

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

Issue Highlights

Branch Programs	2
Nov. Pgm Highlights	3
Public Policy	4
Great Decisions Info	4
N. District Program	5
Interest Groups	6
Branch Contacts	8



January

- 5 **Branch Program**
- 9 N. Dist. Program
- 11 Nonfiction Group
- 17 Great Decisions
- 19 Morning Lit Group
- 26 Movie Meetup
- 27 Brown Bag Books

February

- 9 **Branch Program**
- 16 Morning Lit Group
- 21 Great Decisions
- 23 Movie Meetup
- 24 Brown Bag Books

From the President



President Laurie and Josie.

Dear AAUW Friends,

Have we ever been as eager for a new year to start as we are for 2021? It might be more honest to say, we've never been this eager for a year to end. Goodbye, 2020, and don't let the door hit you on the way out.

Realistically, our lives are not going to change overnight with the calendar. Even as the COVID-19 vaccine rolls out, we will need to follow public health guidelines for months to come. I don't expect we will resume in-person programs or meetings before September 2021.

We will keep moving forward as an organization nonetheless. And to do that, we need your help in two critical areas.

First, please consider joining our leadership team. A nominating committee is working to present a slate of candidates for election as finance officer and membership VP(s) in April and to identify members to serve as chairs of various activities. Joining the board is important work but not burdensome. Especially if you haven't been on the board before, I hope you will take this opportunity to help serve our branch.

Second, please make an individual effort to bring a new member to AAUW. Yes, it's different when we meet by Zoom to make someone welcome at a meeting. But that can't stop us from sharing what we have to offer in programs, interest groups, and camaraderie. We need every member's help with this.

We will begin the new year with hope and enthusiasm for good things to come!

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

Laurie, President

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.

Climate Change in the Commonwealth of Virginia

Guest Speaker James L. Kinter, PhD

Tuesday, January 5, 7 p.m.



James L. Kinter

“Everybody talks about the weather, but nobody does anything about it.” This old saying neglects the fact that everybody is inadvertently doing something about the weather – we are changing it. The reality of global climate change is now undeniable and the likelihood is high that industrialization, urbanization and deforestation have caused most of the changes observed in the past 60 years. The citizens and businesses of the Commonwealth of Virginia are not exempt from the changes Earth will experience during the rest of this century.

Climate change is certainly going to be an increasingly important topic as the Biden administration addresses the issue. Find out what is happening here in Virginia from our guest speaker for the evening, George Mason University professor, Dr. James Kinter.

He will describe Mason research that is focused on these topics, emphasizing what we have learned about predicting future weather and climate in the mid-Atlantic region and what remains to be done to advance our understanding to actionable predictions.

Dr. Kinter is Director of the Center for Ocean-Land-Atmosphere Studies (COLA), which conducts research on climate variability and predictability from days to decades, focusing on phenomena such as droughts and floods, monsoons, El Niño, and climate change.

This lecture is made possible by George Mason University’s Mason Speakers. For further information contact <https://masonspeakers.gmu.edu/> or call 703-993-8761.

Connie, Program Co-VP



Artwork by Connie.

Our February program showcases Peggy Bercher, the adult fiction selector for the Fairfax County Public Library. Peggy loves adult fiction and orders all of it for the library system, both new titles and older ones. She will tell us about titles she is sure we will like.

Branch member Georgia had the desk beside Peggy for eight years. She says Peggy is a woman of many talents. The Fairfax County Public Library has 23 branches, so you know Peggy is very busy. Our book-loving members will find this a fascinating talk.

Connie, Program Co-VP

Highlights of Recent Branch Events

November: Exploring Social Justice

Our November 16, 2020, virtual program was a first in joining with two other local organizations to feature dynamic community leaders to discuss hot topics. The meeting was a great success with 57 attendees.

We joined the Optimist Club of Greater Vienna and the Virginia State Organization, Delta Kappa Gamma Society International, *Alpha Nu* Chapter. Bettina Lawton, a community activist, moderated the discussion and incorporated questions from attendees.

Social Justice in Policing

Hunter Mill District Supervisor Walter Alcorn and Shirley Ginwright, Chair of the Fairfax County Communities of Trust, addressed questions of police policy and practice and improving police relations with the Fairfax County community. Fairfax County Police Chief Edwin Roessler Jr. attended the program and offered comments. According to Supervisor Alcorn, ongoing county initiatives include training programs in de-escalation and a pilot program for how to respond to 911 calls. Expanding the use of body cameras has been slowed by the pandemic and limited resources. Interestingly, it is not the cost of camera hardware that is the obstacle, but staffing to review footage.

Ms. Ginwright detailed many of the activities of the Communities of Trust and how they identify and act

on issues. Two topics of increased importance are providing programs for young people and the reluctance of immigrant communities to raise concerns due to fear of ICE. She also talked about changing the role of school resource officers. Communities of Trust meetings are open to all.

