

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

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From the President



President and Josie.

Dear AAUW Friends,

Now we mark one full year of pandemic living. Our activities, routines, and even our vocabularies have changed (“Zoom” was an onomatopoeia and “Corona” was a beer). Certain aspects of life didn’t stop, though, and our fellow members have experienced joys and sorrows unrelated to the pandemic yet profoundly affected by it. We do our best to support each other from a distance.

As an organization we have adapted to necessary changes and continue to serve our mission. I’m so proud of how our programs continue to address issues of equity, diversity, and inclusion; female entrepreneurship; and academic advancement. Our interest groups didn’t falter and we continue to read, meet, and discuss. Our support for AAUW Funds hit a record for generosity. We’ve even had some fun along the way!

We owe huge thanks to our board members and interest group leaders who have stepped up to the challenge and kept us going. For their service to our branch, eight members who go “above and beyond” were selected as “Named Honorees” (see the list on page 5). Our pandemic lives are richer because of them, and each other. If you would like to be part of the board, please let me know. There are many ways we could use your talents and skills.

Even as the COVID-19 vaccine begins to reach more of us, we can’t yet go back to our old meeting model. March and April meetings will still be virtual—including our annual business meeting after the April program. Don’t let this stop you from inviting a friend or neighbor to a meeting! Whether it is a general meeting or a book group, we have so much to offer women in our community. Let’s share the wealth.

As always, keep safe, keep healthy, and please keep in touch.

Laurie, President

Upcoming Branch Programs

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 let a Program Co-VP know in advance the name of your friend.

**Woman Entrepreneur Facing Challenges:
Guest Speaker Sue Langley, Owner of Sue's Silk
Tuesday, March 9, 2021, 7 p.m.**



Sue Langley, business owner.

Sue Langley began her business because of the desire to do something with her sister. Since they love anything silk, Sue decided to focus on silk for her first business trade venture. Her workshop is in Vienna, but she sells only through the Internet at [Sue's Silk](#).

Sue will tell us how she began her small-scale business. By seeking to help a cottage industry in Thailand, she realized she could create jobs for women while doing something she enjoys.

She and her sister have had to make many adjustments: to industrialized competition in what was once a cottage industry; to changes in what people wear; and now to the pandemic. She currently includes a variety of silk masks in her inventory.

Join us to hear about her beautiful silks and how she designs and orders her products.

Aimee, Program Co-VP



Lane Stone, author.

**Building a Career as a Woman Author: Mystery Writer Tells All
Guest Speaker Lane Stone
Tuesday, April 6, 2021, 7 p.m.**

Annual business meeting will follow the program.

Do you need to curl up with an entertaining book during this socially-distanced spring? Fellow AAUW member [Lane Stone](#) is the author of what are called "Cozy Mysteries." She has two series: Pet Palace Mysteries and the Tiara Investigation Mystery series.

She will tell us about her writing career—her inspirations, her writing process, and the obstacles she

had to overcome.

In addition to serving as Co-President of the AAUW Alexandria Branch, Lane also volunteers with the Delaware River & Bay Lighthouse Foundation and Northern Virginia Community College's Women's Center.

Aimee, Program Co-VP

2021 AAUW of Virginia State Conference



Conference Highlights

Please join us virtually for the annual AAUW of Virginia State Conference, which also includes our 96th Annual Business Meeting. In addition to conducting important business of our organization, over the course of three days you will hear from and be able to question an exciting variety of speakers on the AAUW mission-related topics listed below.

For details about the topics and speakers, [use the link here](#).

Conference Schedule

Saturday, March 13: 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. and 3 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.

- Women Make the Difference! The 2020 AAUW of Virginia Woman of Achievement Awardees
- Keynote Address: Women Make a Difference! in U.S. Elections: Assessing Gender and Intersectional Dynamics in Election 2020 and Beyond
- AAUW of Virginia Women Make the Difference!
- What Difference Does Poverty Make in the Lives of Women?
- AAUW of Virginia Annual Business Meeting

Sunday, March 14: 3 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.

- Women Make A Difference! in Military Service to Our Country
- Equity in Education Makes the Difference!
- Women Make the Difference! As Elected Officials in Virginia

Monday, March 15: 3 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.

- Alexandria's Social Justice Initiatives
- What a Difference! A Virtual Trip to the Booker T. Washington National Monument
- Gender-Based Violence, Institutional Betrayal and the Carceral State

Conference Registration

The conference and business meeting are free, but please register in advance for each day you want to attend by using the registration links below. You will be sent Zoom links for each day.

