



THE KEYSTONER

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

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



Every July, we welcome in new branch and state leaders. Some are new to AAUW, others have held a variety of positions over the years. New friends and old: the mix makes our organization strong.

These last few months we are all trying to get our feet back under us. Daily, decisions made by the White House rock all that we stand for. There is no playbook for our organization's leaders and no way to be fully prepared. The impacts of decisions hit hard and fast. Branch leaders can't rely on the way we have done things, even just a year ago. We must evolve to keep pace with AAUW national if we are to continue to weather these truly thunderous storms of change.

If you are new to AAUW, you join us with untarnished perspectives and creative ideas. A balance between leaders new to our organization and those who have served several years or more is key to moving forward. We need strong and innovative leaders that can attract and pull together members as well as others in their communities to progress and hold true to our mission. More than ever, we need leaders who can inspire members to stay motivated and strong. **Above all, we need our members to truly believe in and commit to the greatness of our organization and the impact we can make for women and girls.**

Perhaps you think you could never carve the time out of your schedule to assume a leadership position. I urge you to rethink AAUW leadership. and how you might bring a fresh perspective to these roles. Leadership takes a commitment to our AAUW mission and priorities, and to local branch members. Creativity and communications skills matter in this turbulent environment. The strength of a non-profit board can be found in the willingness of members to pull together and support each other. Those in leadership positions are never alone.

When the news of the day weighs heavy, an email from a member or a visit to a branch inspires me. The many branch newsletters I receive are packed full of wonderful programs and members' achievements and are a testament to your strongly held belief in our mission. Your energy and deeply held values keep me strong; I want to take this moment to thank you—our AAUW PA members.

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.

PUBLIC POLICY UPDATES



PA Public Policy Priorities update: This year, our state Public Policy Priorities will be reviewed and updated if desired by our organization. A committee is being formed to review the policies and any recommendations from the field to update these priorities. Please review the policies, and if you are interested, complete this form to participate in the committee. For current priorities: Click [here](#) to download. Volunteers: Presidents or PPC, or members: [FORM](#).

Our Health, Our Future, Our Lobby Day: November 18th, Harrisburg

Logos:



Registration Link: [Here](#):

Social Media Toolkit to advertise: [Here](#)

Tentative Agenda for the Day:

- 9:30 a.m. Meet in Rotunda
Two tables in Lobby: Need volunteers to man TBD
Distribution of materials and schedule for attendees
- 10:00 a.m. Press Event on the Steps
Speakers and attendees with signs
- 11 a.m-3 p.m. Capitol or Grace Episcopal Church on State Street
Rage Room
Meetings with Legislators if scheduled
Drop offs at Legislative Offices
Visit Gallery to watch session
Tours of Capitol: 2 slots 1:30 and 2:30
Lunch Vouchers for attendees

For those branches and members that cannot make it to Harrisburg, or just want to take action, please print these postcards or reach out to me, and I will send you some! Complete the back and tell our legislators (both state and federal) that they need to protect our economic security through fair legislation like the Family Care Act or the ERA. [POSTCARDS](#)

PA Legislative Tracker: If you are interested in bills that align with our priorities: [Legislative Priority Updates](#): - [Google Docs](#)

Election Update:

The Supreme Court ruled that all counties must complete the form that alerts voters about the errors in their ballots and permits voters to cure them. [PA court: Counties must alert voters of mail ballot errors • Spotlight PA](#) It has been recommended that each voter check this website to verify that their vote has been counted: [Online/Absentee Ballot Tracking](#)

Judicial Elections From Fair Districts:

Looking for resources you can share?

Earlier this month, we posted two updates on the Fair Districts PA website:

- [Judicial retention elections matter for PA redistricting](#): this provides links to PA Bar Association recommendations, other helpful links, and some materials you can print and share.
- [A recent history of the PA Supreme Court's role in redistricting](#): this includes graphics of PA congressional maps from 2011, 2018, and 2021.
- [CHOP Letter](#): We signed on to protect the privacy of transgender patients.

Federal Update:

National staff have been working so diligently to defend our AAUW priorities with more actions every day! Please review these websites so we can all take pride in our membership in an organization that is making a difference for women and girls.

