

AAUW advances gender equity for women and girls through research, education, and advocacy.

Issue Highlights

Sept. Program	2
Oct. Program	3
Get Out the Vote	4
Public Policy	6
Announcements	7
Diversity	8
Interest Groups	9
Branch Contacts	11



September

8	Branch Program
14	Nonfiction Grp
15	Morning Lit Grp
22	Movie Meetup
30	Brown Bag Books

October

17	Branch Program
18	Great Decisions
20	Morning Lit Grp
28	Brown Bag Books
27	Movie Meetup



President Laurie

From the President

What four-letter word is worth 15 points in classic Scrabble and has become synonymous with maintaining human interaction during the COVID-19 pandemic? ZOOM it is! And Zoom it will be for the next few months at least, as we modify our branch's operations to cope with the public health emergency.

Our branch board resolved at its July meeting that it is in the best interests of our members not to hold in-person meetings for the foreseeable future. This applies to general meetings and small group meetings such as book groups and Great Decisions.

At the same time, the board agreed that it is vital to maintain, as much as possible, a regular schedule of activities that promote and support AAUW's mission—and to sustain the bonds among members that keep our branch vital.

To serve both those needs, the branch has purchased a Zoom subscription that allows us to host large meetings without time limits. All the interest groups will be able to hold meetings on this account. Individuals participating in the meetings do not need to purchase a subscription. They will need to download the free Zoom software.

Building membership this year may be tough, but with everyone's help we can do it. We cannot hold our traditional Open House in September. Instead, I encourage each of us to invite a friend to attend our first general meeting via Zoom on Tuesday, September 8, at 7:00 p.m., on the very timely topic of "Protecting the Vote."

Our program Vps have a full season of topical presentations planned, any and all of which are worthy representations of our branch and AAUW's relevance to today's concerns. Membership VPs will use these events and other opportunities to attract interest, but your personal invitation to a potential member is our best recruiting tool.

Keep safe, keep healthy, and please keep in touch.

Upcoming Branch Programs

NOTE: All branch programs are by Zoom invitation only.

We will email the Zoom link to our members, and if you want to invite a friend you may share the link with that person. Please do not post the link on social media or distribute it widely.

Protecting the Vote

Guest Speaker Kat Calvin

Tuesday, September 8, 2020, 7:00 p.m.

Meet via Zoom



Kat Calvin of Spread the Vote

Voter suppression has been in the news lately, even before the pandemic greatly increased barriers. June saw a 40% decrease in the number of new voters registered statewide compared with June 2016, according to the Virginia Public Access Project.

One especially difficult obstacle is lack of an “acceptable” ID, a burden that especially affects older, poorer and less mobile citizens. In April Virginia greatly improved access to voting, but many other states maintain restrictions.

Enter [Spread the Vote](#), an organization that helps

people across the country obtain IDs so they can register and vote, as well as get jobs and housing.

Kat Calvin, the founder and Executive Director of Spread the Vote, will be our guest speaker in September. She will describe their work, their methodology, results, and how people can help.

You can read more on their website and on the site of their sister organization, [Project ID Action Fund](#). They also produce the podcast, [Vote! The Podcast](#).

Aimee Martin, Program Co-VP



Upcoming Branch Programs (continued)

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*Alicia Jones McLeod of
Challenging Racism*

Challenging Racism

Guest Speaker Alicia Jones McLeod

Saturday, October 17, 2020, time TBD

Meet via Zoom

A Meeting of AAUW-VA Northern District Branches

Our guest speaker, Alicia Jones McLeod, is the Executive Director of **Challenging Racism**. This local organization started in 2004 as an effort to close the minority student achievement gap in Arlington Public Schools, offering training to inform faculty and staff about race and equity.

Since then, the organization has held yearlong workshops to teach people in Arlington about issues surrounding race. **Challenging Racism: Learning How**

began as a parallel experience to the Arlington Public Schools initiative. It has grown to provide information to school and work groups, community organizations, and others whose members can benefit from a deeper and broader understanding of racism and its effect on our society.

The 11 branches of AAUW of Virginia's Northern District are invited to this virtual program, which was organized by the AAUW Arlington (VA) Branch.

A Community Resource for the Conversation of Racism

The Fairfax County Public Library offers **free online videos** which you may find relevant to our October program. Topics include:

- Navigating the Complexities of Race: Racial Healing and Reconciliation
- Reimagining America, Part 1 – History Taught Us: Exploring Yesterday's Impact on Today
- Reimagining America, Part 2 - "Why All the Protests?"
- Reimagining America, Part 3 - "If You Protest You May Die, If You Don't Protest You May Die"



Get Out the Vote 2020



“My dear friends: Your vote is precious, almost sacred. It is the most powerful nonviolent tool we have to create a more perfect union.”

