



THE KEYSTONER

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

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



In State College, college students are back in class and school buses are once again on the roads. Usually, I welcome the change of pace and begin September renewed and ready to tackle a busy calendar and To Do list. However, this year feels different since much of what I believe in has either collapsed or faces a targeted demise. The relentless attacks on higher ed have been vicious and lacking purpose. Critical research studies losing funding, students finding themselves in limbo about their financial aid packages, DE&I activities and structures under extreme duress, and institutions held hostage as they stand for their ideals and the critical work they perform. The funding decisions made by this Administration will have lasting effects well into the future, impacting generations to come.

While there has been little time to reenergize ourselves these past few months, we must continue the work of AAUW locally and across our state. Others are counting on us to stand. Many branches have carried our banner. Sandra Miller, state Public Policy Chair, and I as well as others on the state board are fortunate to hear how you are continuing to stand for women, girls, and all Americans. Daily, I am overwhelmed at the tenacity of our members.

As I enter my fourth and last year as President of AAUW Pennsylvania, I am very aware of the many talented and energetic members in our state. We will need strong passionate leaders to carry us through these years. There will be several key positions opening on the state board effective July 1, 2026 and the work has begun to identify members who are willing to serve. Please see the article from Nominating and Elections Co-Chairs Karen Wellin and Deb Roney for more details.

Our state is well connected to AAUW National as well as other state affiliate members. We now have four state board members serving on national committees: Ajla Laussegger on Governance, Sandra Miller on Public Policy, Deb Roney as co-chair of Advancement, and myself on Nominating. This enables us to keep current with and provide support to National in this very turbulent environment. It also helps National hear and understand the perspectives of members. Getting to know and work with leaders in other states also has been a real boon for Pennsylvania as we form new partnerships.

One very visible partnership is the planning for the regional conference. The Atlantic States Regional Conference hosted by Pennsylvania will be September 25-27, 2026. Late this month or early in October, you will be able to book your room in the reserved room block at the early bird discount. We need AAUW PA members to show up in force, particularly since we are the host state. I hope very much to see every branch represented.

Thank you for all you do.

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



Take-Aways and Feedback from the Summer Retreat

“This was a phenomenal networking opportunity.”

Samantha Burgess, PSU Undergraduate in Cyber Security, Air Force ROTC senior, and AAUW scholarship recipient

“We had a wonderful exchange of ideas – new ideas and suggestions – for recruiting new members.”
Asuman Baskan, President, AAUW Erie

“I really enjoyed this conference today – it was very different, active and participatory.”
Karen Parish, President, AAUW Reading

“It was refreshing to meet people from other branches, because I’ve only been a member for less than a year – and to have them be excited about my ideas.”
Angie Hughes, Co-VP Marketing & Communications, AAUW State College

“I really enjoyed the time I got to spend with members from other chapters, learning about how they do things, what’s important to their chapter, and how they build community among members.”
Dina Liberatore, Co-VP Marketing & Communications, AAUW State College

“The thing that I liked the best was getting ideas from members all over the state – I plan to take them back to my branch and implement them.”
Charlotte Ridge, Co-President, AAUW Huntingdon

“I got a lot of good tools for meetings back home... I took pages of notes, so I’m really excited to go home and read them.”
Ardith Talbott, President, AAUW Doylestown

“There’s something affirming about knowing that you’re not alone in facing challenges but also in developing innovative ideas to face them.”
Sally Kalin, Funds Chair, AAUW PA

“Thank you to everybody for being so open and willing to give their time and thoughts today - I think this will only help AAUW grow, embrace our mission, and do great advocacy work in the future.”
Sandra Miller, Public Policy Chair, AAUW PA

As these testimonials show, our State Summer Retreat was a clear success and provided meaningful value for those who attended. If you joined us in Boalsburg, or heard about the retreat from attendees, you’ll know that we tried something different this year. We moved away from the traditional format toward a collaborative, inclusive space where every voice could be heard and appreciated. Additionally, to address the needs of branch leaders, we designed the retreat to focus on key challenges they identified from across the state: how to deepen engagement with our mission, grow and diversify our membership, and build strong, sustainable leadership for the future.