[AAUW Weighs In: Policy Updates – AAUW : Empowering Women Since 1881](#)

Latest Two Minute Activist: [AAUW Action Network – AAUW : Empowering Women Since 1881](#)

An Open Letter Rejecting Presidential Attacks on Nonprofit Organizations

AAUW national was a proud partner in the No Kings Day on October 18th. In case you would like the resources shared, please visit: [AAUW-No-Kings-Toolkit-Oct-18.pdf](#)

From National Public Policy Staff: Federal — What to know now

- **Pay gap widens (again).** For the second year in a row, the gap grew. Not great! But it's also a neon sign for action. Read AAUW's [press release](#) on the initial data. What's next? We're updating The Simple Truth with state data, preparing resources that can be used for presentation in the community, in your branches, or at state conventions. We'll be releasing this with the 2026 Equal Pay Day calendar in Dec/Jan.
- **Supreme Court:** The Court is not impacted by the shutdown. [Here's a rundown](#) of the cases we're keeping an eye on.
 - There was a rally for voting rights at the Supreme Court on Oct. 15th. Gloria L. Blackwell was among the speakers at the rally. Make sure to check out our social media posts that day!
- **ERA — Congress, community, courts**
 - **Congress:** H.J.Res. 80 is at 213 cosponsors; S.J.Res. 38 has 4 (added in bipartisan pairs to demonstrate that equality isn't a partisan issue).
 - **Community:** ERA Coalition's *It's Our Era: Claim the 28th Amendment* campaign is rolling. You can find [their toolkit here](#).
 - **Courts:** *Equal Means Equal v. Trump* (Selective Service challenge) has a motion-to-dismiss hearing pushed to Nov 2025. AAUW did not join the Aug 1 [Amicus Brief](#); we'll keep you posted.

I look forward to seeing so many of you in Harrisburg on November 18th. Please reach out with any questions or suggestions.

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

HOW JUDICIAL ELECTIONS WORK

Judges have run in political parties in Pennsylvania ever since the Constitutional Convention of 1967-68. We are one of only seven states to elect judges. An attempt was made in the Convention to establish a merit selection appointment process, but as the current budget impasse proves yet again, Pennsylvania politics have not reached the point where a merit process would be workable. The current system of elections followed by retentions was created as a compromise.

Parties should put forward their best candidates, but once elected, these judges are expected to renounce politics. They may not attend any political events until they stand for retention 10 years later. Retention is supposed to be a nonpartisan performance review; if a judge has not misbehaved, the theory is that the judge should be retained for another 10-year term.

The neutral arbiter of judicial qualifications is the Pennsylvania Bar Association. The Bar represents all lawyers regardless of their political leanings, so it has a clear interest in qualifications and fairness. The Bar interviews and rates candidates, and then publishes its findings. Here are the links to those reviews so you can see for yourself why they gave the rating that we report below.

Pennsylvania Bar Association Ratings: <https://www.pabar.org/site/For-Lawyers/Committees-Commissions/Judicial-Evaluation/Resources/JEC-Ratings/2025>.

Supreme Court: <https://www.pabar.org/site/For-Lawyers/Committees-Commissions/Judicial-Evaluation/Resources/JEC-Ratings/2025/Supreme-Court>.

Superior Court: <https://www.pabar.org/site/For-Lawyers/Committees-Commissions/Judicial-Evaluation/Resources/JEC-Ratings/2025/Superior-Court>.

Commonwealth Court: <https://www.pabar.org/site/For-Lawyers/Committees-Commissions/Judicial-Evaluation/Resources/JEC-Ratings/2025/Commonwealth-Court>.

CANDIDATES FOR VACANCIES

We have one opening each on the Supreme Court and the Commonwealth Court.

These candidates will be at the top of your ballot in the usual fashion, where political party is indicated.

Superior Court hears appeals from county counts, most often involving family law and other issues between individuals. For Superior Court, you will see three candidates.

- **Judge Brandon Neuman** is a Democrat who is rated Highly Recommended by the Bar.
- **Maria Battista** is a Republican who was a former Assistant District Attorney and was a staff lawyer in government. She is rated Not Recommended by the Bar for failure to participate in their review process. In this year's primary, she upset the Republican party's endorsed candidate, Ann Marie Wheatcraft, who was Highly Recommended by the Bar.
- **Daniel Wassmer** is currently listed as a member of the Liberal party but has previously run for the Keystone party and the Libertarians. He is a perpetual candidate, having come in fifth behind Sen. Fetterman in 2022 with 0.5% of the vote, and third in 2020 behind then Attorney General Shapiro, getting 1.8%.

