipation and expectations for a better year than 2020. Unfortunately, 2021 began with an unimaginable event: an insurrection that struck at the heart of our democracy and made us question whether all our elected officials were living up to their oath to “support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic.”

Now, regrettably, January 6, 2021, goes down in history as one of those dates that we will never forget exactly where we were and what we were doing. The images we saw unfold will haunt us forever. Let’s hope 2021 improves and morphs into a much better year for our country and the world. With these words, we wish you all a Happy New Year!

Last year ended with the stars aligning for AAUW of Virginia in AAUW’s 5-Star National Recognition Program. On December 2, 2020, we received notification “that AAUW-Virginia is the very first state to achieve all five stars. It’s been a complex year as we continue to navigate the ongoing covid-19 pandemic, but AAUW-Virginia has shown outstanding leadership and resilience in the fight for gender equity. Thank you so much for

your participation, your hard work, your commitment to AAUW’s mission, and the future of AAUW-Virginia.”

Recognitions like this remind us that it certainly takes a village, and we all can be especially proud to be members of the AAUW of Virginia village. AAUW-VA earned this recognition due to the efforts of the extraordinary group of individuals on the state board, along with the tireless efforts of extraordinary members in our 24 branches. Together, we make good things happen to advance equity for women and girls. The real story here is that we received this award for being who we are and for doing what we do!

Special thanks for earning the *Advancement Star* to **Cheryl Spohnholtz** and **Caroline Pickens**; the *Communications and External Relations Star* to **Patsy Quick** and the communications team; the *Public Policy and Research Star* to **Susan Burk, Sylvia Rogers, and Denise Murden**; and the *Governance and Sustainability Star* to the state board for their input into the Strategic and

Succession Plans.

As for the 5th star, the *Programs Star*, we needed to demonstrate that 90% of branches in Virginia held 2-4 strategic plan-related programs. We found that almost every branch is using every type of branch activity, e.g., local scholarships, fundraisers, book/



(Continued on page 3)

District Representatives

Northern

Sara Anderson
Sandy Lawrence

Northwest

Sylvia Rogers

Southeast

Tammie Mullins-
Rice

Southwest

Anita Aymer

From your Co-Presidents (Continued from page 2)

movie choices, and speaker programs, to advance AAUW strategic goals, including demonstrating a better understanding and implementation of diversity, equity, and inclusion. So, kudos to all of you for your untiring efforts to advance equity for women and girls through the many creative projects and activities of your branch.

You can read more about AAUW-VA's Five-Star story in the January 2021 issue of AAUW *Membership Matters*, which is posted to our website [here](#).

Our stars did not end with the AAUW-VA award. We are proud that Virginia has eight star-winning branches—three of them five-star branches. Virginia is leading the way with branch participation in the program.

- * **FIVE STARS** – Virginia Beach, Reston-Herndon Area, and Woodbridge
- * **FOUR STARS** – Alexandria, Springfield-Annandale, and Vienna Area
- * **THREE STARS** – Mt. Vernon
- * **ONE STAR** – Fairfax City

We encourage branches to first apply for those Five Star

goals that are already part of their activities or only require limited further effort to achieve. Then the branch can organize to achieve further stars. We found that the process helped us to identify what we had achieved and make better plans for what we could achieve, including organizing several activities to operate more effectively. Given achievements like our star recognitions, it is no wonder the theme for our 2021 virtual state conference is **Women Make the Difference!!** We hope to see you at the virtual state conference March 13-15. We have worked with VP for Program **Nadine James** to plan a memorable conference.

Check out the conference guide on pages 17 to 19 and be sure to register for each day.

We've scheduled a virtual town hall on Tuesday, March 9, 2021, at 7 p.m. especially for new members (those who have joined AAUW in the past three years) or for those who feel like they are new members!! **See the front page for more information and registration information.**

Stay well,

Leslie and Suzanne



AAUW-VA ended 2020 on a high note, celebrating our successful advocacy of **FairMapsVA** after voters approved an amendment to Virginia's constitution that establishes a redistricting commission with citizen representation. The citizen members have been selected, and the commission met for the first meeting on January 21. Thanks to all who spread the word about this important action! We also took pride in Virginia's free and fair election with a record turnout during a pandemic, and on behalf of our members, sent letters to both the Governor and the Commissioner of the Virginia Department of Elections thanking them and their

staffs for their efforts. We appreciate that several of our branches around the state sent similar letters to their local election officials and that numerous members worked so diligently to Get Out the Vote!

Looking ahead, AAUW-VA joined **Virginia's Coalition for Paid Sick Leave** and began working with them to advance legislation in the General Assembly session that began January 13 to require employers to provide paid sick days for essential workers; a more limited, but attainable goal this year. We held a virtual lobby team meeting to strategize and exchange information on January 11 and provided materials, scripts, and other resources for our members to inform their representatives of our priorities to close the gender pay gap and provide economic security for women and families.

We are also continuing to build awareness of the need for a **salary history ban**. Legislation addressing this was passed by the House during the 2020 session, but lack of Senate action by the end of 2020 has put the effort back to square one. We are working to make it a legislative priority for 2022. **Contacting your legislators is one of the most effective actions for advancing our public policy agenda, so we urge all our members to reach out.** If you made contacts during the General Assembly session, we ask that you provide that information by using <https://forms.gle/c4YpRYaJNfQJRLZz7> or contacting us. Let's continue to work to advance equity for women and girls!

*Denise Murden
Co-VP for Public Policy*

Great News: AAUW's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Toolkit is Now Available!



I am thrilled that the Inclusion and Equity Committee of AAUW unveiled the [Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Toolkit](#) on our AAUW website. This toolkit is far superior to the prior one. It has been developed in a methodical manner and will be updated with additional topics and pertinent material each quarter. The first information available covers three topics:

1. Getting Started with Difficult Conversations
2. Key Terms and Concepts
3. Dimensions of Diversity and Identity

Within each of these topics, there is online information as well as links to additional information on the internet. Please explore this website and continue to learn more about the topics of diversity, equity, and inclusion (DE&I).

You will begin seeing changes to AAUW of Virginia's [Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion webpage](#). Our DE&I logo has been changed to align with national's DE&I logo. Additionally, we will be reorganizing the page to better mirror national's DE&I Toolkit. We also plan to remove links from our site that duplicate national's as part of our transition.

Many of our branch and district meetings are focusing on DE&I topics this year. Several of the mini-grants this year

are DE&I focused as well. You will be hearing more about these programs and projects from the branches. Many branch and district DE&I efforts have been conducted in collaboration with other like-minded organizations within our community. I encourage each of you to continue to search for these types of organizations to share and collaborate with. Doing so will help us sew the fabric of our community into a closer and more empathetic place to be.

As it continues to be true in our long history of working toward gender equity, we have been reminded by experts of DE&I that the work of changing ourselves, our communities, and our country to be more equitable is a lifelong effort, not one that is quickly resolved. We continue to make progress through listening, learning, and, finally, taking action to ensure improvement of DE&I within our communities. We have learned from recent events that we have a long way to go to achieve our goals, but we are on the right path.

*Cyndi Shanahan
Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Chair*



Membership Matters!