– John R. Lewis, from speech in Charlotte, N.C., Sept. 6, 2012

Due to the restrictions of the pandemic, the Vienna Area Branch will not conduct in-person voter registration this year. Instead we will focus on two other activities described below.

Mail Personalized Letters

Sending a **Vote Forward** letter is one of the easiest things you can do to increase turnout. It takes two minutes and one stamp, and meaningfully increases the odds that the recipient will vote.

Requirements: printer, own stamps, envelopes.
Number of letters is up to you, but we hope 15 each.
(If you don't have a printer, we can help with that.)

Vote Forward has partisan and non-partisan lists; to protect AAUW's 501(c)(3) status we will use the non-partisan lists. In early October we will have a Zoom party to celebrate and to share what we have written.

Interested? Contact Kristin for details and to sign up.

Circulate Voter Information

With the general election in a little over two months we want to provide you with some online resources and voting deadlines and dates. *See page 5.*

AAUW encourages us to use all our connections and

social media to reach out. You may be interested in reviewing what these websites offer and sharing this information through Facebook and Twitter platforms, church and community newsletters, and conversations with friends or family.



Online Voter Resources

Main Portals

Virginia	Provides comprehensive information specific to state residents
Fairfax County	Provides comprehensive information specific to county residents
Town of Vienna	Provides complete election information and requirements for town residents
Other States	While these three sites overlap on basic voting information, they each offer additional election information. They cover most but not all of the states.
vote411.org	Launched by the League of Women Voters Education Project
usa.gov/voting	Interagency website of the federal government
vote.org	Non-profit, non-partisan organization

Virginia – Voter Registration Deadlines

[Link to Register or Update Information](#)

In person at the Office of Elections*	October 13	5:00 p.m.
By mail, postmarked by this date	October 13	5:00 p.m.
Online	October 13	11:59 p.m.

Fairfax County – Absentee Voting, Key Dates and Deadlines

[Link to Request Absentee Ballot](#)

First absentee ballot mailout	September 18	
Deadline to apply for absentee ballot by mail, fax, online	October 23	5:00 p.m.
Ballot <i>must</i> be postmarked by this date	November 3	
and returned to Office of Elections* by this date	November 6	12:00 noon

Fairfax County – Early Voting/In-Person Absentee Voting, Key Dates

Dates/hours vary by location:

Office of Elections* days/hours

Check [Office of Elections Link](#)

Satellite locations days/hours

Check [Satellite Locations Link](#)

Guidance for Specific Virginia Voting Populations

Fairfax County School Students	Students must be at least 18 by November 3, 2020. Those who will turn 18 on or before that date can register now
College Students	https://www.campusvoteproject.org/
Military & Overseas	https://www.elections.virginia.gov/casting-a-ballot/military-overseas/
Accessible Voting	https://www.elections.virginia.gov/casting-a-ballot/accessible-voting/

* Office of Elections address: [12000 Government Center Parkway, Ste 323, Fairfax.](#)

Progress Report on 2019-2021 Priorities

AAUW's **Public Policy Priorities**, adopted every two years by every-member vote, establish the federal action issues on which AAUW members across the country focus their advocacy efforts and guide the work of the national staff.



1. To support a strong system of public education that promotes gender fairness, equity, diversity, and inclusivity, and to address the barriers and implicit biases that hinder the advancement of women and girls. AAUW advocates Title IX and STEM. The STEM Act was signed into law Dec. 24, 2019.
2. To achieve economic security for all women, AAUW advocates: Pay equity, closing the gender gap, passing the FAMILY Act and the Paycheck Fairness Act, passed in the House.
3. To guarantee equality, individual rights, and social justice to a diverse and inclusive society, AAUW advocates: full access to civil and constitutional rights, universal access to affordable health care, supporting the Voting Rights Advancement Act. The House passed H.R. 4 to restore and expand voting access. It has been renamed the John R. Lewis Voting Rights Act of 2020.
4. AAUW-VA Public Policy Co-chairs Susan Burk and Sylvia Rogers reported the House Bill 622 was signed into law in April that “prohibits an employer from discharging or taking other retaliatory action against an employee who discloses or otherwise discusses their own wages or other compensation.”