On these issues, we had an open and meaningful dialogue. If you haven't yet read the Summer Retreat Notes – *AAUW PA Summer Retreat 2025 Collective Action for Lasting Change Harvest of Notes* – now is a great time since it's filled with valuable ideas and member contributions to consider as we plan our next steps forward. The report summarizes discussions on 16 topics related to leadership, member recruitment, and advocacy; it has already been updated to include an appendix of notes on the *Five-Star Program* to assist branches in aligning with AAUW's strategic priorities.

Perhaps the most important outcome of the retreat was the sense of community we built by creating an open, democratic space – especially meaningful in a time of growing restrictions on speech, thought and self-expression.

Thank you to everyone who provided oral testimonies and shared written feedback through the retreat survey and email correspondence. We're glad that you found the event enjoyable and a valuable opportunity to connect with others from around the state and engage in meaningful conversations about the challenges we all face.

Let's keep our communication lines open, grow our shared spaces, and continue building the momentum going forward. The 2026 Atlantic States Regional Conference – *Unfinished Revolution* – hosted by Pennsylvania, is just around the corner!

Lori Woods (Indiana Co)
Program VP, AAUW Pennsylvania



IMAGES FROM THE SUMMER RETREAT



Public Policy Chair Sandra Miller presented the 2025 AAUW PA Gateway to Equity Award to Donna Bullock, CEO of Project HOME, an organization dedicated to empowering individuals and families to break the cycle of homelessness and poverty.

AAUW PA President Cindy Hall and AAUW PA Secretary and Huntingdon Branch Co-President Charlotte Ridge presented the AAUW PA 2025 President's Award for Exemplary Service to Deb Roney.



AAUW PA President Cindy Hall and Carlisle Branch President Kate Elkins presented the 2025 AAUW PA Special Honoree to Ann Pehle.

Jasmine Singh Bishnoi, AAUW PA College/University Liaison led one of the storyteller sessions in the morning.



PUBLIC POLICY UPDATES



It has been a hectic summer, and there is so much to cover. We will start with National AAUW resources. AAUW National is very busy doing the hard work in Washington, D.C., pursuing our priorities. They have compiled a listing of actions they have taken, bills they endorsed, and coalitions that they are supporting. Below you will find links outlining their work so far this year. Please take the time to review their work and support it where you can. They are a small but mighty team doing hero's work for our organization.

AAUW Weighs In: Policy Updates – AAUW : Empowering Women Since 1881

Bills Endorsed by AAUW.docx

v1. AAUW National Coalitions & Letter Signatories - Condensed.docx

Here is an example of our work cited in an article that highlights AAUW's influence.

State Updates:

No Budget! As of August 25th, there is still no budget in Pennsylvania. Our 1.7 million school children are starting school where over \$1.4 billion in state payments have not arrived. Follow EdVoters for the latest budget news as we wait for the General Assembly and the Governor to negotiate how to pay for mass transit and education funding that meets the needs of all our citizens. Not having a budget means local libraries, social services, childcare centers, and so much more are not receiving the funds they need to provide the services that we all use throughout the state. We will keep you posted on any actions that we recommend in the coming weeks.

While we wait for the budget, there are actions we can take on other legislative priorities.

Advocacy Day with Partners from Campaign for Women's Health: Nov 18th

AAUW is joining our partners from the Campaign for Women's Health in hosting an Advocacy Day in Harrisburg on November 18th.

The goals of this day would be:

- Make it clear what our legislative priorities are in the House and Senate
- Show the force of our campaign through the collaboration of our partners and their supporters showing up in the Capitol
- Host a "rage room" where supporters can directly advocate for your legislative priorities
- Legislative meetings connecting org leaders and advocates with elected officials

We will provide all the messaging and support you will need in meetings with our lawmakers. We will have a listing of bills that we are endorsing, materials to drop off at offices, and signs to hold for any press events. We hope to schedule at least one opportunity on the steps to share our stories and demands for action with invitations to our state leaders to join us.

