



# THE KEYSTONER

Advancing equity for women and girls through advocacy, education, and research

## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



Several state board members attended AAUW Reading's 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration at the end of September held at Albright College. Originally called the College Reading Group of Reading when founded by twenty-five Wellesley College graduates in 1923, the group soon affiliated with AAUW, embracing the equity mission. Members and Albright College students walked us through Reading's many achievements over the years, including fundraising for college scholarships for women, creation of the Berks County Library System, and supporting pay equity.

Pennsylvania has about 209 colleges and universities awarding associate's, bachelor's, and advanced degrees. Of these, 30 have been member institutions in the last three years. Many of us have colleges/universities right in our backyards. Some are active with AAUW, and some are not. How do we bring these institutions into the fold? College students and alumni stand to benefit as do our branches. National currently is working to renew these institutions. However, personal contact between branches and college/university personnel is the most effective way to create and strengthen partnerships. We have received several queries from branches about joining their local colleges/universities. We are working our way through this.

If your branch has an active relationship with a local college/university, we would like your help in reaching out to promote our Student Impact Mini-Grants and NCCWSL (National Conference for College Women Student Leaders). This also is the time to consider raising funds to send a student(s) to NCCWSL which will be held once again in-person at the University of Maryland, College Park. Branches might consider partnering with neighboring branches to identify and fund students. The deadline for applications typically is April 1 with the conference held late May/early June.

Right after the AAUW PA Summer Retreat, we dug in to planning the April 5-7 conference in Harrisburg. The conference will be our time together to consider the dynamics impacting our organization and the critical role advocacy plays in affecting change. We hope to invite college students to attend the AAUW PA Conference. Branches can recruit and support student(s). Consider discussing this possibility within your branch. More information will be available in the next few months. However, the financial planning begins now.

*Note: If becoming more involved with College and Universities as a liaison for the state interests you, please let me know. This work can be done off-board and with a "co".*

Wishing all of you a lovely Thanksgiving.

Cindy Hall (State College)  
President, AAUW Pennsylvania

***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, and socioeconomic status.***

## MESSAGE FROM THE PROGRAM VICE PRESIDENT



When did women begin speaking out against gender inequality? Many consider the pivotal moment to be the women's liberation movement of the 1960s, when street rallies, marches, hearings, sit-ins, campaigns and other forms of collective protest and action galvanized women across the nation. Feminist activist writers helped to awaken the feminine consciousness, paving the way for later writers to explore the reality of women's experience in their writings openly and freely.

When I was going to college in the 1980s, I was introduced to Audre's Lorde's poetry and feminist anthologies, such as *This Bridge Called My Back: Writings by Radical Women of Color*, works that profoundly influenced me. I also learned that women have been speaking out and writing about their experiences of oppression for a very long time. Some of the earliest feminist writings date back to the *querelle des femmes* ("the woman question"), a literary debate about the nature and status of women that began in the Renaissance era and evolved into feminist campaigns for social change after the eighteenth century.

At our 2024 State Conference, we will reflect upon women's political activism over the last 50 years. Our theme, "Looking Back to Move Forward: Evolution of the Fight," will highlight AAUW's achievements within the broader context of the women's movement. While conference planning is ongoing, we are very excited to announce that we have lined up two very dynamic, experienced leaders to deliver keynote addresses:

- Meghan Kissell, Senior Director of Policy and Membership Advocacy at AAUW; and,
- Dr. Kimberly Adams, Professor of Political Science at East Stroudsburg University and Director of AAUW's American Fellowships and Research Publication Grant Programs.

In addition to the keynote speakers, Ajla Glavasevic Laussegger, AAUW PA Diversity Chair and Quaker Houghton's Deputy General Counsel & Global Data Privacy Officer, will present on artificial intelligence and the new technological lens through which our advocacy will be made more challenging, forcing a need to modernize and evolve.

For updates on conference speakers and programming, please follow the *Keystoner*. The conference will be held at the Best Western Premier: The Central Hotel and Conference Center in Harrisburg on April 5<sup>th</sup> -7<sup>th</sup>, 2024. Please mark those dates on your calendar!

