



Bulletin

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Kristina Haahr
AAUW of Kansas President

President's Recap

Thank you to each of you who attended our annual spring conference, HEAR US ROAR, on April 17, 2021. I appreciated seeing all of your faces, showing our 19th amendment pride in white, purple, and gold attire. (And I have to shout out Paula Shield's taking it that extra step with her early 20th-century style hat!) It was our first virtual conference and we rocked it! Everyone showed up, we only had one technical issue, and we were respectful of each other's time. I certainly learned some new things and I hope you did too.

For those of you who were unable to attend, you missed a good one! Our special guests included Robin Lucas, AAUW Grassroots Advocacy Manager, and Dr. Jane Holwerda, Dodge Community College. Both speakers gave us pertinent information on issues each of us are facing today, as well as the history of our advocacy for issues in the past. Not much has changed, really, except the subject line. We continue to need each other and I hope each of us were inspired to continue our work to "read, watch, listen, learn, and discuss" with each other, lifting up the woman next to us.

This year, we added round table break-out rooms to our agenda. The board wanted to make sure we had an opportunity to interact with each other in a smaller setting -- not always easy to accommodate via Zoom. Our break-out sessions allowed participants to either discuss a series of articles covering the effects of COVID-19 on women, or share program ideas across local branches. I only wish we could have been in two

places at once! We shared notes taken from each room with all participants so hopefully everyone feels like they got all the information, even if you participated in a different room. Please let me, or another board member know, if this is something you would like to see continue.

During our business meeting, we recognized Star Branches, Funds, Legacy Circle members, and Sunflower Garden inductees. We also nominated and elected the following:

- President Elect: Elizabeth Rempel
- Co-Program Vice Presidents: Marjean Harris and Donna Becker
- Treasurer: Carolyn Dwire

We still have vacant positions on the board so if you're interested in being our College Representative or Membership Vice President, please let me know!

Finally, the results from AAUW's 2021 National Election are in. We reached a quorum in only three days this year! Our Board Chair, Julie Brown, was re-elected, as were Vice Chair Malinda Gaul and board members Elizabeth Haynes and Joseph Bertolino. AAUW's public policy priorities were approved by 92% of the voters. The initiative to remove the college degree membership requirement did not pass, receiving only 63% approval, falling short of the two-thirds majority needed. If you have any further questions about this initiative, please contact me or look over the information available on the national website.

I wish each of you a wonderful summer. I am so thankful we will be able to get back out, travel, and see each other in person. Take care and we will see you all soon.

Kristina Haahr
President, AAUW KS
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by Marjean Harris and Donna Becker, Co-Program Vice Presidents

We are enthused about the opportunity to serve our state organization and its branches with plans for more Town Halls, periodic communications with our branches, and a wonderful annual conference next spring.

Those of you who attended this year's annual conference, or have read the minutes of that meeting, know that Robin Lucas, AAUW Grass Roots Advocacy manager, spoke about the systemic racism that exists in our country. AAUW National is highlighting goals to move our organization toward recognition and acknowledgement of the role the organization and each of us as individuals may play in perpetuating oppressive [systems of power](#).¹

With the stark reminders of racial injustice, our goal as co-vice-presidents for programs is to promote opportunities to grow in our understanding of the barriers faced by women of color not only in education but across the spectrum of lived experience. This is described by the term [Intersectionality](#)² - the interconnected nature of social categories such as race, class, and gender that create overlapping systems of discrimination. For example, "Black, disabled, woman," or "Non-English speaking, immigrant, woman," or Latina, lesbian, woman."

We have begun to explore how each of us in our branches and state organization could move toward an examination of racial justice issues and the realities of oppression and discrimination. For those of us who are white, it is uncomfortable to critique how we contribute to the perpetuation of unfair, discriminatory, and oppressive attitudes and behavior. It is hard not to feel defensive, i.e. "I am a good person. I am not a racist. I believe everyone should be equal." In humility we acknowledge to our sisters of color that it is past time for white sisters to join the work.

Robin's "call to action" is for us to Watch, Read, Listen, Learn, and Discuss. Watching (observing) our world, locally, nationally, and internationally with a discerning eye is an important first step. Reading, especially the writings of those who face barriers,

oppression, and traumas visible and invisible, is another method. Listening, even when we feel defensive or that someone is being "too sensitive." These steps lead to Learning and then Discussion – all with kindness, respect, and humility. All of this requires a willingness to examine our own perspective – the lens through which we view others and assign value.

As Program VPs, we will suggest resources such as the AAUW Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion [Toolkit](#), videos, books, discussion groups, and other methods for moving each of us forward, as individuals and as advocates for equity in all its forms. We will also direct you to resources that focus on other AAUW priorities which you may want to check out for program topics. If you choose to have programs on racial justice, we may be able to provide suggestions on how to engage the topic. As one AAUW Webinar speaker said, "Being uncomfortable is not the same as being unsafe."

We are looking forward to a year of programs that are stimulating, challenging, and enlightening. Along with heavier topics, we know you will include time for enjoyment and camaraderie – the sisterhood of AAUW. Wishing you all a year of memorable and meaningful programs.

