



Bulletin

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From the President's Desk



Liz Rempel
2023-2024 AAUW of Kansas President

Four passionate and persistent leaders from AAUW Missouri were the driving force behind the Central States Regional Conference in St. Louis this October. These so-called “four Musketeers” regrouped after the pandemic swept away their 2020 plans and Oct. 19-21 165 people from 13 states gathered for “Celebrating AAUW: Reaching New Heights Together,” in view of the St. Louis Arch.

AAUW CEO Gloria Blackwell and Meghan Kissell, Senior Director of Policy and Membership Advocacy, as well as a number of national board members, including Malinda Gaul, Vice Chair of the Board, were present and involved throughout the conference.

The conference was packed with input, covering public policy, membership, organizational finances, the pay gap, DEI, reproductive rights, fundraising, the Equal Rights Amendment, the future of AAUW, and so much more. The days included a mix of keynote speeches, panels, Swap Shops where branches could share the how-to's of successful programs and projects, and Trending Topics presentations. You can find handouts and additional info from many of the presentations on the AAUW Missouri website: <https://aauw-mo.aauw.net/aauw-midwest-regional-conference/>

Kansas was represented! Usha Reddi, President of the Manhattan branch, led a Swap Shop on their

successful and meaningful annual International Women's Day event. Donna Becker, Kansas AAUW VP of Programs, shared a “Trending Topics” talk “On Tribal Lands,” about injustices to Native Americans and how AAUW members can promote understanding, accountability, and appropriate support for Native people.

This conference was a bit like drinking from a firehose, but I want to pass along some points that stood out to me:

- You should be proud to belong to an organization that gave away over \$6 million to 320 women and community projects in 2022-23 and plans to give away \$6.3 million in 2023-24. AAUW has given away \$140 million total.
- AAUW currently has about \$150 million in assets; however, 95% of that is restricted to be used for educational gifts or for specific purposes, leaving about 5% of flexible funds. AAUW encourages and appreciates donations to the Greatest Needs Fund as this money can be used flexibly as issues and needs arise.
- From the AAUW Key Issues Panel: AAUW will continue to change, and membership will probably continue to decline. Consider a future organization that is “leaner and meaner” and let go of tired questions like “how do we get younger members,” focusing instead on being relevant and active.
- Lisa Maatz gave a keynote address about the challenges facing member-driven organizations. She worked with AAUW for 15 years in government relations and advocacy and is now an independent pay equity consultant. A few takeaways to consider:
 - Our branches should think and act locally. This demonstrates our relevance and helps us find local partners.
 - People want to know “what's in for me” in a membership organization. We need to share a compelling story.

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- A trend in membership organizations right now is eliminating dues. Is this something to consider in our branches and state?
- What are we doing in each meeting to impact the issues we care about?
- Empower new members to re-think what we do/who we are. Let them have a voice immediately.

There were a lot of ideas at the conference about how to get creative and let go of the old ways of doing things to fit with AAUW today and in the future: Update bylaws and policies to make things more flexible. Reduce the number of business meetings. Get rid of leadership roles that have no takers and instead think about the tasks that need to be done and who can do it.

We learned that we will have another national vote in 2024 about eliminating the degree requirement for membership. AAUW has changed and women's situations have changed. Having a degree requirement does not fit AAUW's mission the way it might have in the past. Regardless of what you think, I hope you will vote! Only 25% of members voted the last time this question came up. More info will be coming.

Finally, and always, remember AAUW's mission and keep it front and center as you consider your own future activities with AAUW, your branch's efforts, and our state: *To advance gender equity for women and girls through research, education, and advocacy. Vision: Equity for all!*

Liz Rempel, 2023-24 President, AAUW KS

PHOTO GALLERY OF AAUW CENTRAL STATES REGIONAL CONFERENCE

Photos courtesy of Liz Rempel, AAUW KS President



What a great opportunity to learn from 'living' history! HERstory presentation featuring Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Sojourner Truth, and Susan B. Anthony - early leaders in the women's suffragist movement. They shared parts of their most famous speeches and answered questions about their lives.



Usha Reddi, Manhattan AAUW Branch President, presenting a Swap Shop about the success of the Manhattan branch's International Women's Day event and sharing ideas on how others could host an event.