As we reach almost a year of pandemic restrictions, branches have found many creative ways to stay connected with their members. Virtual programs have become the norm, and many branches have experienced increased participation using virtual methods. Social distancing does not mean lack of social connection. Branches are conducting virtual happy hours, holiday luncheons (where food is ordered from a favorite restaurant for delivery and then enjoyed together virtually), book discussions, and even game nights. The important thing is to stay connected, especially with members who live alone. Pick up the phone and call a fellow member! Send a cheery note, and if you know of someone's birthday or anniversary, send a card. We're stronger together, and we will get through this.

We have nine branches that have reached 90% or more renewals for 2020-2021: Falls Church Area, Greater Manassas, Hampton, McLean Area, Mt. Vernon, Portsmouth, Virginia Beach, Winchester, and Woodbridge. Our renewal year runs from July 1 – June 30, when a new member joins after March 15, the membership is extended to the following year. Be strategic when someone is joining as a new member in the last few months of the membership cycle.

*Cheryl Spohnholtz
VP for Membership*

Bylaws/Resolutions Committee

Call for Proposed State Bylaws Amendments and Proposed Resolutions

A call for the submission of proposed AAUW of Virginia Bylaws amendments and resolutions to be considered at the AAUW of Virginia Annual Business Meeting on March 13, 2021, was published in the fall issue of the AAUW of Virginia *Vision*, with a deadline of December 1. No submissions were received.

AAUW of Virginia Board Proposed Amendment to the Bylaws

The AAUW of Virginia Board of Directors, at its November 2020 meeting, approved a proposed amendment to the AAUW of Virginia Bylaws that is being presented at the AAUW Annual Business Meeting on March 13, 2021. This amendment would replace the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Chair with a Vice President for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. The AAUW of Virginia Board revisited the role of this position because diversity, equity, and inclusion are increasingly important principles within AAUW. This change requires a vote of the membership. The proposed amendment will be voted on under the One Member, One Vote procedure. If this bylaws change is approved, the first election of a vice president for diversity, equity, and inclusion will take place in spring 2022, with the position to commence on July 1, 2022.

Adoption of Editorial Amendments to the Bylaws

Many complex issues arose this past year regarding compliance with various provisions of the AAUW-VA Bylaws

when the Annual Business Meeting was required to be held virtually. This, and other experiences with confusing Bylaws text, led to consideration by the Board of several issues of interpretation and clarity of the Bylaws. At the November 2020 meeting, the Board of Directors considered these extensive editorial revisions to the Bylaws to increase their clarity, accuracy, and usefulness as a resource for guidance.



Revisions to the AAUW-VA Bylaws approved by the Board of Directors that are editorial do not require membership approval. The proposed revisions are considered editorial because they reflect current practices of the Board, clarify confusing or insufficiently detailed provisions, and address inconsistencies between provisions, without changing the substantive meaning of the Bylaws. The provisions clarifying the validity of virtual meetings are especially

important now. The changes are reflected in the restatement of the Bylaws on November 9, 2020, which may be found at: <https://aauw-va.aauw.net/library/>.

Branch Bylaws Changes

It is important that branches contact me to discuss proposed changes to their bylaws so that I have an opportunity to review and provide advice on such changes prior to approval by the branch board or adoption by branch members. I look forward to working with you on such changes, or with other questions or issues regarding AAUW bylaws.

Carol Dabbs

Bylaws/Resolutions Chair

2020-21 Mini-Grants – Tried & True and Bold & New

Mini-grant proposals for 2020-21 reflected exciting and creative activities and programs, both tried & true, and bold & new, with diversity, equity, and inclusion (DE&I) as dominant themes. All applications were funded at some level out of a mini-grant budget of \$1,740.00. Congratulations to the following branches who received mini-grant awards: **Woodbridge** – *Starting Conversations* which engages AAUW-VA with other organizations' members for facilitated Zoom book discussions addressing racism, culture clashes, bigotry, and bullying (\$300.00); **Wytheville** – *Program/Speaker on Implicit Bias* by Zoom if

an in-person meeting is not possible (\$240.00); **Springfield-Annandale** – *Student Inclusion Award* for a local high school junior whose essay on DE&I is selected by a branch reading committee (\$250.00); **Alexandria** – Contribution to create and place a plaque *to Honor the Women's Vote* in Old Town Alexandria to commemorate the suffragists (\$200.00); **Reston-Herndon Area** – Seed money for collaboration with the National Council of Negro Women of the Dulles Area on a reading initiative with local elementary school students using books by diverse authors (\$250.00); **Smith Mountain** – *Science Camp for Girls* which will support four local girls and AAUW's STEM agenda (\$500.00).

Although they did not receive a mini-grant, Virginia Beach

(Continued on page 6)

was awarded \$191.46 from AAUW-VA's Get Out the Vote (GOTV) account to help cover the cost of GOTV signs they printed and displayed before the November 2020 election.

Thanks to all branches who took the time to develop excellent projects that advance equity for women and girls and support our DE&I goals. It's not too early to start thinking about a branch project for the coming year. We will be soliciting proposals again this summer.

Susan Burk
Co-VP for Public Policy

Meet Our Virginia Fellows and Grantees

Thanks to the generosity of Virginia's members and branches, AAUW-VA has 16 endowments funding various fellowships and grants: seven American Fellowships, three International Fellowships, and six Research & Projects (R&P) Grants. The fellowships are primarily for PhD and post-graduate awards. The R&P Grants are for either Career Development (such as changing from an old field into a more current one) or Community Action Projects.

The list of the 2020-2021 recipients is below. For the first time in many years, none of the recipients are studying at a Virginia university. In fact, there is only one recipient of any fellowship or grant who is attending a Virginia college. She is at Virginia Tech and a PhD candidate in computational biochemistry. Her sponsors are four individuals from other states. We do have Virginia endowments sponsoring two awardees at Georgetown University and one at Johns Hopkins. There are also three at Columbia and one each at UNC Chapel Hill, Brooklyn Law School, Duke, and Florida State.

Noticeable is the R&P Career Development awardee, who is sponsored by six Virginia branches and individuals. There is a reason for that. Once an endowment has been created and funded, the principal can never be touched, so the awards to the recipients are dependent on the interest generated. Many of the R&P endowments were completed some years ago when they needed only \$25,000-\$35,000 for completion. Today, that amount does not generate a lot of interest considering that the awards have become larger through the years to keep up with increased tuition, etc.