1. **"Systems of power** are the beliefs, practices, and cultural norms on which individual lives and institutions are built. They are rooted in social constructions of race and gender and embedded in history (colonization, slavery, migration, immigration, genocide) as well as present-day policies and practice."
2. **Intersectionality** is an analytical framework for understanding how aspects of a person's social and political identities combine to create different modes of discrimination and privilege. The term was conceptualized and coined by Kimberlé Williams Crenshaw.

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Vacant

- Membership Vice President
- College/University Partnership

RESOURCES FOR YOU:

Pay Check Fairness Act – Advocacy help

<https://www.aauw.org/resources/policy/pfa-toolkit/>

Find AAUW news for Kansas at our website -

<https://aauw-ks.aauw.net/>

Meet your new AAUW KS officers:

President Elect

Elizabeth (Liz) Rempel

"I joined AAUW in 2016 after moving back to my hometown of Newton from Austin, Texas. I was invited to serve as the branch's Program Vice-President in 2018 and became the acting President in 2019. I stand with AAUW's feminist vision and mission, and love being inspired by our members."



Co-Program Vice President

Donna Becker



Donna shares her talent of bringing historical women to life through first-person presentations. Look up [Historical Echoes](#). From the Newton Area Branch, Donna joined in 2013 and has served as president.

Co-Program Vice President

Marjean Harris

Marjean is a past AAUW KS president and the Newton Area Branch. She joined AAUW in 2011. She is now a retired Licensed Specialist Clinical Social Worker.



Treasurer

Carolyn Dwire



Carolyn has served as Treasurer of AAUW KS since 2009 and we keep electing her back in! She is an El Dorado Branch member whose family moved in with her grandparents at age seven and she's still in that home.

Just a sampling of the attendees for the 2021 AAUW Kansas Annual Meeting – Virtual style! (See Paula’s hat?)



Sunflower Garden

Contributions to the Kansas Sunflower Garden were in recognition of the following:



Newton Area Branch honored outstanding branch member as their officer team. A special donation was made in memory of Janet Hamilton.

Shawnee Mission Branch gave in memory of Jean Ternus and Gloria Stansbarger-Sty.

Manhattan Branch gave a flower in memory of Helen Janes.

RECOGNITIONS AT 2021 ANNUAL MEETING
Kansas Star Branches 2020-21

The branches submitted applications that highlighted their activities and efforts in the area of membership growth, AAUW Funds support, projects and events, visibility, and membership communication.

- Manhattan
- Newton Area
- Wichita

AAUW FUNDS CONTRIBUTORS

All Kansas branches were recognized for their contributions to AAUW Funds for calendar years 2019 and 2020. Overall giving in 2019 was \$3,858.68. Manhattan received the award for Highest Overall all Giving. The other branches came in 2nd Shawnee Mission, 3rd Wichita, 4th Newton, and 5th El Dorado. Overall giving 2020 was \$2,128.00. Manhattan again was first in overall giving with 2nd Newton, 3rd Shawnee Mission, and 4th Wichita.

Thank you for your support of AAUW Funds! These gifts allow AAUW to create and expand our renowned research, mission-based programs, and advocacy initiatives that tackle challenges facing women and girls.

Tresa Landis, AAUW Funds



AAUW KS supported two women to attend the **National Conference for College Women Student Leaders (NCCWSL)** through partial scholarships for the registration fee. This year’s event was virtual! Tahmineh Azizi, PhD candidate at K-State University, and Allison Weaver of Bethel College were this year’s recipients.

Stay on top of AAUW Public Policy issues by subscribing to the AAUW Action Network. <http://www.aauw.org/what-we-do/public-policy/two-minute-activist/>



Excerpts from Julia T. Brown, AAUW BOARD CHAIR, May 19, 2021 message

Many thanks to everyone who voted in [AAUW’s 2021 National Election](#). AAUW’s public policy priorities were approved by 92% of voters. The board-recommended ballot initiative to remove the college-degree membership requirement did not receive the two-thirds, or 66.6%, vote required to enact a bylaws change.

While we have many voices, I know we all share the same commitment to AAUW’s mission of advancing gender equity for women and girls through research, education and advocacy, and our vision of achieving equity for all. More than ever, we must embrace our values and continue to strive towards [diversity, equity and inclusion](#); it’s a journey that will never end....Thanks again for making your voice heard.



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

AAUW Action Fund Mission

The AAUW Action Fund advances equity for women and girls through member activism and voter mobilization.

Since 1881, AAUW has been the nation's leading voice promoting education and equity for women and girls.

The AAUW Action Fund was established July 1, 2009, following a strategic restructuring of AAUW, the AAUW Educational Foundation, and the AAUW Leadership and Training Institute. The AAUW Action Fund supports AAUW's continuing goal of breaking through barriers for women and girls, and it does so through member activism and voter mobilization. Both organizations have a nationwide network of nearly 100,000 members, 1,000 branches, and 600 college/university institution partners.

AAUW Action Fund
1310 L St. NW, Suite 1000
Washington, DC 20005
800/326-AAUW (2289)
connect@aauw.org

In principle and in practice, AAUW values and seeks a diverse membership. There shall be no barriers to full participation in this organization on the basis of gender, race, creed, age, sexual orientation, national origin, disability, or class.



June 2021 Bulletin

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