Lobby Corps Receives Thanks for Voter Research Project



Because of COVID-19, AAUW Lobby Corps members were unable make in-person visits to Congress. Instead 18 members, including branch members Leslie Manning and Mary Dolson, contributed to AAUW's voter research project.

They completed research on 74 key races around the country. Currently, partial information is synthesized into AAUW's Federal Head-to-Head Voter Guide. Final copies will be posted eventually on the [AAUW Action Fund website](#) and sent to the states.

Robin Lucas, AAUW Advocacy Manager, said, “This is the first time we mobilized the lobby corps for such a project, and we are grateful for participants making it such a success.”

Branch Announcements

Branch Earns our Fourth Star



A note of congratulations to our 2019-20 board, especially Co-Presidents and Program VP, for earning our branch its Programs star in AAUW's **5-Star National Recognition Program**.

With our previous stars in Advancement, Communications and External Relations, and Public Policy and Research, we are now a Four-Star Branch. Well done, team!

Laurie

Publicity Help Needed

This is the perfect work-from-home role! The publicity chair works closely with the program team to disseminate information to local news and community outlets about our public meetings.

Marilyn was chair for many years. She provided an excellent template of contacts, deadlines, and other

useful information for publicity, most of which is done through email or online forms.

Please contact Marilyn if she can answer any questions and contact me if you can help with this essential task.

Laurie Cole, President

Last Chance To Be in the Directory

Many thanks from your membership team to all of you who faithfully renewed your AAUW dues this spring and summer. Despite the cancellation of most in-person meetings, the branch is still at work holding small group meetings by Zoom and planning fall programs. We won't be able to hold our annual Open House until the libraries allow it.

Remember that the Membership Directory lists only those who have renewed for the 2020-2021 program

year, so please get your dues in by September 30 to be included.

The easiest way to renew your membership is to email Kathy, who will send you an invoice by return email. Embedded in that email is your personalized link to the AAUW site where you can pay by credit card. This quick and secure procedure, introduced by AAUW, will take less than five minutes to complete.



19th Amendment Stamp

This is ideal for mailing our Get Out The Vote letters! Read more information [here](#).

Newsletter Deadline: October 10

Please email articles and photos.



Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion



It has been a pleasure to serve as chair of Diversity and Inclusion for the Vienna Area Branch. As a branch, we've worked together ensuring that our branch reflects those ideals in all aspects of our membership and programming. Now the scope has been broadened.

This summer the AAUW-VA Board approved changing the title and added the word "equity." Equity has always been the mission of AAUW. The word "equity" means to be fair and impartial. It is a befitting addition.

I invite you to visit the AAUW-VA website and examine the [Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion page](#). You'll find resources on the topics of diversity, equity, and inclusion (DE&I). The website is updated regularly so I would encourage you to visit often!

During the Summer Leadership Meeting in July, the following DE&I experts were invited to speak and guide Zoom attendees' understanding of racism. Dr. Janice Underwood, who was appointed by Gov. Northam as the first cabinet-level Chief Diversity and Inclusion Officer, discussed the *One Virginia Strategic Plan for Inclusion Excellence*. Dr. Angela Hattery, Co-Director of the Center for

the Study and Prevention of Gender-based Violence and Professor of Women and Gender Bias at the University of Delaware, and Dr. Earl Smith, Professor Emeritus of the American Ethnic Studies and Sociology at Wake Forest University, also spoke to attendees. Their talk was based on their book, *Policing Black Bodies*. They discussed how Black lives are surveilled and how to work for change. Both presentations were followed by many questions and comments from AAUW attendees.

Our branch continues to look for and create opportunities to collaborate and partner with other organizations in our community with like-minded goals and interests. This particular moment in the life of our nation offers us the chance to do just that!

Thanks for all you do personally and collectively to help our branch "bend the arc toward justice!"

Potential AAUW Dues Increase (Copy of email sent to all branch presidents on August 17, 2020.)

Dear Laurie,

The AAUW Board of Directors will consider and vote on a change in Individual Member dues at their upcoming Board meeting on October 16, 2020. Any increase would take effect on July 1, 2021. The Board will consider two different options:

- A. An increase to take effect on July 1, 2021, of an amount between \$3 and \$10.
- B. An increase to take effect on the 1st of July of each of the next three fiscal years of between \$3 and \$10 each year.

The selection of option A or B and the exact amount of the increase for the option chosen will be determined by the board at its October meeting. Any change to Individual Member dues will impact paid Life Membership as well, since AAUW's bylaws require paid Life Membership to equal 20 years of annual dues. The Board is not considering a change to College/University Member dues at this time.