In case you are wondering (I did), what is a “rage room”? It is a place where advocates can gather to write postcards, make art and videos, and find various ways to express their views on the legislative situations facing us. Fun activities are planned, and I look forward to my first rage room.

The registration link has not been released yet, but once it is available, it will be shared with all branches. Until then, **mark your calendars: Tuesday, November 18th!** See you there.

Paid Leave: Barb Price Update



Update on Family Care Act

There are 74 co-sponsors on HB200. There are 31 House Democrats who have not signed on as co-sponsors. There is a big push to get them to sign on. Here are the ones who represent our branches who need to be contacted to sign on. If the representative below is yours, please reach out and request their support for the Family Care Act. If your representative is a Republican, reach out too. Here is the listing of the full cosponsors.

Rep. Aeri on Abney (D) 19	RepAbney@pahouse.net
Rep. Ryan A. Bizzarro (D) 3	repbizzarro@pahouse.net
Rep. Amen Brown (D)-10	RepBrown@pahouse.net
Rep. Danilo Burgos (D) 197	dburgos@pahouse.net
Rep. Frank Burns (D) 72	fburns@pahouse.net
Rep. Scott Conklin (D) 77	sconklin@pahouse.net
Rep. Nate Davidson (D) 103	ndavidson@pahouse.net
Rep. Anita Astorino Kulik (D) 45	akulik@pahouse.net
Rep. David Madsen (D) 104	RepMadsen@pahouse.net
Rep. Robert F. Matzie (D) 16	rmatzie@pahouse.net
Rep. Steve Samuelson (D) 135	samuelson@pahouse.net

All senate Democrats have signed on to SB906 and seven Republicans.

Other Family Care Coalition planned events in Harrisburg:

- 29-Oct Press conference in main rotunda at 12, table in East Wing. If you want to attend, we can provide signs and support for that event. The Family Care Coalition would appreciate our support.
- 18-Nov The Family Care Coalition will have two tables in the Rotunda with materials on our Advocacy Day. We will support their messaging with our activities that day.
- 9-Dec The Family Care Coalition will have two tables in the East Wing (lower level by the cafeteria.)

Our members are welcome to attend any of these events. Materials will be available to drop off at legislative offices, or if you need information and wish to meet with legislators, let us know, and we will try to schedule meetings with your legislators.

Election News: November 4th

Important offices are on the ballot that impact AAUW priorities. Please review the ballots for your community:

Pennsylvania Voting Information: Vote411. Personalized Ballot | VOTE411

School Boards: Most school boards will have 4 seats on the ballot so please check out the information on the ballot and look for a voters' guide to help with your decisions.

Judicial Retention and new judge elections:

Several judicial seats are up for consideration. At the Supreme Court level, there is a retention election that demands our attention. Please review these guides and choose the action that will support our AAUW's priorities. These are the individuals who decide important access to healthcare, voting rights, and equity that are important to us.

A Nonpartisan Guide to the 2025 Pennsylvania Supreme Court Retention Election - Guides.vote | Voters Guides

Control of Pennsylvania Supreme Court at stake in 2025 election • Spotlight PA



Click [here](#) for a letter from the Women's Law Project that outlines how to manage this fall.

Another opportunity to learn from a great partner in our work, the League of Women Voter's is hosting this event:

VOTING ON JUDGES: RETENTION ELECTIONS & INFORMATION ON JUDICIAL CANDIDATES
SEPTEMBER 25TH, 6 - 7:30PM

- Learn about judicial retention elections and how they fit into Pennsylvania's judicial system.
- Find out about the difference between contested and uncontested judicial elections in PA.
- Learn the tools to evaluate judicial candidates.
- Empower yourself with the facts before heading to the polls!
- Discover trusted, nonpartisan resources to guide your vote.

Scan here to Register

Voting on Judges: Retention Elections & Judicial Candidates
September 25 | 6:00-7:30 PM
Webinar Via Zoom
Register to Attend Online OR scan the QR code

Branches are doing great work, and make sure to share your events with all of us. We can support and learn from each other as we pursue the rights and freedoms that all girls and women deserve.

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

AAUW PA MEMBERSHIP – A TIME TO RENEW OUR COMMITMENT TO AAUW!