Lori Woods (Indiana Co)  
Program VP, AAUW Pennsylvania

**2024 AAUW PA Conference**  
**"Looking Back to Move Forward: Evolution of the Fight"**  
**April 5-7, 2024**  
**Harrisburg, PA**

## PUBLIC POLICY UPDATES



### Time to Update AAUW PA Public Policy Priorities

Every two years members have the opportunity to suggest revisions to the state Public Policy Priorities. Priorities for 2022-2024 are available at <https://aauw-pa.aauw.net/policy/priorities/>. The update will be for 2024-2026 and will be voted on at the annual meeting in the spring. The Public Policy Priorities are a statement of what we believe and are consistent with AAUW's mission to advance gender equity for women and girls. They do not include specific pieces of legislation. By focusing on broad issues relevant to women and girls, we can pivot when a new issue arises that might address our mission. Please send suggestions by January 5, 2024, to AAUW PA Public Policy Committee Member, Barbara Price, [bpricedvs@gmail.com](mailto:bpricedvs@gmail.com).

### From National:

**A quick overview** of key federal issues coming up this month, a [rapid response petition](#) for Pregnant Workers Fairness Act regulations, our focus on [voting rights](#), and the [appropriations process](#).

**Exciting update:** you can expect a state-by-state update on pay equity data this fall! More to come; this will be a big training and engagement focus over the coming months.

**Title IX Update:** AAUW has joined 126 other gender justice, survivor advocacy, and civil rights organizations in a letter to the Biden Administration calling for immediate action to finalize the Department of Education's Title IX rule. Here's a copy of the letter and an article that ran about this recently: <https://nwlc.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/Advocate-letter-Title-IX-rule-10.23.23-vF-127-orgs.pdf>

As you may know, AAUW [submitted comments](#) on two sets of proposed rules to strengthen the civil rights protections offered by Title IX. The Administration originally stated that the new rules would be released in October, however, there continue to be delays. The new rules are expected to:

- Restore protections from sex-based discrimination.
- Clarify protections for LGBTQ students.
- Strengthen support for pregnant and parenting students.
- Ensure appropriate implementation of religious exemptions.
- Provide clarity on transgender students' participation in athletics.

**ERA:** AAUW in support of HJ Resolution 17/SJ Res 1: [Where We Stand: Equal Rights Amendment – AAUW: Empowering Women Since 1881](#)

HJ Resolution to remove deadline of ERA: [Resurrection of the Equal Rights Amendment: A Century-Long Fight for Gender Equality \(msn.com\)](#)

Great [article](#) on why it is time to pass the ERA from the *Conversationalist* on 10/20/23

**BillTrack50.** AAUW now has BillTrack50 to monitor legislation and we hope to have further training for PPCs to assist in their advocacy efforts.

**State News:*****Campaign for Women's Health:***

Women's Law Project shared that HB507, legislation that would ban the practice of nonconsensual pelvic and rectal exams, unanimously passed out of the Senate HHS Committee in late October. Since it passed the House, what's next is a full Senate vote.

Here's an overview of the issue and bill:

<https://www.womenslawproject.org/pa-hb-507-banning-nonconsensual-pelvic-exams/>

And a downloadable fact sheet (in the post linked above):

<https://www.womenslawproject.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/HB507-2023-Fact-Sheet-3-23-23.pdf>

It would be great if you send action alerts, urging your supporters to contact their state Senators to vote YES on HB507.

**Pennsylvania Education Issues**

By Ann Pehle, AAUW Pennsylvania Public Policy Education Lead (apehle@outlook.com)

Thank you to branches and members for your attention to the candidates for local office in the November 7 election. Reviewing candidates through the lens of AAUW public policies and priorities helps to identify those who are not supporting women and girls in the Commonwealth. This is particularly necessary for some **school board director candidates** in many school districts. Thank you for all you do to alert members, friends, the community, etc. By using your voice in letters to the editor or asking questions when speaking with candidates or sending a Facebook post or whatever, you are advocating for women and girls.