American Fellowships

- **Tesneem Alkiek**, PhD in Islamic Law; Georgetown University; how Muslim jurists identify multiple forms of harm in marriage and divorce, particularly emotional and sexual harm. **Falls Church Area and McLean Area Branch endowments**
- **Carolina Munoz-Saez**, Post-Doctoral in Earth Science; Columbia University; hydro-thermal responses to deglaciation in the Andes. **Vera Huckle endowment.**
- **Barbara Sostaita**, PhD in Religion in the Americas; UNC Chapel Hill; mutual aid at the U.S.-Mexico border. **Mary Wright Thrasher endowment.**
- **Nupur Sutara**, Columbia University; Selected Profession MBA Business Administration and Management; facilitating development of digital and hardware products from design through development. **Pauline Evansha endowment.**
- **Diamonique Johnson**, Columbia University; Selected Profession MS Architecture and Design; sustainable construction. **Gillie Larew endowment.**
- **Hyanna Cardoso**, Law JD at Brooklyn Law School; New York City community needs. **Rosalind Exum endowment.**

International Fellowships

- **Jovita Byemerwa**, Tanzania, PhD in Pharmacology; Duke University; focus on breast cancer. **Janet McDonald endowment.**
- **Sohaila Isaqzai**, Afghanistan, PhD in Education; Florida State; improving girls' education in Afghanistan. **Adelaid Stegman endowment.**
- **Heather Chidarara**, Zimbabwe, L.L.M. Masters of Law; Georgetown University; international women's rights with focus on advancing the cause of women in Africa. **McLean Area Branch endowment.**

Research & Project Grants—Career Development

- **Rhian O'Rourke**, MBA/MA Government; Johns Hopkins University; health care public policy, legislation, and management. **Falls Church Area Branch, McLean Area Branch (two endowments), Newport News Branch, Martha Ann Miller, and Susan Nathanson Fairey endowments.**

Caroline Pickens
AAUW Funds Chair

Be Careful in Election Season Not to Be Partisan in AAUW Activities!!

In 2021 Virginia is holding elections for governor, lieutenant governor, attorney general, all members of the House of Delegates, and numerous local offices. Although AAUW is a political organization, it is strictly nonpartisan. Put simply, being political is a way to influence legislation and regulation through government or public affairs reflecting our shared values and consistent with our mission, while partisan activities have a firm adherence to a political party, faction, or person. Further, AAUW's obligation to operate as a nonpartisan charity is required by Internal Revenue Service limitations. The organization or a branch can lose its tax status as a charity for violating the nonpartisan requirement.

Under the AAUW Board of Directors Policy on Candidates for Public Office, branches can do the following:

- hold a forum or debate for candidates for partisan elective office only if all candidates from at least two political parties are invited and other recordkeeping and publicity disclosure requirements are satisfied;
- participate in nonpartisan voter registration and education by avoiding any candidate or political party identification; and
- although discouraged, once a person declares their candidacy for partisan elected office, hold a program at which the candidate is a speaker only if the

candidate limits his/her presentation to a subject of particular expertise, and no reference is made in publicity materials or at the event to the speaker's candidacy.

What we cannot do as an AAUW activity is oppose, endorse, or strongly advocate for candidates in partisan elected office races; encourage voter registration with



a particular party; fundraise for partisan candidates; or coordinate with partisan campaigns or political parties. We also cannot allow a candidate to be a speaker at a program to campaign for office unless the event is a properly held candidate forum or debate.

Members retain the right as private citizens to engage in activities otherwise prohibited to them as members so long as they take steps to ensure that they do not give the appearance that their activities are on behalf of AAUW. Depending on the circumstances, for example, when members invite their AAUW friends via email to join in a partisan political activity in their private citizen role, the member may need to state something like "I am sending this email solely in my role as a private person and not related to any organization I may be a member of."

Please contact either one of the AAUW-VA co-presidents or co-vice presidents for public policy if you have a question regarding a specific situation. We are glad to be of assistance.

*Suzanne Rothwell
Co-President*

College and University (CU) Partners

There are currently 10 higher education partners across Virginia - a loss of 10 since last year. The lower number reflects the challenging circumstances created by the covid-19 pandemic. Some institutions do not welcome visitors to campus to limit exposure to the virus. Others are operating largely at a distance with online programming.

According to the AAUW website, the current CU partners are as follows:

- Mary Baldwin University
- Northern Virginia Community College
- Old Dominion University
- Piedmont Virginia Community College
- Sweet Briar College
- University of Mary Washington
- University of Richmond
- University of Virginia at Wise
- Virginia State University
- Washington and Lee University

This number of higher education institutions does not accurately reflect the number of relationships our branches maintain with colleges and universities in their regions. The results of a November inquiry to branch presidents suggests there are many collaborations with institutions not listed as formal CU partners. These activities range from supporting scholarships and student organizations to sharing special programs.

There is interest from branches for an information piece or brochure describing AAUW scholarship opportunities in Virginia - a project we will work on this spring. Earlier guidance from AAUW encouraged promotion of the organization's online programming, which will be a topic for discussion at a February Zoom meeting of CU representatives.



*Barbara Woodlee
CU Representative*

AAUW-VA Continues Its Relationship with the UVA Batten School

Those of you who attended the 2020 summer leadership meeting heard from **Madison Roberts** about her excellent capstone research project titled [Using Legislation to Reduce the Gender-Based Wage Gap in Virginia](#). At that time, Madison had just received her Master of Public Policy degree from UVA's Frank Batten School of Leadership and Public Policy. Her research was conducted for AAUW-VA as her client. **Sylvia Rogers**, in her former role as an AAUW-VA Co-VP for public policy, served as Madison's mentor.

When AAUW-VA entered the relationship, we weren't sure how it would turn out. It was a win-win: Madison completed her graduate degree, and we received sound policy recommendations for our advocacy for a salary history ban. Further, Madison was the only one in her graduating class who was asked to make a presentation on her research findings to the client organization she was working with—something that did not go unnoticed with her advisor. As a result, we were contacted by several students this year interested in researching for us, and we found a great match with **Catalina Perez** (UVA '20)—and of course, Sylvia, as her mentor.

Catalina is pursuing an accelerated master's degree at the Batten School. With AAUW-VA as her client, she is completing a capstone project that will document how the economic impact of covid-19 is compounding pay inequity for working women—especially single mothers—at a greater rate than for men. The study, expected to be submitted this May, will include policy recommendations that could ameliorate this injustice and have important implications for our advocacy on the issue.

This fall, Catalina plans to attend law school and specialize in immigration law; a goal inspired by her experiences as a two-year-old coming to the U.S. with her parents in 2000 as refugees fleeing Colombia. She was told by a classmate in grade school that she should go back to where she came from, but a teacher reassured her that as an immigrant, she had much to contribute. And indeed, she already has. Fluent in Spanish, Catalina has volunteered to help farm workers on the Eastern Shore complete documents and report job discrimination. She currently serves as a program director for Charlottesville's Legal Aid Justice Center, where she represents low-income immigrants in court-related cases. She has translated stories from Latino children unlawfully separated from their parents and held in a local correctional facility for use in a suit against the Virginia Department of Corrections. Through her service in these and other ways, Catalina aspires not only to defend the law, but also to create laws and policies that will give the Latino community, in her words, "hope and comfort knowing there are lawyers . . . that will fight for their right to belong" in this country.

*Sylvia Rogers
AAUW-VA Client Liaison*

Online Voting for AAUW of Virginia's One Member/One Vote 2021

VOTER GUIDE

THE VOTING PROCESS FOR THE ELECTION OF STATE OFFICERS AND A BYLAWS AMENDMENT WILL BEGIN APRIL 12. It is very important that you cast your online vote by the deadline of **May 3, 2021**, because we need a quorum of **seven (7) percent of the membership for the election**. If we don't have a quorum, the new state officers cannot take office July 1, 2021. Please take the time to vote as a responsible AAUW of Virginia member.

HERE IS THE SCHEDULE OF 2021 VOTING.