[Register here for March 13](#)

[Register here for March 14](#)

[Register Here for March 15](#)

AAUW of Virginia: Support Paid Family Leave and Paid Sick Days in Virginia

[Editor's Note: The Special Session of the Virginia Legislature is projected to end February 27, after this newsletter is distributed. For the latest status of HB 2137, check the link below.]



Virginia State Capitol. (Photo by Mary Dolson)

AAUW of Virginia is committed to achieving equity for women and girls and creating a secure economic future for all Virginians.

At some point, most workers will need time away from work to deal with a serious personal or family illness or to care for a new child. The situation becomes more acute for those individuals in the “sandwich” generation, i.e., caring for aging parents and for children.

Paid Family and Medical Leave

The 1993 Family and Medical Leave Act was an important step to protect an employee’s position during an extended leave *without pay*. Many workers, especially women who are already disadvantaged by the gender pay gap, cannot afford to lose pay while caring for a new baby or an aging parent and are forced to return to work prematurely.

Virginia Sen. Boysko and Del. Ayala have introduced identical bills in the House (**HB 2016**) and Senate (**SB 1330**) and are working together to support Virginia’s families by making this program a reality in the

Commonwealth.

The bill requires the Virginia Employment Commission to establish and administer a paid family and medical leave program beginning January 1, 2024. Funding is provided through premiums assessed to employers and employees beginning in 2023. Workers get 80% of a weekly wage with a cap of 12 weeks per year.

HB 2016 Status: Passed in House Labor and Commerce Committee but left in Appropriations.

SB 1330 Status: Did not pass in Labor and Commerce.

Paid Sick Days

This bill, **HB 2137**, sponsored by Del. Elizabeth Guzman, provides access to five paid sick days for essential workers-- people in health care, grocery and food service, and childcare.

Workers who are sick are forced to go to work while ill to get paid. The bill is especially needed during the COVID-19 pandemic because access to paid sick days prevents

the spread of infectious disease. Workers who go to work sick endanger their co-workers, the public, and the ability of the business to remain open. Currently 41% of private sector workers, which includes 1.2 million workers in Virginia, have no paid sick days.

HB 2137 Status: Passed Senate Commerce and Labor Committee 2/22. [Check current status here.](#)

Mary, Public Policy Chair

Updates for AAUW Funds and Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion

Total Raised for AAUW Funds: \$4324



Thank you for your contributions to AAUW Funds.

In 2020, in the midst of a pandemic, our branch raised funds from three sources: individual online donations, the Appeal Letter campaign, and the Ornament Raffle (ornaments were donated by a branch member). We raised more than we ever expected.

Your generosity also allows our branch to honor eight members for their service. That's the most honorees

ever! This year's honorees were recently selected by the branch Board of Directors and are the following:

They will be recognized in the program for the AAUW of Virginia State Conference in mid-March.

Thank you for your support, Vienna Branch! Thank you for all that you do!

Nadine, AAUW Funds Chair

Toolkit for Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion (DEI)



Have you visited the **DE&I Toolkit** on the national AAUW website? The toolkit is the most extensive collection of resources that AAUW has collected. Reviewing it with others is a wonderful way to get as much as possible from the resource.

I recently had the opportunity to join a group of AAUW members from around the state who have been reviewing it together for some time. They were reviewing the section, **Dimensions of Diversity and**

Identity.

Our "homework" was to spend 10 minutes looking at that section before the group met. Our conversation about the section was engaging and thought-provoking, and as a participant I gained much more than I would have if I were viewing the site by myself.

After spending that time with other AAUW members, I have come to realize that I have much to learn about the subject and even more about the website.

Nadine, DEI Chair

Branch Announcements

Nominating Committee Report

The Nominating Committee proposes the following slate of officers for the 2021-2023 term:

- Finance Officer: Kathy
- Membership Co-Vice Presidents: Gail and Jean

In addition, Marian and Aimee have agreed to serve as Publicity Co-Chairs, which is an appointed position.

The Vienna Area Branch would like to thank the

nominees for serving this past year and for agreeing to continue to serve the branch for another two-year term. Your talent, skill, and commitment are very much appreciated.