Several branches have dealt with **book ban efforts in their communities**. Now the Pennsylvania Senate is joining in. Senate Bill 7 just passed (mostly along party lines). The bill's primary sponsor is Senator Aument (District 36). The official short title is "An Act amending the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), known as the Public School Code of 1949, in terms and courses of study, providing for parental control relating to instructional materials and books containing sexually explicit content." Many are interpreting this legislation as a book ban bill. Read this [article](#) for more context. Emails to your Pennsylvania Representative stating opposition to Senate Bill 7 is a great way to advocate for women and girls.

If your community and/or school district begins a book banning action, please let Ann Pehle ([apehle@outlook.com](mailto:apehle@outlook.com)) know. We will put you in touch with tools and AAUW members who have/are battling this issue in their communities.

Many members and branches have been fighting for **fair funding in K-12 public education** for years. We thought the lawsuit in Commonwealth Court would solve the problem. While the judge ruled in the plaintiffs' (our) favor and said the solution was a matter of money, she did not specify a remedy or direct action. In his budget address on March 7th, Governor Josh Shapiro stated, "[The judge's] remedy was for us to get around the table and come up with a solution that ensures every

child has access to a thorough and efficient education,” and he created the Basic Education Funding Commission.

The BEFC is a bipartisan bicameral group of 12 lawmakers and three representatives from the governor’s administration. Since September the BEFC has been conducting hearings to gather testimony from educators, parents, advocates, and education policy experts. Commission hearings will conclude in mid-November. We have serious concerns that the legislature and Governor Shapiro may continue to kick the can down the road and fail to develop and fund a constitutional school funding system beginning with the 2024-2025 state budget. There are two upcoming opportunities for you to continue your advocacy work for public school funding.

1. Attend the rally in Harrisburg on Tuesday, November 14 at noon to grade the Basic Education Funding Commission. Context and details are here. Join members from Harrisburg and Carlisle branches to make a real AAUW Pennsylvania impact.
2. Submit public comments to the Basic Education Funding Commission (BEFC) calling on commission members to issue a final report outlining a clear plan to ensure public education is adequately funded across Pennsylvania in accordance with the Commonwealth Court’s decision. Go here for sample comments and information on how to submit a public comment, and who to contact if you need assistance.

Please take the time to advocate for women and girls. Pennsylvania Representatives and Senators need to know you are watching.

Sandra Miller (Easton/Bethlehem)  
Public Policy Chair, AAUW Pennsylvania

## ARE THERE AAUW FELLOWSHIP OR GRANT RECIPIENTS IN YOUR BACKYARD?



AAUW has implemented a new software program to enable easier searching for information on fellowship and grant recipients:

<https://my.aauw.org/fellowshipsandgrantsdirectory>

This site is menu driven. It appears that some fields that still need to be populated, but I was able to identify what grant and fellowship recipients are in Pennsylvania.

Branches that are located close to states such as Maryland might want to plug in the name of that state to see if there are other recipients nearby.

This information is accurate as of October 30. Additional details on some recipients are available on the AAUW website or will be forthcoming.

The following information should prove helpful for branch program planning and outreach to AAUW-sponsored students and community groups.