- **February 10–March 22:** Verify that your email address is accurate in the AAUW Member Services Database (MSD) (instructions below).
- **April 12:** Online voting opens.
- **May 3:** Online voting closes at 11:45 pm.

⇒ **SAVE THIS COPY OF THE VIRGINIA VISION.**

This is the Voter Guide for the 2021 AAUW of Virginia state election. You will be voting for candidates for three state offices and a bylaws amendment. All are described in this Voter Guide. On March 13, 2021, at the annual business meeting at the AAUW-VA virtual state conference, you will have the opportunity to meet the nominees for the state officer positions and to discuss and amend the bylaws amendment. If there are any changes to information in the Voter Guide after its initial publication, we will notify you and post information on the AAUW of Virginia website. According to the AAUW of Virginia Bylaws, the board can accept additional nominations for any of the three positions being filled so long as any nomination is submitted in writing (which includes email); has the written consent of the nominee; and is made to the Nominating Committee Chair **Anita Aymer** at alaymer2010@gmail.com within 30 days of this Voter Guide being distributed in this Winter/Spring 2021 edition of the *Vision*.

⇒ **VERIFY YOUR EMAIL ADDRESS IN YOUR AAUW NATIONAL PROFILE IN MSD.**

Go to the [AAUW Member Services Database](#) on the AAUW website. Use your member number and your password to log-in. If you do not know your member number, follow the directions you receive when clicking on MSD to obtain it. It takes only seconds. Your branch treasurer can also give you your member number. If you do not have a password, follow the instructions to create a password. Complete this task now, or at the latest, by **March 22**. While updating your email address, also update any other information that needs updating.

⇒ **VOTING WILL BE MADE AVAILABLE ONLINE TO ALL AAUW OF VIRGINIA MEMBERS WITH EMAIL ADDRESSES.**

The email address that AAUW has in your profile in the MSD will be the address used to notify you to vote. New members who have joined **by April 1** will be eligible to vote in the 2021 election.

⇒ **WATCH FOR YOUR VOTING INSTRUCTIONS IN EMAILS BETWEEN MARCH AND MAY 2021.**

Do not ignore emails from AAUW of Virginia during March, April, and May! These will contain instructions and reminders about voting. This year again, we will be using software from an outside vendor, ElectionBuddy, to conduct our election and to tally the results. Therefore, individual votes cannot be seen by AAUW of Virginia members. We will let you know when the link to the electronic ballot is emailed to members so that, in case you do not receive the email, you can check your email junk or spam files.

Questions concerning the election can be directed to
Leslie Tourigny (ltourigny@gmail.com) or Sandy Lawrence (sandyaauw+juno.com).

Meet Your Candidates

The Nominating Committee has a complete slate of officers for 2021-2023. They are as follows:

Vice President for Finance-Marsha Melkonian, Vice President for Membership and Branch Development-Cheryl Spohnholtz, and Recording Secretary-Sherry Warren.

*Anita Aymer
Nominating Committee Chair*

Vice President for Finance Marsha Melkonian

Marsha is currently the vice president for finance for AAUW of Virginia and is seeking a second term. Since 2016, she has been a member of the Smith Mountain Branch. She is retired from the Internal Revenue Service, where she worked for 33 years as a computer programmer and training branch chief. Marsha graduated from the University of Maryland with a BS degree in marketing and from George Washington University with an MA degree in American history. Before her retirement, Marsha lived in Warrenton, Virginia, where she belonged to the Fauquier Business and Professional Women's Club and was an active volunteer with other community organizations. Marsha is married and the mother of two adult sons. Her hobbies include quilting, crocheting, scrapbooking, and cardmaking.



Vice President for Membership and Branch Development Cheryl Spohnholtz

Cheryl has been a member of the Mt. Vernon Branch since she joined AAUW in March 2013. She is the current vice president for membership and branch development. She was a co-vice president for program for AAUW of Virginia from 2018-2019, and from 2016-2018 she was the AAUW of Virginia Funds chair. Cheryl retired from the Aerospace Corporation in 2018 and also retired as a captain in the Navy with over 24 years of service. Cheryl was a member of the first class of women to attend the U.S. Naval Academy, where she graduated in 1980 with a BS in political science. She also holds a master's degree from the Naval Post-graduate School in Systems Technology (Space Operations) and an MBA from Liberty University. Her military career included tours in computers, intelligence, communications, and space systems. Cheryl enjoys traveling, reading, and supporting AAUW activities. She is a single mother of one son and has lived in Virginia since 2000.

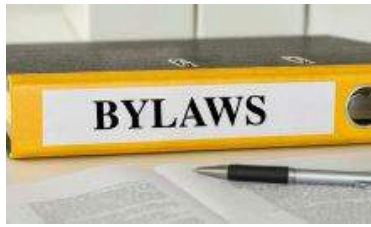


Recording Secretary Sherry Warren

Sherry Warren has been a member of the Portsmouth Branch since 1991, where she has served as recording secretary, public policy chair, AAUW Funds chair, and co-president. Between 1998 and 2017, she served on the AAUW of Virginia Board in various positions- Southeast District representative, public policy co-vice president, and most recently, as recording secretary. Sherry graduated from Old Dominion University with a BS in special education/elementary education and earned an MEd from the University of Virginia. For over 33 years, she worked in public school divisions teaching special education and elementary school, working in staff development, training reading teachers, supervising preschool special education teachers, and serving as an elementary school assistant principal. Since retiring from education in 2010, Sherry has worked as office manager for the Southeastern Virginia Chapter of the Alzheimer's Association. Sherry discovered her artistic side about 15 years ago, and now creates many forms of fiber art. She is currently recording secretary for the League of Women Voters of South Hampton Roads. Sherry sees the AAUW of Virginia Board as a strong, supportive tool that can assist branches in strengthening mission-driven programs and recruiting and retaining members.



AAUW OF VA PROPOSED BYLAWS AMENDMENT



In addition to candidates, you will vote on the bylaws amendment below.

Shall the AAUW of Virginia Bylaws be Amended to Establish the Elected Position of Vice President for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion and to Eliminate the Appointed Position of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Chair?

The AAUW of Virginia Board periodically reviews the state bylaws to reflect best practices and compliance with AAUW, state, and federal standards. The board recommends approval of an amendment to the state bylaws to add the elected board position of vice president for diversity, equity, and inclusion in lieu of the current appointed board position of diversity, equity, and inclusion chair.

Rationale for Proposed Amendment

At its meeting in April 2019, the AAUW of Virginia Board approved the newly appointed board position of diversity and inclusion chair, which did not require membership approval. At the November 2020 board meeting, the AAUW of Virginia Board revisited the role of this position. The board concluded that because diversity, equity, and inclusion are increasingly important principles within AAUW, this position should be elevated to be an elected vice president position. This change requires a vote of the membership.

If this bylaws change is approved, the first election of a vice president for diversity, equity, and inclusion will take place in Spring 2022, with the position to commence on July 1, 2022.

Current Text

ARTICLE X. OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS

Section 1. Officers and Directors.