Commonwealth Court hears appeals from county courts involving individuals v. governmental units and is the original court of jurisdiction for issues like election law, education, and the environment.

- **Judge Stella Tsai**, a Democrat, is Highly Recommended by the Bar. She is a Judge of Common Pleas currently.
- **Matt Wolford**, a Republican, is an environmental lawyer. He is Highly Recommended by the Bar.

JUDGES STANDING FOR RETENTION

Please be sure to turn your ballot over because that is where the retention election is. This placement—as far from the competitive elections as possible while still being on the same piece of paper—is meant to underscore that retentions are not supposed to be political.

You will see a series of questions: Shall Judge So-and-so be retained for an additional term on the Court of Whichever? Yes or no. The first three are Justices of the Supreme Court, then Superior, then Commonwealth. Each of these judges is Recommended for Retention by the Bar Association. Their evaluations are included with the candidates for each of the relevant Courts.

You may have gotten mailers or otherwise have seen messaging urging a No vote. That messaging is coming from a billionaire who opposes AAUW's public policy. He is the one who makes the profits on cyber charter schools.

COUNTY LEVEL ELECTIONS

Across the state, 69 county level judges are up for retention. Because they have served at least one 10 year term—and some have served more—their political party is irrelevant and any issues regarding bad judgement or misbehavior should have come to light in their counties. We know of only one whose performance is questioned. That judge serves in Philadelphia, where the Inquirer has published stories that would be of interest to members in Philadelphia County.

Combined with those on the state level, the serving judges bring a wealth of experience. If they are not retained, the court system essentially will freeze for two years while replacements are elected. Those replacements would lack the experience needed for sound judgement in complex legal matters. Please share this information.

Dianne Gregg, State College
Branch Public Policy Co-Chair

AAUW PA MEMBERSHIP BRANCH-TO-BRANCH RECRUITMENT



The national Branch-to-Branch Recruitment program is up and running, and your branch can be showcased in Membership Matters. Let's tell our AAUW members nationwide about all the impactful recruitment efforts that we make here in Pennsylvania! In a recent Membership Matters, a Virginia branch shared some great tried and true recruitment efforts.

Personally inviting someone to join, being a force in the community where our mission can be seen and experienced, having successful fundraisers, and involving members in social and study groups are all best practices that were shared. Are you doing something different or unique that has resulted in adding new members? Is there a particular community event that has been more successful than others? Have you changed your meeting space and/or meeting times and found that there was improvement in engagement?

Start thinking about your branch membership successes! National can highlight your creativity in Membership Matters with this new "Branch-to-Branch Recruitment" spotlight program. Submit your ideas to connect@aauw.org with the subject line Branch-to-Branch Recruitment. And let's all learn from one another!

Thank you for all you do for AAUW!

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

2026 AAUW ATLANTIC REGIONAL CONFERENCE



The 2026 Atlantic Regional Conference "Unfinished Revolution: Together We Stand" will be held September 25 - 27, 2026 at the Lancaster Convention Center.

The hotel room block is now open for the Lancaster Marriott at the Lancaster Convention Center- reserve early to secure your stay at and be at the center of the action!

Please visit the conference website at aauwatlanticregionalconference.net for more details and follow us on [Facebook](#) for updates!

CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

AAUW PA is seeking nominations for the following officers for the 2026-2028 term on the PA board: **President, Program Vice President, and Marketing and Communications Vice President.**

You or someone you know is likely to make an excellent candidate for one of these positions. We know that AAUW PA members are talented and generous with their time. Please consider a candidacy for yourself or someone you know.

Details about the qualifications and position responsibilities along with the nomination and candidate forms can be found at <https://aauw-pa.aauw.net/about/nominations/>.

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).

Questions? Need a form? Contact [Deb Roney](#) or [Karen Wellin](#), co-chairs, or any member of the Nominating and Elections Committee, who are doing great work:

Karen Parish (Reading Branch), Eastern PA

Kate Elkins (Carlisle Branch), Central PA

Cheryl Towers (Fox Chapel 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: November 15, 2025

Deb Roney (Huntingdon and Carlisle Branches)

Karen Wellin (Valley Forge Branch)

Nominating and Election Committee Co-Chairs, AAUW Pennsylvania

A NEW FOCUS ON AAUW PA DONATIONS AND NAMED GIFT HONOREES



A long-standing AAUW Pennsylvania tradition is to ask attendees at its conferences and retreats to consider a donation to AAUW and/or AAUW Pennsylvania.