## 2023-2024 AAUW Grant and Fellowship Recipients in Pennsylvania

Name/Contact	AAUW Award Program	Institution/Name	Field of Study/Project
Marissa Escada <i>mescajeda@smwg.org</i>	Community Action Grant	Strong Women, Strong Girls (Pittsburgh)	Curriculum-driven, female-centered skills mentoring program for girls in under-resourced communities
Julianna Kinsolving <i>jkk83@drexel.edu</i>	Selected Professions Fellowship	Drexel University	Third year medical student; advocate for equitable health care
Shakira Martinez Vasquez <i>Shakira.marie1998@gmail.com</i>	Selected Professions Fellowship	Carnegie-Mellon University	M.S. student in chemical engineering; plans career in cosmetics and personal care products
Ebunoluwa Olawole <i>ebunolawole@gmail.com</i>	Selected Professions Fellowship	Temple University	Fourth year medical student planning specialization in orthopedic surgery; advocate for women in medicine
Emily Landis <i>elandis@tlsf.org</i>	Community Action Grants	Lancaster (PA) Science Factory	Girls Code Club: girls 8-13 learn computer science concepts and coding
Wendyliz Martinez <i>wzm96@psu.edu</i>	American Dissertation Scholarship	Penn State World Campus (University Park)	The Secret Lives of Black Girls: Inferiority and Black Girls in Film, Literature, and Social Media
Lauren Marsh <i>Lnm44@pitt.edu</i>	American Dissertation Scholarship	University of Pittsburgh	Laboring for Reproductive Justice: Doula Care in Carceral Spaces
Nana Aishat Alli Porras <i>Alliaishat@gmail.com</i>	Career Development Grant	Wilkes University	Not Available
Donya Bacon <i>walkerdonya@gmail.com</i>	Career Development Grant	St. Joseph's University	Not Available
Madalo Champeni <i>champeni@yahoo.com</i>	International Masters/First Professional Degree	Cairn University (Langhorne Manor, Pa)	Not Available
Saw Yu <i>Sanyunwe201@gmail.com</i>	International Masters/First Professional Degree	University of Pennsylvania	Not Available

Sally Kalin (State College)  
AAUW Funds Chair, AAUW Pennsylvania

## CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

The AAUW Pennsylvania state board is seeking nominations for the following officers for a two-year term from 2024-2026.

**President:** The president is responsible for directing, coordinating, and overseeing the work of the state. This position shall be the official spokesperson and representative for AAUW Pennsylvania and shall be the designated contact from AAUW Pennsylvania to AAUW.

**Program Vice-President:** The program vice president is responsible for planning the biennial conference program and the biennial summer retreat program that occur in alternating years. Throughout the year, the program vice president is responsible for planning, coordinating, implementing, and reporting other mission-based programming.

**Marketing and Communications Vice President** (new position): The Marketing and Communications Vice President works closely with the AAUW Pennsylvania board to develop strategy and manage state communications to members as well as the general public. The vice president ensures that the brand image is consistently upheld and works to enhance visibility across the state. In addition, the position serves as the editor of the *Keystoner* newsletter and the annual yearbook.

Complete job descriptions for all positions are in the [AAUW Pennsylvania Handbook](#).

The AAUW Pennsylvania board meets four times annually: in July, October, January, and April (at the State Conference or Annual Meeting). The January meeting is typically held on Zoom or by conference call. Other meetings will be in person or virtual, as conditions warrant. It is expected that all board members attend the board meetings and the biennial conference or summer retreat (whichever is occurring that year). AAUW PA reimburses expenses related to the position and for attendance at meetings.

If you are **interested in nominating** a person as a candidate to consider, please complete the [Candidate Nomination form](#). Please complete the [Candidate Application](#) if **you are interested in serving** on the AAUW Pennsylvania state board in one of these positions. Both forms also are found at <https://aauw-pa.aauw.net/nomination-and-election/>.

All nominations must be received by Ann Pehle, Nomination and Elections Co-Chair ([apehle@outlook.com](mailto:apehle@outlook.com)) no later than **December 15, 2023**.

Ann Pehle (Carlisle)  
Barbara Price (Lower Bucks)  
Nomination and Election Co-Chairs, AAUW Pennsylvania

## BYLAWS UPDATE

In spring 2023, AAUW members voted overwhelmingly in favor of changes to the National bylaws. More information about why these changes were proposed can be found [here](#).

These changes require all AAUW branches to update their bylaws. Pennsylvania branches will complete them by **June 30, 2024**, but the sooner the better.

The mandated changes are easy to make. You must adopt the seven articles in the Affiliate Model Bylaws verbatim as your branch's first seven articles, so just copy-paste them into your current bylaws. The text for these mandated changes can be found [here](#).

The next step may be a bit more challenging, depending on your current bylaws: Eliminate any previous versions of these new articles. They may all be at the beginning (lucky you) or may be woven into other parts of your bylaws. Don't miss this step.

If you have questions or want help, please ask AAUW PA Bylaws Chair Deb Roney at [aauwpabylaws@gmail.com](mailto:aauwpabylaws@gmail.com).