This Summer vacations and travel are behind us as we gear up for another year of working towards putting our AAUW mission into action. Many of us who attended the AAUW PA Summer Retreat found inspiration in meeting one another and examining our core belief in what AAUW means to us and to our communities.

We have so much work that we can do – public policy efforts, mission-based programming, membership drives, and fundraising all contribute to the success of AAUW locally and nationally.

Our national Strategic Plan that believes in breaking down barriers in education has been rolled out, and it's time to see how this can fit into your branch activities. What programs can be created that will help women in higher education and in the workplace? Let's start by inviting undergraduate and graduate students to join us. Student memberships are only \$18.81 and are free for students at College/University member schools. Can we support a student by offering or contributing to a scholarship? And we must continue to invite potential new members of all ages, backgrounds and cultures to our meetings and ask them to join us. There's always strength in new ideas and new energy.

Thank you to all branches who submitted the FY25 branch survey! We'll be anxious to "see our stars" and celebrate our successes at the virtual September 18th Fall Member Gathering. Please join us to learn more about AAUW going forward. Start thinking about your branch membership successes! I understand that national will be highlighting our creativity in a new "Branch-to-Branch Recruitment" spotlight program. Tips can be submitted to connect@aauw.org.

A couple of "housekeeping" notes:

1. Any free memberships that were earned by your branch this past year through the Shape the Future program must be used by October 31, 2025. These free memberships can be used for new members and to renew a membership as well. Check the national website for the redemption form, and I will send a reminder email to all branches that can claim any free memberships.
2. Fellowship and grant applications are due by September 30, 2025.
3. Please encourage all members to check that their contact information in their personal snapshot is correct. AAUW is moving to a new mass email platform and updated contact info is vital.

Please let me know if you have any questions or concerns about membership. We can usually find the answer, and we're here to help.

Thank you for all you do for AAUW!

Karen Wellin (Valley Forge)
Membership Vice President, AAUW Pennsylvania

ELECTION RESULTS

In the 2025 election of the Membership Vice President, Finance Officer, and Secretary held in April 2025 using online balloting, branch balloting, and mail-in ballots, 136 AAUW PA members cast ballots. Karen Wellin received 135 votes for Membership Vice President; there was also one write-in vote. Charlotte Ridge received 136 votes for Secretary. Pam Fuller received 135 votes for Finance Officer; there was also one write-in vote. These three officers were installed at the June 27 board meeting in Boalsburg, PA. Congratulations, Karen, Charlotte, and Pam!

NOMINATING AND ELECTIONS COMMITTEE—VOLUNTEER NEEDED

AAUW PA is seeking a volunteer to serve on the Nominating and Elections Committee. Other than the co-chairs, both committee members and alternates cannot be serving on the state board at the time of service on the nominating committee. We still need a representative from the Western district.

The committee's job is to identify and vet candidates for the three offices up for election in spring 2026 for the 2026-28 term of office: AAUW PA President, Program Vice President, and Marketing and Communications Vice President. The job is small and is done via email or Zoom meetings outside of work hours. Ideally, most of the work will be completed by January.

Alternates are included on all email communications of the committee so that if a member is unable to continue in the position or is nominated for one of the offices, the alternate can take over. Alternates do not need to attend meetings unless the member from that district is unable to serve.

Western District branch presidents, if you know of someone in your branch who would be a good member of this committee or if you would like to serve yourself, please contact Deb Roney, co-chair, at aauwpanominations@gmail.com.

The co-chairs of the Nominating and Elections Committee are
Deb Roney (Huntingdon and Carlisle Branches), Co-chair, aauwpanominations@gmail.com
Karen Wellin (Valley Forge Branch), Co-chair, aauwpamembership@gmail.com

Many thanks to the Nominating and Elections Committee volunteer representatives from each of our three districts:

Karen Parish (Reading Branch), Eastern PA

Kate Elkins (Carlisle Branch), Central PA

THIS COULD BE YOU! (YOUR BRANCH HERE), Western PA

Thanks also to those who agreed to serve as alternates for those representatives:

Paula McDaniel (Lansdale Branch), Eastern PA

Mary Kratzer (Harrisburg and Huntingdon Branches), Central PA

Pat Byerly (Indiana County Branch), Western PA

If you are interested yourself or have questions, please contact Deb Roney, co-chair, at aauwpanominations@gmail.com.

CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

AAUW PA is seeking nominations for the following officers to fill 2026-2028 term on the State Board.

President: The president is responsible for directing, coordinating, and overseeing the work of the state and for remaining in close contact with PA branches. In addition, the president serves as the primary liaison with National AAUW. Although the 2026 regional conference will be held during the incoming president's term, it will have already been planned ahead of the term. The incoming officer will assist with the regional conference as needed.

Program Vice President: The program vice president is responsible for planning the biennial convention program in 2028 and the program for the biennial summer retreat in 2027 and for planning, coordinating, implementing, and reporting other mission-based programming and such other duties as the president and board shall direct. Although the 2026 regional conference will be held during the incoming program vice president's term, it will have already been planned ahead of the term. The incoming officer will assist with the regional conference as needed.

Marketing and Communications Vice President: The Marketing and Communications Vice President works closely with the board to develop strategy and manage state communications to members and the public, to ensure that the brand image is consistently upheld, and to enhance visibility across the state and for such other duties as the president and board shall direct. In addition, the position serves as the editor of the *Keystoner* newsletter and the annual yearbook. Although the 2026 regional conference will be held during the incoming marketing and communications vice president's term, it will already have a marketing team. The incoming officer will assist with the regional conference as needed.

Meeting Obligations: The state board meets four times annually, usually in July, October, January, and April or May (in even-numbered years, just before the State Conference). The January meeting is typically held on Zoom. Other meetings are expected to be in person but may be virtual.

Board expenses related to the position and most expenses for attendance at in-person meetings, when they are held, are reimbursed by AAUW-PA.

To nominate someone for one of these positions, please complete the Candidate Nomination Form, which is linked online from <https://aauw-pa.aauw.net/about/nominations/>.

To nominate yourself or if you are a candidate nominated by someone else, complete the Candidate Application Form, which is linked online from <https://aauw-pa.aauw.net/about/nominations/>.

Whichever form is used, it should be returned to Deb Roney at aauwpanominations@gmail.com (e-mail preferred) or by mail at 1211 Allison St. NE, Washington, DC 20017. To request a copy of the forms or for more information, contact Deb at the above email address.

Questions? Contact Deb Roney or Karen Wellin, co-chairs or any member of the Nominating and Elections Committee:

Karen Parish (Reading Branch), Eastern PA
Kate Elkins (Carlisle Branch), Central PA

TBD (TBD Branch), Western PA

Serving as alternates for those representatives:

Paula McDaniel (Lansdale Branch), Eastern PA

Mary Kratzer (Harrisburg and Huntingdon Branches), Central PA

Pat Byerly (Indiana County Branch), Western PA

Submission deadline: October 15, 2025

Deb Roney (Huntingdon and Carlisle Branches)

Karen Wellin (Valley Forge Branch)

Nominating and Election Committee Co-Chairs, AAUW Pennsylvania

BYLAWS UPDATE

National Bylaws

As you may recall, there was a national vote to amend the national bylaws in the spring. The new national bylaws can be accessed here: <https://www.aauw.org/app/uploads/2025/05/2025-AAUW-Bylaws.pdf>. **None of the recent changes made require changes to branch bylaws.**

Details of the AAUW PA Bylaws Balloting in April:

The outcome of the bylaws balloting on the proposed substantive and technical amendments done in April 2025 ahead of the May 3 state annual business meeting follows. The previous bylaws, under which this balloting took place, established the quorum as 81 members, so the quorum was attained and the vote counted. There were 96 votes cast, including one national/state member and 95 members from 20 of the 25 AAUW Pennsylvania branches. **All the proposed bylaws amendments were passed unanimously. The 2025 bylaws can be accessed [here](#).**

Thank You, Branches!

Thank you to ALL 24 PA branches that have already made the mandated bylaws updates. If any branch is working on other bylaws changes, [Bylaws Chair Deb Roney](#) stands by ready to assist.