Shyamali Hauth, a staffer for Supervisor Alcorn, supplied ongoing answers and links through the chat feature, as did Ms. Ginwright.

Social Justice in Education

Sean Perryman, President of the Fairfax County NAACP, and Leona Smith-Vance, Director of Equity and Family Engagement at Fairfax County Public Schools, each spoke to education issues. In response to a question about equity at the highly-rated Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology, Mr. Perryman said not only the student selection process needs revision. He cited the dearth of diverse teachers and some of the steps being taken to make hiring decisions more objective and inclusive.

Ms. Smith-Vance is the first Director of Equity and Family Engagement, a new FCPS initiative. The office is reaching out to parents of students and the community at large to raise issues and help develop policy. She noted that racism is currently not adequately addressed in written policy.

Aimee, Program Co-VP

December: Donations to Artemis House



Table set up to receive donations.

A major “thank you” to Vienna Branch members for your generous contributions to Artemis House. We are not many but clearly are powerful in commitment to our community. Jasmine Barnes, Supervisor at Artemis House, expressed her deep appreciation for our contributions when she came to pick them up.

Total collected was \$845 in gift cards and 180 personal care items.

Suzanne, Artemis House Chair

Public Policy Matters:

Notes from Zoom Meeting with Sen. Kaine's Staff on December 10, 2020



AAUW Reston-Herndon Area Branch hosted other branches at a Zoom meeting with two senior staffers for Senator Tim Kaine to discuss priorities for 117th Congress. There were 27 attendees.

Moderator and branch president Janine Greenwood asked if there was any news on the bipartisan COVID Relief Bill. Legislative Correspondent Nigel Stinson said the Senate was negotiating now and that COVID was at the forefront of the administration's priorities along with getting the economy under control.

Stinson also said Sen. Kaine joined Sen. Patty Murray (D-WA) to introduce the Child Care is Essential Act. This legislation would create a \$50 billion Child Care Stabilization Fund within the existing Child Care and Development Block Grant program. AAUW recognizes the important role of child care issues in achieving women's workplace and economic equity.

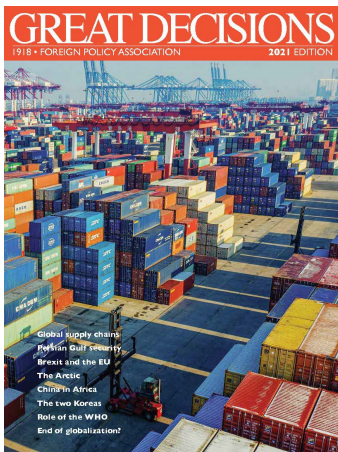
Legislative Correspondent Anna Przebinda, who covers

women's issues for Sen. Kaine, responded to Greenwood's characterization of the recession as a "she session" because it was an economic setback for women. Przebinda said women in care-giving roles have been hit by the pandemic with challenges and interruptions in careers, labor supply and with day care closings.

Moderator Greenwood also brought up the Ft. Hood sexual harassment case. AAUW Springfield Branch member Marcy Leverenz recalled AAUW supporting legislation that would take sexual harassment/assaults of military personnel by military out of the chain of command.

Although the new administration has multiple problems to solve, Sen. Kaine's staffers said its priorities are to enhance and fix the ACA; pass COVID-19 relief; control the economy; put school funding and child care at top of the list; and strengthen the Voting Rights Act. With those hopeful words, the Zoom meeting ended.

Mary, Public Policy Chair



2021 Great Decisions:

Group Discussion Open to All

Great Decisions is a program of the Foreign Policy Association, whose motto is "Informed citizens make great decisions." Great Decisions is America's largest discussion program on world affairs. The program model involves reading the Great Decisions Briefing Book, watching the DVD, and joining a group to discuss the most critical global issues facing America today.

We will begin the new year of Great Decisions discussions on January 17 and meet monthly for eight sessions. We meet on the third Sunday of the month from 2:00 to 4:00 pm, unless the group decides to move our meeting date due to a holiday.

Members take turns leading the discussions. We will meet by Zoom until it is safe to meet in homes.

Note that the topics for the January and February meetings are on page 6 of this newsletter. Members buy a copy of the briefing book, and it is fine to share them. If you wish to join the group for 2021, please email me for details.

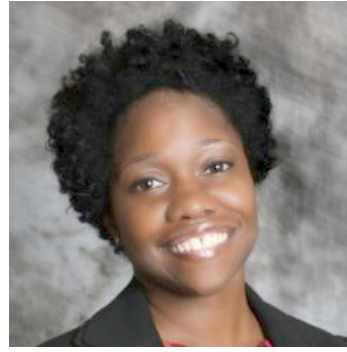
Jean, Great Decisions Chair

Northern District and Virginia AAUW Events

January 9, 2021: Local Governments' Efforts on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion



Karla Bruce, Fairfax Co.