Thanks to your generosity at the June retreat in State College and the proceeds from two donated gift baskets, AAUW received a donation of \$705 for its Greatest Needs Fund and AAUW Pennsylvania received \$1049.31 to help offset the cost of the retreat and to support our mission in Pennsylvania. Thank you!

Member donations to AAUW PA at the retreat inspired some fresh thinking about our Named Gift Honoree program. The number of Named Gift Honorees a branch can have has been based on the donation to national AAUW from the branch and its members. A branch can name one Honoree for every \$500 donation.

At the October 11th AAUW PA Board meeting, the Board moved that donations made to AAUW PA* will also count towards the number of Named Gift Honorees that a branch can have.

I am working with our Financial Officer to determine if and how we can inform branches of donations made to AAUW PA by their members this year. After branches receive their accounting of donations to national in 2025, they can add their donations to AAUW PA to the total.

More information will be sent to branch Financial and Funds officers later this fall.

As always, send questions my way (aauwpafunds@gmail.com).

*Unlike donations to national AAUW, donations to AAUW PA are not tax-deductible.

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

BRANCH BYLAWS

Are you reviewing your bylaws to make changes to your branch operations and/or to include the mandated Articles? Mandated changes are due to National by June 30, 2026; the good news is that most branches have already made these changes. Thank you!

Remember that all proposed bylaws amendments to Articles need to be reviewed and approved by the AAUW PA bylaws chair before your branch votes on them.

If you have questions, need help, or want to submit your proposed amendments for review, please contact Deb Roney, aauwpabylaws@gmail.com, who is more than happy to assist. I want to help—please get in touch.

Deb Roney (Huntingdon and Carlisle Branches)
Bylaws Chair, AAUW Pennsylvania

COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY UPDATE



The past few months have been both busy and deeply rewarding as we continue strengthening partnerships between Pennsylvania branches, college campuses, and student leaders. My role as College & University Liaison focuses on building these bridges, helping institutions, faculty, and students connect with AAUW's mission of equity, education, and advocacy.

AAUW Pennsylvania Student Impact Mini-Grant Applications Are Now Open!

The 2025–2026 AAUW Pennsylvania Student Impact Mini-Grant applications are officially open! These grants offer up to \$500 in funding for student-led projects that advance gender equity, advocacy, and leadership development.

Projects can include initiatives around equal pay, Title IX awareness, STEM empowerment, civic engagement, or any other creative idea that promotes AAUW's mission.

Deadline: February 15, 2026 (midnight)

Submit to: aauwpacu@gmail.com

More info: <https://aauw-pa.aauw.net/student-impact-mini-grants/>

Please help spread the word to your student networks, women's centers, and campus partners. These small grants can have a big impact, giving students the chance to design and lead meaningful advocacy work on their campuses.

Congratulations to Juniata College – 2025–2026 Student Impact Mini-Grant Recipient!

AAUW Pennsylvania proudly congratulates Juniata College on receiving the 2025–2026 AAUW PA Student Impact Mini-Grant for their inspiring and long-standing project, the *Sister-to-Sister Summit*. Launched in 1998, this annual event brings together middle-school girls from several nearby school districts for a full day of mentorship, leadership development, and open conversation. Led by Juniata's AAUW Student Chapter, the Summit pairs each participant with a college mentor and guides them through engaging workshops on self-esteem, body image, mental health, healthy relationships, and women's participation in STEM.

The *Sister-to-Sister Summit* continues to create lasting connections between students and the broader community, embodying AAUW's mission of advancing equity for women and girls through education, advocacy, and leadership. This year's Mini-Grant will help the Juniata team expand their program, strengthen local partnerships, and develop new hands-on activities that promote confidence and belonging among young women.

The review committee praised the project for its outstanding alignment with AAUW's mission and its strong collaboration with local schools, women-owned businesses, and campus offices, making it a model initiative for other colleges across Pennsylvania. AAUW Pennsylvania celebrates Juniata College's dedication to fostering confidence, collaboration, and empowerment among young women and looks forward to watching this impactful program continue to grow.