Two things to keep in mind for bylaws changes not mandated by AAUW National:

- All branch bylaw amendments must be approved by the state bylaws committee before the required branch vote.
- Although AAUW requires only an administrator and a finance officer for a branch to exist, PA state statutes require every non-profit organization to have a secretary. According to state law, the same person may hold multiple offices. For further details, see <https://www.palegis.us/statutes/consolidated/view-statute?txtType=HTM&ttl=15&div=0&chapter=57§ion=32&subscn=0>

Deb Roney (Huntingdon and Carlisle Branches)

Bylaws Chair, AAUW Pennsylvania

COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY UPDATE

AAUW Pennsylvania College/University Liaison Jasmine Singh Bishnoi



Jasmine Singh Bishnoi advocates for gender equity, student leadership, and educational justice. Originally from Haryana, India, she is a PhD candidate in English Literature and Criticism at Indiana University of Pennsylvania, where she also serves as a teaching associate. She has joined the AAUW PA state board as a College/University Liaison Officer. Currently, she serves as President of the South Asian Student Association, Vice President of the Graduate Student Assembly, and Communication Officer for AAUW Indiana County.

In 2023, Jasmine joined AAUW after receiving the AAUW Indiana County Scholarship and was named the Thomas C. Segar Leader of the Year in 2025. In 2020, she earned the National Award from the Honorable President of India for her dedication to rural development, education for underprivileged children, and women's empowerment.

Outside her academic pursuits, Jasmine practices Taekwondo and aims to earn her black belt by the time she completes her PhD, showcasing that strength and resilience can exist in both scholarly and martial contexts. Her leadership is rooted in compassion and a commitment to creating meaningful change, bringing a global perspective and the power of storytelling to every space she occupies.

Report from Ann Pehle on the NCCWSL 2025 National Conference for College Women Student Leaders

The season of NCCWSL (affectionately pronounced nick-whistle) started with the announcement that the organizer for NCCWSL would be NASPA (Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education). For 39 years, AAUW had the honor of bringing thousands of college women together from across the country for leadership training, inspiration, and networking at the National Conference for College Women Student Leaders. While transitions always create hiccups, state and branches continued to promote and send college women to this amazing event.

AAUW Pennsylvania budgets grant money for four students to attend the NCCWSL conference. Five grant applications were received and reviewed by the selection committee. Thanks to a donation from AAUW Carlisle, we awarded a grant to all five applicants. Regrettably, two recipients canceled due to health issues. We were able to substitute one.

Below are the remembrances we received. These remind me how very important NCCWSL is to the attendees, and it makes me very proud that AAUW Pennsylvania and Pennsylvania branches promote this program and encourages attendance by offering grants.

Heather Small -- *undergraduate student attending Juanita College; AAUW Student Associate member and President AAUW Juniata College Student Organization*



I enjoyed the NCCWSL leadership retreat so much more than I thought I would. I got along with my roommate almost immediately, and we stuck together like glue through the retreat. The keynote speakers were all mesmerizing and it was empowering to hear so many people who were close to my age. I appreciated the elevator speech memo and networking practice the most, especially since both will be so valuable to me moving forward with my career as a social worker. I took so many notes that whole weekend that I will keep close to my heart and was happy to be able to decompress at the end of each day in the dorms. The University of Maryland is such a large and beautiful campus, and I was grateful to experience the delicious food and wonderful amenities available to me. Overall, I am so glad AAUW was able to fund this event for me, and I will be going to something like this again.

Colette Costlow, *graduated senior, AAUW student member at Saint Francis University, and AAUW Pennsylvania intern during her junior and senior years. President of the Saint Francis University Literary Club.*

I recently attended the 2025 NCCWSL Conference at College Park, Maryland, and I thoroughly enjoyed my experience. I met many accomplished, inspiring women who have put their education first in spite of their hardships. Some women were late teenagers beginning to navigate their leadership roles while others were older women who have decided to go back to school to pursue their dream. No matter what drove people to attend the conference, many people, like me, left with newfound strength and confidence in their leadership skills.