Donna Becker, AAUW KS Programs VP, presented "On Tribal Lands" about injustices toward Native Americans and how AAUW members can promote understanding, accountability, and support.





Liz Rempel, AAUW KS President, AAUW CEO Gloria L. Blackwell and Donna Becker, AAUW KS Programs Vice President

A Historic Event

What do you have when 160 AAUW members meet in a ballroom for three days? Lots of chatter, laughter, reflection, learning, sharing, and A-ha moments in an atmosphere of collegiality and dedication to a mission larger than any one person, branch, or state. With an agenda packed with a wealth of sessions from which to choose, it became a matter of careful selection to maximize benefit and avoid overload.

While wide differences exist in how each of the 13 states represented at the conference operate, the message from national leaders and keynote speakers was strong: Focus on the mission of gender equity. Questions were asked about how AAUW will look in the future. It will be smaller but stronger; greater focus on advocacy and local action, less on meetings; differing leadership and organizational structures at the branch and state level. What about regional conferences? Many long-time members still find value in this type of event. They may be out of reach both time-wise and financially for many women, but there was still an expressed interest in holding these regional meetings. The value lies in the inspiration, encouragement, and great ideas that comes from gathering with a cross-section of women from small and large states, small and large branches. Hearing from Gloria Blackwell and other national staff and board members in person is a rare opportunity.

The 13 states represented were Arkansas, Iowa, Indiana, Kansas, Missouri, Michigan, Minnesota,

Wisconsin, Texas, Idaho, Georgia, North Carolina, and West Virginia. The last four, while not in the “Midwest” region, heard about the conference and wanted to participate.

I came away with lots to ponder about AAUW in Kansas, and how our state board can support the strengths and challenges of our branches. The state board would love to hear from you!

**Donna Becker, Vice President of Programs,
AAUW KS**

Update

The Suffragist Memorial Committee is excited to announce that the Capitol Preservation Committee, which is the statehouse group that determines what is permitted to be displayed in the Capitol, has given provisional approval of our selected artist’s mural.



The Suffragist Committee selected Phyllis Pease from Manhattan. Phyllis is the daughter of a 2nd generation Kansas farmer and a proud Mexican Immigrant mother from Kingman County. She graduated from KSU with a BFA in 1987. In her words, she tries to tell a story with her art.

Her mural depicts the rich history and profound imagery of the suffragist struggle. The mural features Clarina Nicholes surrounded by other Kansas women leaders, like Anna Waide from Lincoln, Laura Johns from Salina, Annie Diggs from Topeka, and Lila Monroe from WaKeeney. The mural will be 18 feet by 8 feet and is planned for the first-floor wall across from the cage elevator in the Capitol.

Next step is presenting Phyllis’s work to the Capitol Preservation Committee in January for full approval. It will take Phyllis a year to complete the art and the Suffragist Committee is anticipating an installation ceremony in 2025.

As AAUW members in Kansas, we need to start helping to raise funds for our own Kansas suffragists who you will get to know very well

through this art. They should be household names for our Kansas history lessons and their roles as being among the first to win the right to vote. Get to the contribution form by clicking [here](#).

I am humbled as we stand on the shoulders of the women who stood for right, for honor, and for full citizenship! You too will be very proud. And these women come from across the state! Thankful that AAUW of Kansas has fully supported honoring our past and recognizing the sacrifices of those before us so we can VOTE!

Louise Ehmke, Public Policy, Kansas Suffrage Memorial Committee Rep, AAUW KS & Dr. Marlene Merrill, Chair, Suffragist Memorial Committee

NCCWSL 2024

Coming May/June 2024 in the DC Metro Area



What Is NCCWSL?

AAUW's annual conference, The *National Conference for College Women Student Leaders* (NCCWSL), brings together more than 800 young women from around the country for two and a half days of leadership training, networking and inspiration. This year's event will include sessions on career development, mentorship, financial literacy, racial-justice activism and more. Participants will have an opportunity to explore post-graduate programs, careers in a variety of disciplines and other opportunities for their future.

Conference programming will center on the following learning objectives:

- **Leadership development:** Develop and strengthen a leadership narrative through voice, skill set and mind-set.
- **Professional development:** Build a professional tool kit for postgraduate life.
- **Activism:** Know the how, why and when to take action and be a change maker.
- **Women's issues:** Gain a better understanding of issues and policies

affecting women locally, nationally and globally.