Collaboration Across Pennsylvania

I've been actively learning about various institutional partners and branch leaders who are discovering new and exciting ways to work together.

The York Branch continues to thrive through its partnership with York College's Women in Science and Engineering (WiSE) Club, with another event planned in late October focusing on women in STEM leadership and advocacy. Their ongoing mentorship and student engagement make York a great model for other branches looking to strengthen their C/U connections.

The Beaver Valley Branch has also been connecting with local colleges to promote programs like NCCWSL (National Conference for College Women Student Leaders) and the AAUW PA Student Impact Mini-Grant, encouraging more students to take on leadership and advocacy roles. These partnerships remind us how powerful it can be when branches and campuses join forces to create lasting opportunities for women and girls.

A Friendly Reminder to C/U Partners

As we move into the new academic year, I encourage all College/University partner institutions to renew their AAUW memberships. Staying current ensures your institution and students continue to receive the full range of AAUW benefits, from free national student memberships to access to programs like Start Smart, Work Smart, and NCCWSL.

If you're unsure whether your institution's membership is current, please reach out. I'm happy to help you confirm or reconnect with the right contact at National. Keeping these partnerships active is one of the best ways we can empower students and strengthen our statewide network.

AAUW National Webinars

AAUW National hosted a fantastic series of virtual programs throughout October, all open to members, students, and community allies.

- AAUW Work Smart: Refresher
- Without Fear: A Conversation with Dr. Keisha Blain & Gloria Blackwell
- AAUW Start Smart (Salary Negotiation Workshop)
- Lobby Corps Virtual Training
- AAUW Money Smart: Smart Finances
- Branches in Action: A Century of Advocacy, Fundraising & Impact
- Defending Equity in Education: DEI Rollbacks & Curriculum Bans

These webinars were great opportunities to stay connected, learn new skills, and engage in national advocacy conversations. Please visit <https://www.aauw.org/resources/programs/webinars/> to view a recording of some of the presentations.

AAUW Awardee & Grant Spotlights

AAUW International Fellow: *Sara Sofia Pedraza* (UCLA Biology Ph.D. student, Colombia) — empowers women in science through her research on climate and biodiversity in the Andes.

AAUW Community Action Grant: *Ka Ho'ona'anao Wabine* — supports girls in rural East Maui with culturally grounded STEAM education, blending Hawaiian traditions with science and technology.

AAUW in Action

AAUW continues to stand for equity and safety in education by:

- Opposing harmful layoffs at the U.S. Department of Education that weaken civil-rights enforcement
- Urging Congress to pass the bipartisan **Campus Accountability and Safety Act**
- Resisting data collection plans that threaten student privacy and equity

Act: Become a Selection Panelist

Help shape the next generation of AAUW scholars! Apply to serve as a **fellowship or grant reviewer** and support the evaluation of AAUW's next cohort of changemakers. [Learn more and apply here.](#)

For Members

- **Member Recruitment Best Practices** – Nov. 19 | 7:00 PM ET
- **Working in Coalition: Building Power Through Partnerships** – Nov. 6 | 7:00 PM ET

[Watch the Fall Member Gathering recording here.](#)

Key Dates

- **Nov. 5:** *AAUW Work Smart: Know Your Value & Get Paid*
- **Nov. 19:** *AAUW Member Recruitment Best Practices*
- **Nov. 20:** *AAUW Alumnae Recognition Award*

Staying Engaged

Together, we're building stronger relationships between Pennsylvania branches and institutions, giving students the tools, mentorship, and confidence to lead. I'm deeply grateful to everyone who has reached out, collaborated, or helped spread the word this fall. Let's keep that momentum going.

If your branch or campus is planning an event or partnership, please let me know. I'd love to feature it in the next update!

In Solidarity,

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

NEWS FROM THE BRANCHES

AAUW Beaver Valley



The AAUW Beaver Valley Branch hosted its 24th Annual Kitchen Tour and Tasting on October 4, 2025. As in previous years, four local homeowners graciously opened their homes to guests, offering tours of their newly designed or recently renovated kitchens. Each kitchen featured a local chef who prepared a tasting sample of their specialty dish, adding a delicious highlight to the day.