I also learned a lot about how women are truly treated in the workplace. As someone who recently acquired a job in their field, I was shocked to hear about how some female leaders experience hardships and criticisms. Dr. Daria J. Willis, president of Howard Community College, shared how she is criticized by many for the casual way she dresses. Yet, she continues to express herself through fashion and ignores the haters, showing her resilience at her workplace.

My NCCWSL experience was very beneficial, especially since I learned how to be resilient in the midst of hate. I encourage other women to attend this conference as you will make connections with other women as well as understand the realities of leadership and how to overcome these obstacles. Coming out of NCCWSL, I became a stronger, more mindful leader.

Jasmine Singh Bishnoi (Indiana)
AAUW PA College/University Liaison

NEWS FROM THE BRANCHES

AAUW Carlisle

AAUW Carlisle Celebrates High School Trailblazers

In one of our favorite events of the year, AAUW Carlisle held its 7th annual Trailblazers Girls' Recognition Awards this spring at Carlisle High School.

AAUW Carlisle created the Trailblazer Award in 2019 to recognize girls who are interested in vocational or technical pathways in high school but may not otherwise receive positive support or recognition. This year's Trailblazers studied in the fields of automotive technology, carpentry, communications, culinary arts, engineering, health, marketing, and workforce development.



Trailblazer honorees are selected by their CTE (Career and Technical Education) teachers based on good citizenship at school, enthusiasm for their CTE program, and GPA.



The 14 honorees were introduced by members of the Trailblazer Committee: Barb Attivo, Gail D'Urso, Mary France, and Lillian Wong. Committee member Carolyn Freberg was unable to attend. Each honoree was presented with a Trailblazer Certificate and a stadium blanket embroidered with *Trailblazer* and the AAUW Carlisle branch logo. A special \$500 award, initiated last year as part of the 100th anniversary, was awarded to one honoree at the Career and Technical Education Awards night.

The event program featured a panel of local women who have also pursued non-traditional careers who shared their experiences and offered helpful advice to the girls as they set out on their careers.

Talented Culinary Arts students provided refreshments at the reception following the event for AAUW members, students' families, and friends.

AAUW Fox Chapel

Fox Chapel Area AAUW Inaugural CCAC Career Launching Awards

The Fox Chapel Area Affiliate of AAUW is honored to announce the winners of our 2025 Career Launching Awards (CLA). The CLA is intended to provide financial assistance to a recent female graduate of the Community College of Allegheny County who is about to begin her career or continue her education. To be eligible for the grant, students must be at least 28 years old with a GPA of 3.5 or above. The grant of \$2,000 carries no restrictions and may be used for anything that advances the awardee's academic or professional goals. Thank you to the CLA Committee for their hard work developing this new direction for our annual awards: Lindsay Totten- Chair, Fran Dice, Barbara Johnstone, Judith Matheny, and Cheryl Towers. We're pleased to have been able to select two winners this year:

Sara Sabri, from White Oak, PA, graduated at the end of the spring term with an Associate in Science Degree. As one of AAUW's primary missions is to advance gender equity, Sara's pursuit of a career in cybersecurity, a field in which women are significantly underrepresented, made her a strong candidate. Sara will use the grant to pursue industry-specific certifications which are required to advance a professional's credentials in the field of cybersecurity.





Yvonne Rodriguez, from Meriden, Connecticut, will earn her Associate in Science Degree in Court Reporting as an online distance learning student. The CLA committee was impressed with her academic accomplishments and her commitment to help other female students once she's established in her career. Yvonne plans to use the funds to purchase the professional equipment that court reporters are expected to finance themselves.

Upcoming Programming

The Legacy of Sophie Masloff

Dr. Barbara Burstin, author of *Sophie: The Incomparable Mayor Masloff* will present "The Legacy of Sophie Masloff" on Tuesday, September 9, 2025 at 10:00 am at the Cooper-Siegel Community Library.

As the first woman to hold the job of Mayor of Pittsburgh, as well as the first Jewish mayor, Sophie Masloff was an unlikely leader, but one of Pittsburgh's most memorable. By the end of her tenure in 1994, she was also one of the city's most high-profile mayors.