Once the changes are made and your branch board has approved them, send me a copy for review and state approval. **I will submit a copy of all approved branch bylaws to National on your behalf by the National deadline.**

**Pro Tip 1:** Complete the process of making the mandated changes and submit them **before** you tackle Pro Tip 2.

**Pro Tip 2:** Consider reviewing the rest of your bylaws to ensure that they reflect current practices and provide a solid foundation for the health of your branch. They must comply with all state and local laws and can in no way conflict with AAUW National bylaws and/or policies. I am happy to help, and you will need state approval of your proposed changes in advance. Such changes **DO** then require a branch vote after prior notification to all members. After the vote, submit your revised bylaws to the [state bylaws chair](#).

NOTIFICATION: The AAUW PA board of directors has approved the nationally mandated changes to the AAUW PA bylaws. The updated version can be found on the [website](#).

Deb Roney (Huntingdon)  
Bylaws Chair, AAUW Pennsylvania



## MISSION-BASED PROGRAMMING

### **AAUW Carlisle School Board Candidate Forum**

AAUW Carlisle has earned the reputation in the community, along with the League of Women Voters of the Pennsylvania Capitol Region, of being non-partisan advocates for voter education and have held these forums for a number of years. In the past, there were about six or seven candidates and we were pleased when 50 voters attended.

This year the October 23<sup>rd</sup> forum was live-streamed from Carlisle High School and ten candidates joined together to form two opposing teams with different perspectives. That created some unique challenges in gaining the trust of both sides that our questions and format would be fair, with both slates threatening to pull out at different times. In the end, all ten agreed to participate.

In the end, there were 330 registrations and another 100 watched the livestream! The feedback from candidates after the forum was universally positive. You can read the article from *PennLive* [here](#).

### **AAUW Fox Chapel Area Presents China's Influence on The World Stage November 14th**

On Tuesday, November 14, 2023, at 10:00 am at the Fox Chapel Presbyterian Church, Dr. Mark Haas, Professor of Political Science at Duquesne University and an expert in international security, will be examining why fears of a rising China may be overblown and why the United States' economic and military dominance are likely to continue.

Dr. Haas has been a professor of political science at Duquesne University for 20 years, specializing in the area of international security. Having received his PhD from the University of Virginia, Dr. Haas is the distinguished author of seven books and dozens of peer-reviewed articles. He currently serves on the editorial board of *Security Studies*, a journal devoted to research on national and international security problems and foreign policy issues.

### **AAUW Lansdale Hosting Representative Madeleine Dean November 21st**

The Lansdale Branch will be hosting Representative Madeleine Dean at the Educational Services Center, [401 East Hancock Street, Lansdale, 19446](#), on November 21st at 8:00 pm.

Representative Dean was a member of the Pennsylvania state house of representatives from 2012-2018. In 2018 she was elected to Congress representing Pennsylvania District 4. If there is interest outside of the branch, a hybrid option may be available. If there are questions members would like her to address, please forward the questions to **Lee Wolfe** at [lee.wolfe831@gmail.com](mailto:lee.wolfe831@gmail.com).

## NEWS FROM THE BRANCHES

### AAUW Reading Celebrates 100 Years

On September 30th a luncheon celebration was held at Albright College.



## WEBSITE SUBMISSIONS

Please send news for the AAUW PA website to [aauwpaad@gmail.com](mailto:aauwpaad@gmail.com)

## ADDRESS CHANGES

E-News Subscribers:

Send email address changes and additions to [aauwpa.president@gmail.com](mailto:aauwpa.president@gmail.com) or the branch officer who manages your branch email list.

## SUBMITTING INFORMATION TO THE KEYSTONER

We're always looking for news from AAUW branches! The best submissions will be between 100-250 words and include a photo (well-focused and at high resolution, please!)

Deadline for submissions is:

**January 2024 Issue: Friday, December 22nd**

Send to the Keystoner editor at [aauwpakeystoner@gmail.com](mailto:aauwpakeystoner@gmail.com)

Please put “For the Keystoner” in the Subject line!

## AAUW PA STATE BOARD

President	Cindy Hall (State College)	aauwpa.president@gmail.com
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