- a. Elected Officers and Directors. The elected officers and directors of the Affiliate shall include the president; vice presidents for program, membership and branch development, finance, public policy, and communications; and a recording secretary.
- b. Appointed Officers and Directors. The appointed officers and directors shall be the AAUW Funds chair, bylaws and resolutions chair, college/university chair,

diversity, equity, and inclusion chair, historian, and parliamentarian, and such other officers as may be considered desirable and approved by the Board to carry out the work of the Affiliate. The president shall appoint appointed officers and directors with the approval of the Executive Committee.

Proposed Amendment (Deleted text has a line through it, and added text is underlined.)

ARTICLE X. OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS*

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* Temporary Note: Article X, Section 3 states "The president and vice presidents for program, public policy, and communications shall be elected . . . in even numbered years and the other officers elected in odd-numbered years." To keep the number of officers eligible for election evenly balanced at four each year, the first vice president for diversity, equity, and inclusion shall be elected for a one-year term in 2022 and commencing in 2023 shall be elected for two-year terms in odd-numbered years. Therefore, the first such vice president shall be eligible to serve an initial one-year term and then one two-year term.

Branches in Action

The **Alexandria Branch** cooked up Lunch and Learn Zoom meetings and invited everyone. The branch created a successful and safe 75th anniversary fundraiser with its Autumn Leaves campaign. Money raised will be forwarded to the branch's human trafficking rescue initiative. Date nights were changed to virtual, viewing three programs by members on their own and then discussing them on Zoom ("Just Mercy," "The Vote," and "Radioactive"). Also, we converted the program to feed the homeless at Christ House to touchless.

On September 15, Alexandria's Francophile group discussed *The Plague* by Albert Camus. The coronavirus pandemic brought renewed attention to the famous novel. Published shortly after World War II, this book can be read on many levels. The discussion of this prescient novel was led by Francophile Chair **Susan Cash**. Susan's research included recent articles on the book's relevance to today.

Members even celebrated New Year's Eve on Zoom!

*Lane Stone
Co-President*

The **Arlington Branch** generally offers a program monthly, keyed to the strategic goals of AAUW. For all but the January and February programs, when the branch preferred to have an internal discussion, all are invited to attend. The list of planned programs is below. Details are posted on the website (<https://arlington-va.aauw.net/>). Contact presarlvaauw@gmail.com to request the Zoom invitation for a program.

- Saturday February 20, 10:30 a.m., Racial Inequities, an internal branch discussion facilitated by **Krysta Jones**
- Saturday, March 20, 10:30 a.m., Women's Financial Security, presentation by **Ann Summerson**, a financial advisor, followed by the annual meeting
- Monday, April 12, 7:00 p.m., Girls and STEM, presentation by **Dr. Argie Kavvada**, NASA, and AAUW Arlington awards to female winners of the Northern Virginia Regional Science Fair.
- Monday, May 17, 7:00 p.m., Celebration of 2021 AAUW Arlington **Elizabeth Campbell Award**, Lunch Bunch scholarship winners, and Educator of Year.

*Carol Dabbs
President*

The coronavirus has taught us that it is challenging to provide programs. Resilience is the key, and the

Hampton Branch has risen to the challenge. The first challenge was to ensure that a member was able to serve as a Zoom master! Surprise! The branch has two Zoom masters - **Dr. Sarita Gregory** and **Laura Greenfield**.

The branch's second challenge was to develop virtual programming for the 2020-2021 program year. On September 22, the branch partnered with the Association for the Study of African American Life and History (ASALH) to present a virtual program on African Americans and the Vote. The branch was represented by **Dr. Margaret Bristow** and **Dr. Sarita Gregory**. **Dr. Bristow**, along with **Ebone Giles**, presented a dialogue between **Adella Hunt Logan**, a Black member of the National American Women's Suffrage Association (1869-1915) and **Margaret Murray Washington** (1870-1925), the wife of Booker T. Washington. **Dr. Gregory** spoke on the Voting Rights Act of 1965 and its impact today.

The branch leadership participated in the national AAUW webinar, Programming in a Pandemic for Branch and State Leaders on October 14, and the Southeast District meeting on October 24. The information from both programs was shared with members during the November meeting.

The last challenge was achieved when members watched the Morgan State University Choir Virtual Christmas Concert on December 13.

Dorothy "Dort" Pride passed away January 4, 2021, at age 98. She was the last original member of the branch, which was founded in 1949.

*Carolyn Stewart
Newsletter Editor
Program Vice President*

Celebrate! Celebrate! Celebrate! Significant Branch Anniversaries in 2021

Lynchburg	100 years
Newport News	95 years
Winchester	90 years
Mt. Vernon	65 years
Wytheville	50 years



(Continued on page 13)

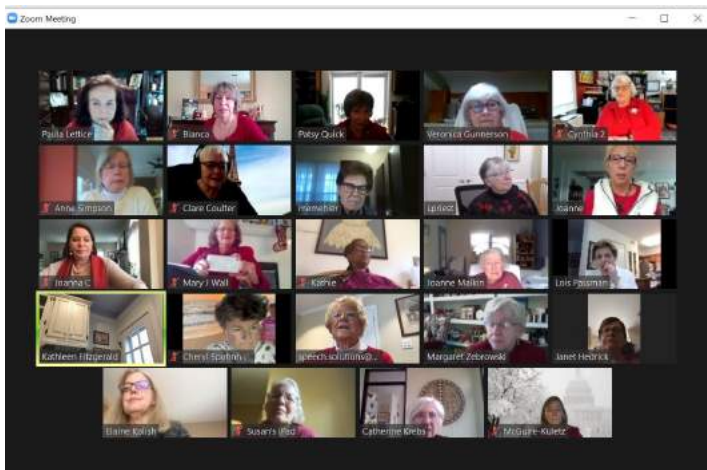
Branches in Action

(Continued from page 12)

As the **McLean Area Branch** welcomes the New Year with much hope, it still plans to hold meetings by Zoom. The December meeting featured dancer and activist **Brinda Guha** who presented several pre-recorded routines of her dances, both solo and with her company. Her advocacy group, Wise Fruit, highlights social justice issues concerning minorities. In January, **Elizabeth Novara**, American Women's History Specialist for the Library of Congress Manuscript Division, presented *Women of Color in the Struggle for the Vote*. Because members are not gathering in person, the branch membership vice presidents, **Sue Christie** and **Barbara Sipe**, organized a buddy system where each board member keeps in contact with six other members through phone calls, cards, and emails. It has been very successful.

*Carol Mournigham/Nez Basit
Co-Presidents*

In spite of a crazy, disrupted year, the **Mt Vernon Branch** ended it on a high note! The Holiday Zoom Get-Together was a complex adventure in planning! **Paula Lettice**, who hosted the Zoom event December 5, arranged for the delicious lunches from Cedar Knoll, which members picked up before Zooming, while at the same time donating food to the local food pantry. Thanks to **Cathy Krebs** who collected and delivered the food! Members **Susan Watkins (Mississippi)**, **Mary Wall (California)**, and **Ronnie Gunnerson (Chester, MD)** joined on Zoom from afar.



The screen shot is compliments of Bianca Daugherty.