Samia Byrd, Arlington Co.

The Northern District of AAUW of Virginia is planning a Zoom program for January 9, 2021, at 10 a.m.

This will be a panel discussion with representatives from local districts. The goal of the program is to help our members in Northern Virginia better understand what our local governments are doing related to diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Currently we have two confirmed panelists: Karla Bruce, Chief Equity Officer of Fairfax County, and Samia Byrd, Chief Race and Equity Officer for Arlington County. We have also asked someone from Alexandria City to participate. See more about [Fairfax County's plan](#) in this outline by Karla Bruce.

Complete details, including how to register, will be sent later.

Sandy Lawrence, N. District Co-Representative

March 13 – 15, 2021: AAUW of Virginia State Conference



Because of the continuing pandemic, the 2021 state conference, which includes the annual business meeting, will be a virtual event using Zoom. Social distancing, by nature, places some limits on what we can do during the conference. However, as we

demonstrated during the virtual Summer Leadership Meeting last July, virtual meetings also enable us to bring in extraordinary speakers from anywhere in the world and to allow more members to attend. There will be no charge to attend.

Sessions will be held as follows:

- Saturday, March 13, from 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. and from 3 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.
- Sunday, March 14, from 3 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.
- Monday, March 15, from 3 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.

Save the dates and plan to attend!

Leslie Tourigny and Suzanne Rothwell, AAUW-VA Co-Presidents

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

January 17, 2 p.m.

Global Supply Chains and National Security

The shutdown of global supply chains due to the COVID-19 pandemic brought to the fore an issue with the high level of global interdependence: What happens when one country is the main source for an item, say face masks, and then can no longer supply them? How would this affect national security?

February 21, 2 p.m.

Persian Gulf Security Issues

The Persian Gulf remains tense as the rivalry between the regional powers of Saudi Arabia and Iran continues. Tensions escalated in early 2020 as the United States began to intervene in the Gulf, launching an airstrike that killed two Iranian military commanders. What are the historical influences that have led to these tensions? What role, if any, should the United States play?

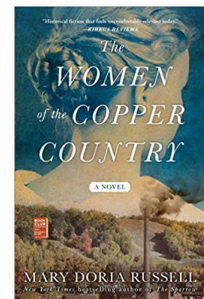
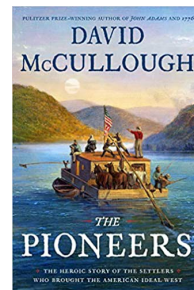
Chair
Jean

Brown Bag Books

January 27, 1 p.m.

The Pioneers by David McCullough

The story of the settling of the Northwest Territory by dauntless pioneers.



February 24, 1 p.m.

The Women of the Copper Country by Mary Doria Russell

The story of the courageous woman who started a rebellion by leading a strike against the largest copper mining company in the world.

Co-Chairs
Susan and Betty

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

January 11, 7 p.m.

We will discuss *The Library Book* by Susan Orlean. This describes the disastrous fire that partially destroyed the Los Angeles Public Library in 1986 and also acts as an homage to libraries and their role in American communities.

Next Date: March 8 (*The Riches of This Land*)

Chair
Jean

Movie Meetup Group

January 26, 1 p.m.

February 23, 1 p.m.

The group meets on the 4th Tuesday of most months via Zoom to discuss films available for streaming through **Cinema Arts Theater**.

Please contact the chair to be included in the distribution list.

Chair
Susan

Morning Literature Group

January 19, 10 a.m.

Kristin will lead the discussion on *The Water Dancer* by Ta-Nehisi Coates. Please let Adrienne know if you will attend.

February 16, 10 a.m.

Kathy will lead the discussion on *The Grammarians* by Cathleen Schine. Please let Adrienne know if you will attend.

Chair
Adrienne

Know any relatives or their friends who might be interested? Pass this on!



Take AAUW's free online salary negotiation course.
Get started at salary.aauw.org.

Branch Program Schedule, 2020-2021

September 8	7 p.m.	Protecting the Vote, with Kat Calvin
October 17	10 a.m.	Challenging Racism, with Alicia Jones McLeod
November 16	7:30 p.m.	Exploring Social Justice in Policing and Education
December 21	7 p.m.	Winter Solstice Celebration
January 5	7 p.m.	Climate Change in the Commonwealth of Virginia, with James Kinter, PhD
February 9	7 p.m.	Peggy's Picks, with Peggy Bercher



Vienna Area Branch Leaders, 2020-2021

NOTE: Each person's name is linked to her email address. Click the name to send an email.

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.