Connie, Nominating Committee Chair

Tax Deduction for 2020

A portion of your national AAUW dues is tax-deductible as a charitable donation if you itemize. Since the national dues for 2020 were \$59, the tax deduction is \$56.

Please contact Finance Officer Kathy if you have questions.

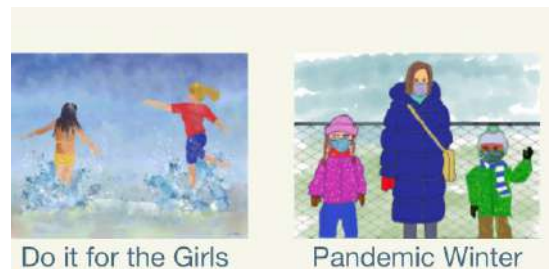


Vote for Art Now!

We have a special incentive to vote in this year's AAUW Art Contest. Our member Carol has two entries in the 2021 contest!

Look for "Do It for the Girls" and "Pandemic Winter."

Follow this link to vote. **Deadline is March 3.**



Each member can vote once for up to 10 selections. The top vote-getters will be used on the annual greeting cards printed by AAUW.

Laurie, President

Highlights of February Branch Program

February's program featured a very enthusiastic Peggy Bercher, the adult fiction selector for the Fairfax County Public Library.

Peggy described all the resources she uses to learn about upcoming novels, keeping in mind that she wants to appeal to the diverse audience of Fairfax County. Peggy then moved on to some of the

upcoming books she is excited about.

Besides Peggy we had 32 attendees, including guests of members and members from other AAUW branches. Be sure to invite your friends to upcoming programs.

Aimee, Program Co-Vice President

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

March 21, 2 p.m.

Brexit and the European Union

With the “Brexit transition period” coming to an end, the United Kingdom has formally left the European Union as of the start of 2021. With negotiations between the two entities continuing to stall, what does the future of Europe and the UK look like? Will the UK survive a possible Scottish vote to leave? Who will step up and take command of Europe now that Angela Merkel is out of the spotlight?

Kathy will lead the discussion. The video will be shown at the beginning of the meeting.

April 18, 2 p.m.

The Coldest War: Toward a Return to the Great Power Competition in the Arctic?

The major changes that the Arctic is experiencing as a result of global warming are repositioning it as a region of strategic importance. Large sheets of Arctic ice are melting, exposing vast stores of natural gas and oil. With Russia and China already miles ahead with their Arctic strategies, can the U.S. catch up?

Kristin will lead the discussion. The video will be shown at the beginning of the meeting.

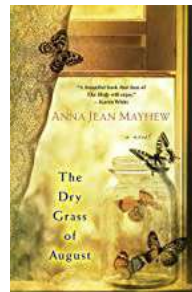
Chair

Brown Bag Books

March 31, 1 p.m.

The Dry Grass of August by Anna Jean Mayhew

A riveting depiction of Southern life in the throes of segregation, what it will mean for a young girl on her way to adulthood—and for the woman who means the world to her.



April 28, 1 p.m.

The Vanishing Half by Brit Bennett

The book follows the lives of twins, light-skinned Black girls who run away from home at the age of sixteen. Desiree marries a dark-skinned Black man and has a child, while Stella lives her life passing as White. The book tracks their lives across generations, as their lives branch away from each other and yet remain intertwined.

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

March 8, 7 p.m.

We will discuss *The Riches of This Land: the Untold True Story of America's Middle Class* by Jim Tankersley.

Next Date: May 10

Chair

Movie Meetup Group

Note change in the selection of a film.

March 23, 1 p.m.

April 27, 1 p.m.

The group meets on the 4th Tuesday of the month to discuss a movie of each participant's choice on a streaming platform.

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

Chair

Morning Literature Group

March 16, 10 a.m.

Candace will lead the discussion on *The Dutch House*, by Anne Patchett. Please let Adrienne know if you will participate.

April 20, 10 a.m.

Laurie will lead the discussion on *The Nickel Boys*, by Colson Whitehead. Please let Adrienne know if you will participate.

Chair

Catch up on Past Webinars

AAUW is committed to staying connected during these difficult times, so we're providing regular webinar content for our communities. Check out recordings from [past webinars](#) and look for emails with news of upcoming online events!



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
March 9	7 p.m.	Sue Langley, local business owner, Sue's Silk
April 6	7 p.m.	Lane Stone, local author; annual branch business meeting
May TBA		End-of-year get-together and installation of officers



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.