The December raffle basket earned \$840 for AAUW Funds. Thanks to **Paula Lettice** who dressed the basket and sold the raffle tickets. **Louise Priest** was the lucky winner. **Paula** also handled the technology of a couple planned sing-alongs and a flash mob video! **Patsy** gave several toasts! Thanks to **Cynthia Jacobus**, who made storytelling in three categories such a success! Prizes for great stories went to **Mary Wall**, **Janet Hedrick**, and **Patsy Quick**. Best Dressed Award went to **Ronnie Gunnerson** who wore the Christmas shirt her daughter made for her at age 12! Was the complex adventure worth it? Many wonderful, positive responses included, "It really felt like a party!"

*Patsy Quick
President*

After many successful years of September dinner meetings, the **Norfolk Branch** succumbed to a Zoom Meet and Greet September program. It was good to finally be able to see and talk to members again and make some plans! October was very enlightening with **Mrs. Martha Rollins, J.D.**, and past president of the local League of Women Voters, giving a view of the Virginia 2020 election, especially Amendment No. 1. For November, **Dr. Isabelle Hallam**, gave a thoughtful program on Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking. The December meeting was entertaining with a classic book quiz instead of the usual holiday tea. Members had fun guessing the names of classic books from the first sentence, and afterward members had some much needed catching up with friends! The branch is proud to announce that past president **Jane Hosay** is now the branch's 13th Fifty-Year member. The branch is grateful for the use of Zoom meetings for programs to continue meeting together during this time.

*Wilma S. Robinson
President*

Reston-Herndon Area Branch celebrated its Five-Star achievement January with a special Zoom meeting with AAUW President **Kim Churches**. The next day, the branch celebrated American democracy by watching the inauguration of the U.S. president together via Zoom.

In late 2020, members enjoyed a virtual tour with the National Women's History Museum on the Lavender Menace and Second Wave Feminism. The museum offers programs either free to the public or, for a small fee, to

Branches in Action

groups. The branch replaced the annual November Friendsgiving with a virtual event with branch member **Dr. Jean Ann Linney** who shared ideas on maintaining mental health in the time of covid-19. Attendance at this and other programs and groups continues to be terrific. The branch continues to have fun and keep connected with AAUW friends in the branch, district, and statewide.

*Janine Greenwood
President*

In addition to continuing virtual program presentations, the **Roanoke Valley Branch** has made efforts to enhance AAUW's presence and name recognition in the Roanoke area. In May, with proceeds from book sales, the branch presented six scholarships to area girls and women. In September, the branch set up a voter information/registration table as part of the Citizen's Fair which was co-sponsored by several area organizations.



The branch is listed as a partner in the Roanoke Change Academy, a book discussion program facilitated by the Roanoke public libraries. The branch has initiated a card sharing project to relieve some of the social isolation of so many of our members. Along with members' continued work on diversity issues and member education through monthly programs, the branch continued book sorting efforts in hopes of resuming semi-annual book sales by August.

*Cacky Wright
President*

The **Smith Mountain** branch has been busy! Activities were either conducted via Zoom or outdoors wearing masks and socially distanced.

International Study Group: In September, members learned about Moroccan education and culture, including a demonstration of belly dancing; in November, members watched an iMovie Morocco travelogue, and; in February, will have a book discussion on *The Caliph's House: A Year in Casablanca* by Tahir Shah and *A House in Fez: Building a Life in the Ancient Heart of Morocco* by Suzanna Clarke.

Classics Book Group: In October, the group discussed *Middlemarch* by George Eliot, and in February, the group will discuss *The Joy Luck Club* by Amy Tan.

In Your Own Backyard: The branch launched this new series by meeting in October at the Skyway Animal Farm in Bedford, where the owners explained their life-providing animal-assisted activities for children and adults.

Branch Meetings: In September, Co-Presidents of AAUW-VA **Leslie Tourigny** and **Suzanne Rothwell** spoke about the founding of the organization as well as the diversity, equity, and inclusion initiative. At another meeting, **Pidge Morgan** discussed her personal calling to promote education for young girls and women in Tanzania. **Jennifer Golston**, manager of the Moneta Library, presented *Reinventing Libraries* in January.

*Laura Southall
Newsletter Editor*

The **Springfield/Annandale Branch** celebrated a Zoom holiday party with members donning festive holiday clothes and providing their own food and drink. Neighbors of Co-VP for Programs **Ann Sauberman**, a husband and wife duo, played classical pieces including three short Bach selections on flute and violin. (**Jennifer Richard** is with the National Philharmonic Orchestra and **Andy Axelrod** is a professional multi-woodwind instrumentalist.) A short brass concert was presented by Co-VP for Program **Irene McGhee's son, Sean**, on trombone and his girlfriend **Audrey Schmid** on trumpet. Both are professional musicians, and Audrey is a trumpet teacher. Some members shared information about food or drink that is part of their holiday tradition and some showed samples. They were asked to send their recipes to one of the program VPs, who put them together in an email to send to members.

January's general meeting featured **Dr. Gloria Addo-Ayensu**, director of the Fairfax County Health Department, who gave a little history of the state's largest health department and the impact of covid-19 on women and minorities. Another Zoom meeting will feature **Olivia**

Branches in Action

Campbell, a journalist and author specializing in medicine and women. Her debut nonfiction book, *Women in White Coats*, is due out in March 2021.

*Judy Baldwin
Co-President*

Despite little virtual meeting experience, **Suffolk Branch** members helped each other learn to Zoom, enabling them to hold an emotional tribute in late October for founding member **Fran Alwood** who had passed away in March 2020. Fran's friends, family, AAUW-VA co-presidents, and other board members joined branch members reviewing Fran's contributions to AAUW and its mission since the branch's founding in 1959. It was a comfort to be able to share love for a beloved member. It has motivated members to continue to meet via Zoom despite the challenges of the pandemic.

*Denise Murden
President*

Because of the pandemic, the **Vienna Area Branch** could not hold its annual holiday luncheon, which is also the donation drive for a local women's shelter. How to make up for the loss of social time and to make sure the shelter continued to receive our support?

First, the branch held a drop-off day for members to bring donations for the shelter. One member opened her (immaculately clean!) garage as the collection site. Members donated almost \$1,000 in store cards and multiple bags of hygiene products.

Second, members held a Winter Solstice Toast via Zoom on December 21. Everyone was invited to share something with the group. Shares ranged from a picture of a new grandchild to a delightfully customized rendition of "Santa Baby," performed with ukulele accompaniment. Raffle drawings for special Vienna-themed ornaments donated by a member, with proceeds to AAUW Funds, were interspersed. A happy way to wrap up the first half of the program year!

*Laurie Cole
President*

The **Virginia Beach Branch** is working diligently to keep members engaged with the branch and AAUW initiatives. In September, the branch met over Zoom to discuss the challenges faced and the lessons learned during covid-19. To increase meeting turnout over Zoom, the branch held a practice Zoom meeting to assist members in joining meetings. In October, the branch hosted

the Virginia Beach mayoral candidates, and in November, had a program explaining gerrymandering. Instead of the usual Christmas luncheon, members socialized over Zoom. The program chair encouraged members to donate the money allotted for the luncheon to AAUW or to programs the branch supports. Prior to Christmas, books depicting diversity, equity, and inclusion were collected and donated to REACH, a program which promotes literacy among children. Unable to hold the usual January fundraiser, the branch sold Autobell gift cards and raised \$400 for the Greatest Needs Fund.