An additional fundraising component of the Kitchen Tour is the Marketplace, held this year in the newly completed International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) Union Hall in Vanport. The Marketplace featured a basket raffle, baked goods, accessories for sale, and vendor displays. It also provided an ideal setting to meet visiting patrons, share the AAUW mission, and offer membership information in a welcoming, one-on-one setting.



We are pleased to report that this year over 340 tickets were sold, with \$15,000 raised to benefit scholarships. Thanks to the generosity of Beaver County's businesses, homeowners, and patrons, the Beaver Valley Branch has over the years been able to award 104 scholarships totaling \$158,000 to date.

AAUW Carlisle



AAUW Carlisle, in conjunction with the Dickinson College AAUW Student Organization, hosted a panel discussion on the upcoming PA Supreme Court Judicial Retention Election. The event, "Big Money, Big Questions: The Future of PA's Supreme Court," was held Thursday, October 16.

Dr. Sarah Niebler, Associate Professor of Political Science at Dickinson, served as moderator. We had a stellar panel of judicial experts including, Gary S. Gildin, Emeritus Dean, Professor of Law, Penn State Dickinson Law; Hon. Robert A. Graci, former PA Superior Court Judge and former Chief Counsel, PA Judicial Conduct Board; Jane Rigler, Professor of Law, emerita, Penn State Dickinson Law; and Ed Mahon, Investigative Reporter, Spotlight PA.



Dickinson Votes, a campus non-partisan voter engagement organization, was there to assist students wishing to change their out-of-state voter registration to PA.

AAUW Fox Chapel

Upcoming Programming

Living in Liberty: Combatting Sex Trafficking

Elizabeth Echevarria, CEO of Living in Liberty, a non-profit organization that works to combat human trafficking in Southwestern PA by supporting survivors on the streets and in their safe home as well as providing community education about the realities of commercial sexual exploitation will present “*Living in Liberty: Combatting Sex Trafficking*” on Tuesday, November 11 2025 at 10:00 am at the Faith United Methodist Church (261 West Chapel Ridge Road, Fox Chapel)

Human trafficking is a business enterprise so far below the radar that many Southwestern Pennsylvania residents could live an entire lifetime here without ever detecting its presence. But it’s here – on city streets and in dark corners of our communities. It’s extremely secretive, making it very difficult to expose and combat. And its perpetrators want to keep it that way.

Enter Living in Liberty, a nonprofit organization dedicated to restoring personal dignity and healing to victims of commercial sexual exploitation. Living in Liberty cannot prevent the crimes from happening, but they *can* sometimes help the women who have survived the ordeal to reclaim their lives and live in freedom again. Liberty Home, a safe house, awaits those who make it. A 5-step program for renewal guides victims from the most basic step – reestablishing their identity – to the final step of emotional and financial independence.

Our speaker, Elizabeth Echevarria, founded Living in Liberty in 2012, after learning about the devastating conditions of human trafficking from an Indian woman from Calcutta. Ms. Echevarria completed ministry training at Reach Northeast Ministry School in 2010 and received her master’s degree in social work from Slippery Rock University last year. She will talk about Living in Liberty’s mission and discuss the methods they deploy to find and help the women they strive to serve.

AAUW Johnstown

“Do You Know Your Rights?”



On October 2, 2025, the Johnstown Branch AAUW’s Public Policy Committee held a free, open-to-the public presentation concerning the rights afforded to people in the United States by the U.S. Constitution. The program was held from 6-8 PM at the Pennsylvania Highlands Community College.

ACLU Attorney, Ali Szemanski, presented information about the First Amendment and Voting Rights. Attorney Mark Wheeler from the Indiana County Public Defender’s Office discussed Fourth and Fifth Amendment Rights. Some of the topics included: the right to assemble, due process, voting, freedom of speech through symbolism, interactions with the law, illegal search and seizure and search warrant. Member and audience questions were answered by the speakers.



Ali Szemanski

Mark Wheeler

AAUW Lansdale

Lansdale Branch Promoting AAUW Mission & Membership While Honoring Women of Our Community



Our annual Montgomery Township Autumn Festival is a family-friendly fall celebration featuring food, live music, pumpkin games and decoration, a petting zoo, crafts, K9 demonstration, hayrides and visits from famous movie characters and a real helicopter!