Membership dues cover between 15% and 20% of AAUW's annual budget. While AAUW's expenses increase annually, in recent years dues have not increased with enough regularity to keep pace with expenses. Increasing Individual Member dues will help AAUW cover more expenses, including important functions like the Connect team, critical technology and infrastructure such as the website and Member Services Database, and other member support.

Please send any comments regarding this dues increase to connect@aauw.org no later than Friday, September 25, 2020. All comments will be reviewed by AAUW staff and the Board of Directors prior to the Board's vote. Thank you.

Best regards,

Julia T. Brown, Esq., Board Chair

Interest Groups



Please let your host know whether or not you will attend.

Group meetings will be via Zoom unless otherwise described. If you are new to a group, contact the group's chair to receive the email notices.

Great Decisions

September

There will be no meeting this month since we discussed topic 6 in June.

October 18, 2:00 p.m.

The Philippines and the U.S.

The Philippines has had a special relationship with the United States since the islands were ceded by Spain to the United States after the Spanish-American War at the end of the 19th century. However, since the election of Rodrigo Duterte, the country has pivoted more toward China, and away from the U.S. Duterte has also launched a large-scale war on drugs that many criticize for its brutality. What does the future hold for U.S. relations with the Philippines?

Nadine will lead the discussion. The video for this topic can be [viewed free here](#).

A link to join the conference will be sent to group members shortly before the meeting.

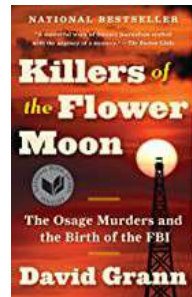
Chair

Brown Bag Books

September 30, 1:00 p.m.

Killers of the Flower Moon: The Osage Murders and the Birth of the FBI by David Grann

Detailed account of the murders of over 20 members of the Osage Indian tribe in the 1920's in order to acquire their oil money.



October 28, 1:00 p.m.

The Island of Sea Women by Lisa See

The story of the friendship of two Korean women sea divers and the culture of the Haenyeo society from 1938-2008.

Co-Chairs

Interest Groups (continued)

Group meetings will be via Zoom unless otherwise described.
If you are new to a group, contact the group's chair to receive the email notices.

Nonfiction Book Group

September 14, 7:00 p.m.

We will report on the nonfiction books we read over the summer and use this as a basis to vote on the books the group will read this year.

We always have room for more; please contact the chair to receive the Zoom invitation.

Next Date: November 9

Chair

Movie Meetup Group

September 22, 1:00 p.m.

October 27, 1:00 p.m.

Because of COVID-19, the group will not meet at a local theater until further notice.

Instead we discuss films that Cinema Arts offers for online streaming. Check the [theater's website](#), pay a nominal fee, and watch your selection on your own time. The group will meet on the dates above via Zoom to discuss the films.

Chair

Morning Literature Group

September 15, 10:00 a.m.

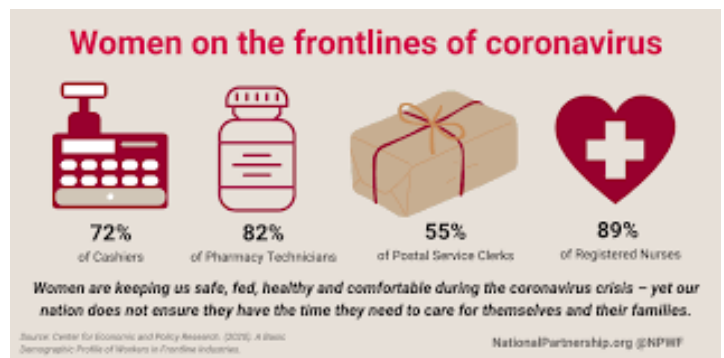
Bert will lead the discussion on *The Overstory*, by Richard Powers. Please let Adrienne know if you will participate.

October 20, 10:00 a.m.

Gail will lead the discussion on *The House on Mango Street*, by Sandra Cisneros. Please let Adrienne know if you will participate.

Chair

From [AAUW's Facebook](#) page



Branch Program Schedule, 2020-2021



★ September 8	7:00 p.m.	Protecting the Vote, with Kat Calvin
★ October 17	TBD	Challenging Racism, with Alicia Jones McLeod
November 16	TBD	Social Justice Reform, Joint Program with Vienna Optimists and Vienna Chapter of Delta Kappa Gamma
December 5		Tentative; drop-off of gift cards supporting Artemis House

Schedule is subject to change; future newsletters will include updates.



Vienna Area Branch Leaders, 2020-2021

AAUW Diversity Statement

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