*Jeanette Olson
President*

With confirmation that the **Woodbridge Branch** had earned 5-Star status in August (meeting membership deadlines, planning virtual meetings, and developing C/U partnerships), the branch continued to live up to its 5-Star attitude! The branch added 11 members - including transfers, a recent college graduate, four C/U affiliate staff, two national members, and two who rejoined. The branch



"Saxon, the Suffrage Cat" by Julie Dzikiewicz
(September Program Presenter)

Zoomed an artist and an author with presentations on women's history, STEAM, and Chasing the American Dream; virtually hosted the second annual Honoring Our Educators program, paying tribute to 11 connected to the branch's programs and community- including the champions of gender equity **Myra and David Sadker**; and had a ZOOM-TOGETHER for the holidays including sharing family traditions and recipes plus fun activities. The annual movie event after previewing "Finish the Fight" will include discussion and attendees sharing a significant woman's biography of their own.

*Susan Bardenhagen
Communications Chair & Newsletter Editor*

DISTRICT NEWS

The **Northern District** has been busy with two outstanding programs. In the first program, 79 members discussed What's My Privilege - Identifying and Using Various Privileges for Good. **Alicia Jones McLeod**, Executive Director, Challenging Racism, and other members of the group spoke and led small groups in learning more about privilege, specifically White privilege and how it informs systemic racism.

The second event was a panel discussion on Local Governments' Efforts on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion; 58 members attended and learned what our local governments are doing related to diversity, equity, and inclusion. The panel included **Karla Bruce**, Chief Equity Officer for Fairfax County, **Samia Byrd**, Chief Race and Equity Officer for Arlington County, and **Susan Bardenhagen**, Manassas City Equity and Inclusion Task Force member.

Both events were lead and moderated by Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Chair **Cyndi Shanahan**.

*Sandy Lawrence/Sara Anderson
Northern District Co-Representatives*

On October 18, Allison Barrett Carter from the Frank Batten School of Leadership and Public Policy at UVA conducted a Zoom program for the **Southwest District** branches. Carter is the operations director of the Center for Effective Lawmaking. Her program shared some interesting facts regarding the effectiveness of

women legislatures. Seems the women in the minority party in Congress are more effective than the majority party. Minority legislative women impact the lawmaking process by over 30%, whereas the majority party women only achieve about 10%. Women are better at compromising than the men which improves their success rate. The meeting was attended by 20 members, which included all four SW District branches. The next meeting will be in the spring, focusing on criminal justice reform. The Wytheville Branch will be offering a program with **Sue Joyce**, M.Ed. on implicit bias. Program format yet to be determined - Zoom or in-person.

*Anita Aymer
Southwest District Representative*

You will notice throughout this newsletter that for security reasons, email addresses are written like this: Name+ email address. Please know that the + sign is a stand in for the @ sign in each address.



In Memoriam - Mary Swain

AAUW of Virginia celebrates the memory of our longtime friend and member, **Mary Martin Swain**. Mary, age 80, passed away November 7, 2020. Mary joined AAUW on July 1, 1968 and continued to be an active, engaged, committed member for 52 years. Prior to moving to Portsmouth, she was an active member of, and served as treasurer of the Vienna Area Branch. Mary was co-president of the Portsmouth Branch in 2007-2009 and again in 2011-2013. She founded the Portsmouth AAUW Book Group in September 2001, and actively facilitated many spirited book discussions until shortly before her death.

Mary served as state treasurer in 2000-2002 and membership/community relations chair from 2002-2003

when Theresa Merkel was state president. Theresa said, "She was always a pleasure to work with and enlivened all our meetings. Her let's get this done attitude was an encouragement for all the members of the Board."

Mary served as AAUW of Virginia's AAUW Funds chair 2010-12. She also was the Portsmouth Branch AAUW Funds representative for several years through 2020. Many branch members enjoyed the theater outings to Thomas Nelson Community College she organized to raise funds for AAUW. She is survived by her husband of 53 years, Robert Swain, two sons, four grandsons, and two great grandchildren.

*Kathy Batkin
Historian*



Conference Schedule and Registration Information

Please join us virtually for the annual AAUW of Virginia State Conference, which also includes our 96th Annual Business Meeting. In addition to conducting important business of our organization, over the course of three days, you'll hear from and be able to question an exciting variety of speakers on the AAUW mission-related topics described below.

On Saturday, March 13, there will be morning and afternoon sessions, while on Sunday, March 14, and Monday, March 15, there will only be afternoon programs.

The conference and business meeting are free, but **please register in advance for each day you want to attend by using the registration links below.** You will be sent Zoom links for each day. Even though there will be two sessions on March 13, there will only be one Zoom link for that day.

Contact us at AAUWofVA@gmail.com if you have any questions or problems with the registration links.

Day 1: Saturday, March 13

10:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. & 3:00 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.



[REGISTER HERE FOR DAY 1](#)



Women Make the Difference! The 2020 AAUW of Virginia Woman of Achievement Awardees

Biennially, AAUW-VA presents our prestigious Woman of Achievement Award to Virginia women who have made outstanding educational, civic, and cultural contributions; demonstrated excellent leadership skills; and contributed to the advancement of women with a positive impact in our state and/or nation. We selected two outstanding awardees in 2020, but the covid pandemic prevented us from honoring them last year.

Join us in honoring our 2020 Woman of Achievement Awardees: **State Senator Janet Howell** and **Scientist Ana Humphrey**:

- As the second in seniority in the Virginia Senate, **Senator Howell** is one of Virginia's most influential state senators. She has been representing parts of Fairfax and Arlington Counties since 1992. She is credited with major legal reforms, and her legislative priorities have focused on education, children and families, and equal rights for women.
- **Ana Humphrey** is a scientist who has won multiple national, international, and state awards for her research, and who mentors young students in STEM. In 2019, she was the first-place winner surpassing more than 2,000 student entries in the prestigious Regeneron (formerly the Westinghouse) Science Talent Search. Ms. Humphrey is currently a sophomore majoring in astrophysics at Harvard College.



Keynote Address: Women Make a Difference! in U.S. Elections: Assessing Gender and Intersectional Dynamics in Election 2020 and Beyond

2020 was a record-breaking year for women in American politics from the presidential level down. However, understanding the success and influence of women in elections and representation requires attention to diversity *among* women, including along lines of race/ethnicity and party. **Dr. Kelly Dittmar, PhD**, Associate Professor of Political Science at Rutgers University–Camden, and Director of Research and Scholar at the renowned Center for American Women and Politics at the Eagleton Institute of Politics, will assess the gender and intersectional dynamics in election 2020, with particular attention to women candidates, voters, and activists, and discuss what election outcomes reveal and mean for women's representation and policymaking in 2021 and beyond.



What Difference! Does Poverty Make in the Lives of Women?

Economic security, *i.e.*, ensuring livelihoods for women, is one of the focal areas in the AAUW Strategic Plan. It plays a prominent role in our research, advocacy, and program planning. No discussion of economic security is complete without considering poverty and what difference it makes in the lives of women.