Branch presence at the festival was announced prior to the event via our local radio station, utilizing their free community bulletin board platform. Our AAUW table, staffed in shifts by branch members, aimed to introduce our community to some of our projects and to invite community participation. We shared trifold brochures and bookmarks which briefly describe our organization and highlight our Excellence in Writing competition and our high school and college scholarship programs; each contain a QR code to our website.

Additionally, postcards advertising our upcoming online Higher Education and Community Outreach Auction, and rack cards describing our daylong STEM day for middle-school girls at the Montgomery County Community College which draws over 130 girls from 50 schools in 4 counties every March.

New this year was a way for anyone in attendance to honor a woman in their life who was instrumental in making them the person they had become. They purchased a postcard, addressed it to that woman, and got the opportunity to ring a bell or bang a gong and announce that woman's name in public! Said postcard was stamped and contained our QR code.

AAUW Reading

AAUW Reading has been busy. Our July book sale netted over \$100,000 which we share with our companion organization, Friends of the Berks County Public Libraries. Afterward, we jumped right into collecting and sorting for next summer's sale.



AAUW Reading was the sponsor of the Women's film block at the Reading Film Festival. A reception, called Sip, Savor, Screen, was held after the movies. The reception attracted over 40 participants and brought in four new memberships. Our members acted as servers and enjoyed mingling with guests. The reception brought recognition to the branch and through our purchase of pastries from a local MBE bakery that had recently experienced a catastrophic fire

and was closed due to damages, we helped a local business.





During October, the Cultural Arts Interest Group presented a reading of the play “The Savannah Sipping Society”. The actors did a full dress play but with scripts in hand. The play is about four women “of a certain age” who meet up by accident and join together determined to live a more exciting life. They learn that life is more interesting when you do things with friends. We invited friends and family and everyone had a good laugh. We’ve taken the moral of the story to heart!

AAUW Valley Forge

Valley Forge Teacher Outreach

Are you interested in connecting with local teachers? Do you have some AAUW funds to donate? If you answer yes, here is an easy program that can be started and directed by one AAUW member. It supports local teachers who have needs in their classroom that are not covered by district funds, while giving you the opportunity to tell them about AAUW.

Teachers use the app DonorsChoose.org to request funding. Your AAUW Program Director, through the app, chooses a teacher in your area and supplies the funds they have requested. DonorsChoose.org buys the products and ships them to the teachers. You receive emails from the app as to when the products arrive. You can then send personal notes to the teachers (through their schools) introducing them to AAUW and inviting them to come to a meeting. So far, our branch has helped three local teachers.

This program helps teachers while making AAUW better known. Definitely a win-win! If you have any questions, feel free to contact Susan Norris.

UPCOMING BRANCH ANNIVERSARIES

Erie, November 29, 1902

North Hills-Pittsburgh, November 19, 1970

Reading, December 1923

West Chester, December 1959

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:

January 2026 Issue: December 19, 2025

March 2026: February 20, 2026

May 2026: April 20, 2026

Please send information to *the Keystoner* Editor and put “For the Keystoner” in the Subject line!

AAUW PA STATE BOARD

Cindy Hall (State College) - President

Lori Woods (Indiana Co.) - Program Vice President

Karen Wellin (Valley Forge) - Membership Vice President

Pam Fuller (State College) - Finance Officer

Charlotte Ridge (Huntingdon)- Secretary

Rebecca Gardner (National) Marketing & Communications Vice President

Kacie Kirkpatrick (Beaver Valley) - Administrative Director

Sally Kalin (State College) - AAUW Funds Chair

Deb Roney (Huntingdon) - Bylaws Chair

Sandra Miller (Easton/Bethlehem) - Public Policy Chair

Ajla Glavasevic Laussegger (National) - Diversity & Inclusion Chair

Debe Mack (Johnstown) - Social Media Coordinator

Jasmine Bishnoi (Indiana Co.)- College/University Liaison

Off-Board Positions

Deb Roney (Huntingdon and Carlisle Branches)-Bylaws Chair

Barbara Zaborowski -Archives Chair, Website Coordinator

Deb Roney (Huntingdon and Carlisle Branches)- Nominating & Elections Committee Co-chair

Karen Wellin (Valley Forge Branch) - Nominating & Elections Committee Co-chair

Ann Echols, (State College) Regional Conference Treasurer

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