- **Identity and diversity:** Own one's personal identity and role in increasing and supporting diverse voices.

Who Attends NCCWSL?

NCCWSL is a conference that brings together a diverse group of young leaders who are involved in various activities on their campuses. They are engaged in student government, academic organizations, social justice clubs, and advocate for political change. Most attendees are rising juniors or seniors, at a critical stage in their educational journey. The conference promotes diversity, justice, equity, and inclusion, and provides a space for emerging leaders to connect and collaborate on initiatives.

NCCWSL By the Numbers

- Roughly 50% of NCCWSL attendees are women of color. Many are first-generation college students.
- 1 in 4 NCCWSL attendees major in the STEM fields, followed by majors in business and the social sciences.
- Nearly 500 colleges from 48 states have sent campus leaders to NCCWSL.

Scholarship Information

Every year, AAUW National generously offers both full and partial scholarships to individuals who face financial difficulties but are eager to attend NCCWSL. **We are excited to announce that the application process for the scholarship will open November 15.** Make sure to mark your calendar and check the [AAUW website!](#)

AAUW of Kansas will offer a scholarship early Spring of 2024, and will send out more info about the application process as that time approaches.

Need More Information

The information for this article was taken from the AAUW National Website. For more information about attending NCCWSL visit the following link: <https://www.aauw.org/resources/programs/nccws/attend/>.

**Linda Ball, President-Elect,
College/University Partnership, AAUW KS**



2023-2024 AAUW KS Sets Theme



**From the
Vice-president of
Programs**

Donna Becker

Our program theme this year is “Women Making an Impact for the Future.” The special focus is on Hispanic and Latina women. If you haven’t already done so, please consider reaching out to the women in your community who are making an impact in any one of a variety of settings – for example, schools, health care, public policy, local libraries, or community volunteerism. Does your community have a Girls on the Run program? School counselors for Hispanic and Latina students? Culturally competent teachers? Libraries that hold inclusive space?

This issue includes a comprehensive report on the Central States Regional Conference by President Liz Rempel. One presentation that moved and inspired us was the 1619 Freedom School Project, given by Dr. Sheritta Stokes. She was instrumental in starting this program in Waterloo, Iowa, with her childhood friend, Nikole Hannah Jones, creator of the New York Times’ 1619 Project. Through teaching and building literacy skills, the school’s mission is to help children develop a love of reading and books through liberating instruction centered on Black American history – Liberation Through Literacy.

The program, supported by the local school district, delivers after-school intensive literary instruction to bridge the academic opportunity gap among low-income public school students in Waterloo. The program provides a free book to students every week. They are preparing to make their curriculum available to other organizations interested in starting a 1619 Freedom School.

<https://www.1619freedomsschool.org/>

This issue also highlights the exciting development of a Kansas Suffrage Memorial to be placed in the Capitol in Topeka. Louise Ehmke, state board member, represents AAUW of Kansas on the steering committee. Here is a link to the website: <https://www.kssuffragist.org/>

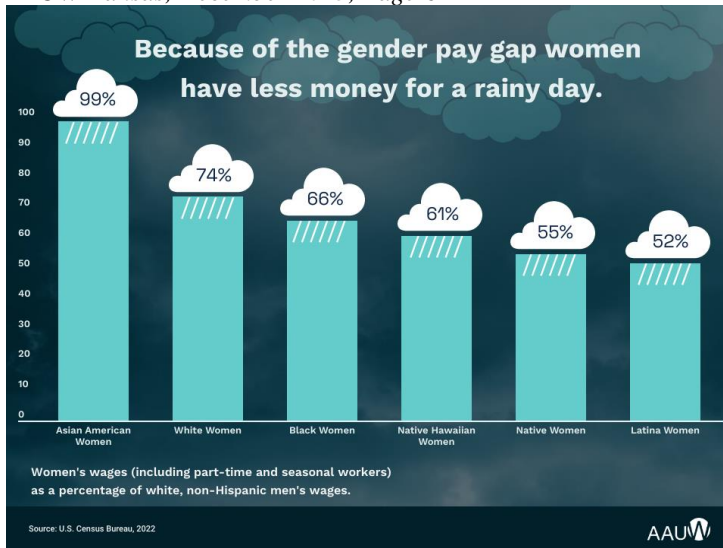
Kansas women were involved early on in the suffrage movement. Clarina Nichols, abolitionist from Vermont, moved to Kansas to work for Kansas being admitted to the Union as a Free State. She was also a women’s rights activist and lobbied the Wyandotte Constitutional Convention for the vote for women. Thanks to her efforts, women were given the right to vote in school board elections in the first Kansas Constitution in 1861. Kansas was the first state to put women’s suffrage on the ballot in 1887.