Poverty is indeed a complex and thought-provoking term. For women, it entails more than just a lack of income and resources. It impedes their ability to make decisions regarding every aspect of their lives. In this session, we will hear from two experts: **Dr. Diane Hodge, PhD**, Director of the School of Social Work in Radford University's Waldron College of Health and Human Services; and **Susheela Varky, Esq.**, Director of the Center for Family Advocacy and Legal Assistance for Victim-Immigrants of Domestic Abuse (LA VIDA) at the Virginia Poverty Law Center. They'll discuss poverty's impact on our society, especially on women.



AAUW of Virginia Women Make the Difference!

Kim Churches, AAUW's chief executive officer since 2017, joins us for a special presentation to recognize AAUW of Virginia as the very first state to achieve all five stars in the AAUW Five-Star National Recognition Program. She will present an overview of what AAUW national has been working on and achieved, an update on national priorities for 2021, and a description of what is next on the gender agenda, and then entertain questions from the audience.

Thanks to our state board and members for the collective hard work that resulted in this recognition.



AAUW of Virginia Annual Business Meeting

Please join us at our 96th Annual Business Meeting so that we can conduct important business of our organization, including hearing the financial report, considering a bylaws amendment, and meeting the candidates for AAUW-VA officer positions. You'll be on hand as we unveil AAUW of Virginia's first State Named Honorees. And, if it is your lucky day, you may even win a door prize!

Day 2: Sunday, March 14

3:00 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.



[REGISTER HERE FOR DAY 2](#)



Women Make A Difference! in Military Service to Our Country

Women have been making a difference in military service as far back as the Revolutionary War when a number of women disguised themselves as men and fought in the Continental Army. Women did the same thing during the Civil War for both the Union and Confederate armies. During World War I, women served as U.S. Army nurses at military hospitals in the United States and overseas. In World War II, the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps (WAAC) was established, and the Navy Women's Reserve Act created the WAVES. Fast forward: According to the Council on Foreign Relations, "when the draft ended in 1973, women represented just 2 percent of the enlisted forces and 8 percent of the officer corps. Today, those numbers are 16 percent and 19 percent, respectively..."

To help us learn about the history of women in military service to our country, there is no one better than **Lieutenant Colonel Marilla Cushman, USA, Retired**. After almost 25 years of active duty in the U.S. Army, in 1997 she went to work for the Military Women's Memorial Foundation, where she is now vice president of development.



Equity in Education Makes the Difference!

"...high-quality public education is the foundation of a democratic society and the key to improving economic prosperity and gender equality." (2019-2021 AAUW Public Policy Priorities)

It is not news to any AAUW member how integral equity in education is to our mission and our Public Policy Priorities. **Dr. Gregory C. Hutchings, Jr., EdD**, Superintendent of the Alexandria City Public Schools (ACPS), will join us to talk about the courageous and bold equity work being done by ACPS. Tasked with a mission to ensure that every student succeeds, the ACPS serves 15,000 plus students who hail from more than 145 countries and speak 132 languages.



Women Make the Difference! As Elected Officials in Virginia

Each successive election more and more women have been elected to serve at various levels of government in Virginia. Hear what our three panelists have to say about what motivated them to seek elective office, challenges they have faced as women elected officials, what unique skills women bring to governing, their personal successes, what lessons they have learned, and advice for those following in their footsteps, plus more.

- **State Senator Jen Kiggans**, a former Navy helicopter pilot and the first female military veteran to serve in the Virginia General Assembly, was elected in 2019 to represent Virginia's 7th Senate District, which covers parts of Norfolk and Virginia Beach. She was one of those voting aye for ratification of the ERA in 2020. Senator Kiggans also works as an adult geriatric nurse practitioner.
- **Chair Phyllis J. Randall**, Loudoun County Board of Supervisors Chair-at-Large, is the first person of color in Virginia's history to be elected chair of a county board. By profession, Chair Randall is a mental health therapist, working with substance abuse offenders in an incarcerated setting.
- **Mayor Deanna Reed** of Harrisonburg was first elected to the Harrisonburg City Council in 2016 and was recently selected by her fellow council members for her third consecutive term as mayor. She is the first African American female mayor in Harrisonburg's history and also works as the Director of Community and School Partnerships at the On the Road Collaborative, a nonprofit organization dedicated to closing the learning gap and empowering youth.

Day 3: Monday, March 15

3:00 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.



[REGISTER HERE FOR DAY 3](#)



Alexandria's Social Justice Initiatives

Anyone who has visited Alexandria undoubtedly has spent time in Old Town enjoying the historical sights, quaint shops, and the amazing restaurants. However, "a horrific part of Alexandria's history is that, prior to America's Civil War, Alexandria served as one of the largest domestic slave trading ports in America. Most of Alexandria's leading businesses and properties could not have operated without the unpaid labor of the enslaved men, women, and children who lived and worked here."

This session, presented by **Audrey Davis**, the renowned Director of the Alexandria Black History Museum, explores some of Alexandria's social justice initiatives. Learn about the city's partnership with the Equal Justice Institute in Montgomery, Alabama, "to memorialize documented victims of racial violence throughout history and foster meaningful dialogue about race and justice today." The Alexandria Community Remembrance Project is "dedicated to helping Alexandria understand its history of racial terror hate crimes and to work toward creating a welcoming community bound by equity and inclusion." Also, find out about new social justice initiatives during the pandemic, including *The Legacy of George Floyd: Documenting Alexandria's Response*.



What a Difference! A Virtual Trip to the Booker T. Washington National Monument Makes

Nestled in the Smith Mountain Lake region in Franklin County, Virginia, is one of our country's treasures, the National Park Service's Booker T. Washington National Monument. Accompany us on a virtual trip to the birthplace of Dr. Washington, who was born a plantation slave in 1856 and gained freedom when he was 9 years old. He went on to become a renowned orator, author, educator, advisor to U.S. Presidents, and founder of the Tuskegee Institute (now Tuskegee University) in Alabama.

Join us for a presentation about the park, the man, and his legacy by **Park Ranger Brittany Webb-Lane**. Ms. Webb-Lane, who became the park's newest ranger in 2018, was born and raised in Rocky Mount, Virginia, in Franklin County, not many miles from the park. She is one of the small percentage of national park rangers who are minorities, and the even smaller percentage who are women of color.



Gender-Based Violence, Institutional Betrayal and the Carceral State

Once again, **Dr. Angela J. Hattery, PhD**, Professor of Women & Gender Studies and Co-Director of the Center for the Study and Prevention of Gender-Based Violence at the University of Delaware; and **Dr. Earl Smith, PhD**, Emeritus Professor of American Ethnic Studies and Sociology at Wake Forest University, who teaches classes in sociology, African and African-American studies, and women gender studies at George Mason University and the University of Delaware, will help us better understand the complexities of a horrendous societal problem.

In this session, they will explore the ways in which gender-based violence is much more than violence perpetrated by one individual on another; and the ways in which institutions, including college campuses and the military, reinforce and amplify this violence through a series of policies and practices that produces experiences of institutional betrayal for victims/survivors. Finally, Drs. Hattery and Smith will consider the ways in which mass incarceration, which ensnares millions of Black men in the criminal legal system, exposes their partners to state surveillance and violence.

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SUMMER LEADERSHIP MEETING 2021

will be held at
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34 Chapel Rd
Sweet Briar VA 24595



July 31, 2021

Hopefully!!