Sophie lived and breathed Pittsburgh, her beloved hometown. Join us as Dr. Burstin recounts Mayor Masloff's humble beginnings and her improbable journey to the highest office on Grant Street.

Barbara Burstin is an Adjunct Professor in the history department at the University of Pittsburgh, specializing in U.S. history, Jews in the U.S., and the Holocaust. She earned her doctorate degree from Pitt. Dr. Burstin has authored several award-winning books on the Jewish experience in Pittsburgh, including *Steel City Jews: A History of Pittsburgh and Its Jewish Community*.

Success Stories: Gwen's Girls

Dr. Maureen Anderson, Director of Education, Gwen's Girls will present "*Success Stories: Gwen's Girls*" on Tuesday, October 14, 2025 at 10:00 am at the Faith United Methodist Church (261 West Chapel Ridge Road, Fox Chapel)

Gwen's Girls is a Pittsburgh nonprofit organization with a powerful mission: helping at-risk girls and young women overcome emotional and socio-economic challenges on their path to becoming successful, self-sufficient adults. Brighter futures at Gwen's Girls begin with educational support; holistic, gender-specific programs that enhance self esteem; and social services designed to promote and strengthen mental health. Our speaker, Maureen Anderson, will focus on the organization's initiatives that improve educational outcomes and workforce readiness.

Gwen's Girls grew from the vision of Gwen Elliott, a Black woman who shattered barriers by becoming one of Pittsburgh's first African-American police officers and eventually commander of Pittsburgh's police force. During her tenure, she witnessed first-hand the struggles of young women and girls growing up in Pittsburgh's low-income neighborhoods. Gwen's Girls was the result of her determination to help them attain what she herself had achieved: respect from their community and a better quality of life.

Dr. Maureen Anderson has been the Director of Education at Gwen's Girls since 2023. She brings diverse perspectives to her role, having prior professional experience in government, business, education, and nonprofits. She taught Career Readiness and Workforce Skills at City Charter High School and computer science at the Community College of Beaver County. Dr. Anderson is also a valued guest speaker for Global Pittsburgh. With a doctorate in education from Point Park University, Maureen is a Certified Education Administrator for grades K – 12 in Pennsylvania.

AAUW Lansdale

The new website address for the Lansdale branch is www.lansdaleaauw.org.

AAUW State College: 2025 Used Book Sale Brings Record Turnout

This May's AAUW State College Used Book Sale, a fixture in State College since 1962, brought out nearly 7,700 shoppers, a record turnout and an increase of 4.5% over last year. Mary Ann Blair, Used Book Sale Co-Chair, commented, "The increased attendance at this year's sale tells us that readers still seek out paper books. I have seen that smile of discovery as someone spots a particular title or author. Our generous community supplies the books and our volunteers and community partners continue to make the sale a treasured event. "

After expenses, the cost of renting the book workshop throughout the year and putting on the sale - the branch will net about \$161,000 for local programs of non-profits that empower girls and women in areas such as STEM, health, literacy, and economic self-sufficiency. In addition, sponsorships are awarded for college women to attend a multi-day leadership conference and to supplement a branch scholarship endowment for returning adult women students. Additional monies fund mission-based Branch programs and priorities, and operations.

Next year's sale is planned for May 9-12 in the Penn State Snider Ag Arena in State College. All are welcome to join us!



AAUW Pennsylvania President (and AAUW State College member) Cindy Hall enjoys volunteering at the sale in the children's section. With roughly 25,000 children's book to keep organized, her help is greatly appreciated!

UPCOMING BRANCH ANNIVERSARIES

Johnstown, October 18, 1923
 Huntingdon, October.12, 1926
 Lower Bucks, October 20, 1953
 Valley Forge, September 12, 1956

ADDRESS CHANGES

E-News Subscribers: Send email address changes and additions to the President 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!)

Below are copy deadlines for upcoming issues:

November 2025 Issue: October 17, 2025

January 2026 Issue: December 19, 2025

March 2026: February 20, 2026

May 2026: April 20, 2026

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For contact information please visit: <https://aauw-pa.aauw.net/about/board/>