Laura Johns of Salina became the first president of the Kansas Equal Suffrage Association; Mrs. Johns was called on many times by the National American Woman Suffrage Association leadership to assist in state campaigns. In 1912, after several failed attempts, Kansas granted women full suffrage. When the 19th Amendment was passed, Kansas and New York were the first states to ratify.

As the work of the NAWSA was drawing to a close, a proposal was made to transition the work to a new organization, the League of Women Voters. Jane Brooks of Wichita was named as the first chair of the LWV, until a more permanent organizational structure could be formed. The stories of these women and so many other Kansas suffragists make for powerful reading; they are our foremothers in the ongoing fight for equality. They were far from perfect; however, they deserve our thanks for never giving up. The Kansas Suffrage Memorial will bring recognition to these movement leaders.

<https://suffragistmemorial.org/suffragists-in-kansas/>

Finally, a word about our annual Spring Conference. The Newton Branch is the host this year and logistical planning is underway. I am excited to announce that we have secured our keynote speaker but will not announce her name yet. The date is April 6, 2024, so please put it on your calendar now. Newton is 30 minutes from Wichita. 45 minutes from El Dorado, 75 minutes from Manhattan, and 180 minutes from Overland Park. We would love to top our attendance of 30 last year!



What can you do in 75 minutes?

- Make dinner
- Watch two episodes of my favorite sitcom
- Learn how to increase my lifetime income by \$200,000

Share this with others after you complete the WORK SMART online workshop.

<https://salary.aauw.org/salary-negotiation/>

Here's some proof that WORK SMART can work!

"I lowballed my net worth for a large part of my career, only to be frustrated down the road in a job where I don't feel like I'm being paid what I'm worth. I joined the local AAUW after I learned about AAUW's work on pay equity and salary negotiation." — Alyssa R., AAUW salary negotiation workshop participant (from aauw.org website)

KANSAS is WEAK...

We're weak in our equal pay laws. And, as of 2019, (latest data found), the median annual earnings for year-round full-time workers pay ratio is 80% or .80 for women on every \$1 white, non-Hispanic men's wages in Kansas. Read more about the gap at <https://www.aauw.org/issues/equity/pay-gap/>

As of 2020, this chart shows the year pay equity will be achieved in our nation for women of various races.

RACE	YEAR
Asian	2041
White, not Hispanic	2069
Black	2369
Hispanic	2451

Source: Earnings data from U.S. Census Bureau (2020), Current Population Survey, 2020 Annual Social and Economic Supplement. Wage projections based on calculations done by AAUW.

To see the interactive chart go to:

<https://www.aauw.org/resources/research/simple-truth/>



TWO MINUTE ACTIVIST

Are you receiving AAUW's Two-Minute Activist emails? Sign up to send emails and texts to legislators to fight for equal pay, family leave, stopping sexual harassment, equality in education, and more. Get alerts to take timely action on the issues that count!

<https://www.aauw.org/act/two-minute-activist/>

Millennials and Gen Z
are more likely to discuss salary with coworkers than any other generation.

Salary transparency is key to closing the gender pay gap. Learn more at salary.aauw.org.



SAVE THE DATE

AAUW KS ANNUAL MEETING

WHEN: Saturday, April 6, 2024

**WHERE: Prairy Market & Deli,
601 N. Main Street, Newton**



Did you know...

Childcare workers, about 92.7% of whom are women, have median earnings of \$29,570 a year, while construction workers, 96.7% of whom are men, have median earnings \$46,350 per year. This disparity persists even though both jobs require similar levels of education and training.

Source: [Bureau of Labor Statistics](#)

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.

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

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/>

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