



Bulletin

Volume 101, Number 2 Newton, Kansas June 2024

From the President's Desk



Liz Rempel
2023-2024 AAUW of Kansas President

It is bittersweet to write my last update as your AAUW of Kansas President. Most of all, I'm thankful for the dynamic women - eloquent, skilled, funny, passionate, smart community leaders - I have met along the way. Truly, the best people gravitate to AAUW.

I'm thankful to leave on the positive note of a meaningful, small-but-mighty, state conference in April. You will read all about it in this newsletter!

Engagement

My AAUW relationships and learning experiences have been enriched through leadership. I have found that engagement and investment in AAUW grow deeper with involvement.

Having a leadership position in AAUW has pushed me to stay involved and up-to-date on women's issues and AAUW's programs and initiatives to support women - and I'm thankful for that. I plan to continue participating with AAUW through the Newton Area branch, and I encourage any of you who have an inkling to get more involved in your branch's leadership or activities to do it!

New Faces on Your AAUW of Kansas Board

Your incoming President, Linda Ball, starts her term as AAUW of Kansas President July 1. Linda is doing a great job already with building AAUW of Kansas for an energized future, and I hope you're excited for the group of women who will lead us. I will

venture that this is a younger board than AAUW of Kansas has seen in some time, and these women will bring new ideas and ways of doing things. I hope you will have a chance to get to know each of them better over the next few years. Interestingly, while we do not have a Lindsborg AAUW branch, our board will include 4 professors from Bethany College in Lindsborg (Linda - Business, Andrea Ring - Psychology, Rachel Finnell - Public Policy, Rana Razek - History), as well as Ruth Mbah (Business) who teaches at McPherson College and formerly taught at Bethany. Marjean Harris has joined the board again, this time as the secretary.

Open Membership Vote

Finally, a few comments on the recent national vote to remove the degree requirement (currently a minimum of an associate's degree) for membership. The change, which did not pass, would have meant that anyone who supports AAUW's mission could join, regardless of their education. Again, as was the case with the last vote, it came very close to passing. Changes to AAUW's bylaws require $\frac{2}{3}$ majority (66.6%) to pass. AAUW members voted 65.1% to approve the change.

I think it's important to note that even though the percentage to make the change fell slightly short, essentially two-thirds of AAUW members who voted support opening up our membership. A few of the reasons for supporting the change are to better serve our vision of equity and our commitment to inclusion, as well as allowing AAUW to access funding to further its programs and mission.

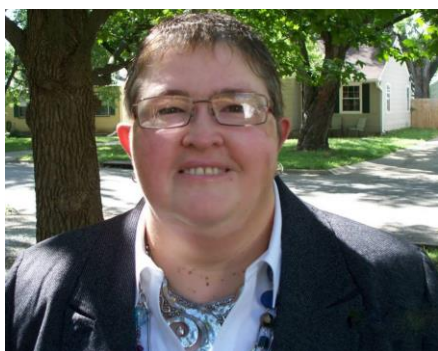
I voted in favor of the change. I do not know how you voted, of course, but regardless of that, this vote got us to again consider our vision (equity for all), mission (advancing equity for women through education, research, and advocacy), and how to

support a better future (and present) for all women.

In light of that reflection, I will wrap up with a few thoughts about AAUW's future in Kansas. I'm sure we've all had a lot of opportunities to think about our future, a topic that often raises concerns of dwindling branches and lack of leaders. I can't say what that future looks like, but, clearly, there is a need for progressive women's organizations like AAUW. I try to hold worries of the future loosely. I think I gained that perspective from Lisa Maatz, formerly with AAUW in public policy, who spoke at the regional conference in St. Louis.

What I took from her message, as well as information I've gotten in meetings with national and regional leaders this year, is that future AAUW *will* look different. In fact, it already looks a lot different than it did 20 years ago. There is no maintaining the status quo. AAUW will be smaller. Branches will operate differently, perhaps with fewer leadership positions or meetings. Branches will close or merge. In a way, this is sad, but, on the other hand, it is a great opportunity to try new ideas, look at things differently, and get creative. We can let go of what doesn't serve us (e.g., an obligation to hold a certain number of yearly programs), and put energy into areas that energize and rally us (e.g., hosting one bigger community event or fundraiser). The possibilities are endless for our future supporting women in Kansas and worldwide!

Liz Rempel, 2023-24 President, AAUW KS



Forward Thinking...

As we transition to the 2024-2025 year for AAUW of Kansas, there are many things running through my head.

The first is a huge "Thank You!" to the out-going Board. What a joy it has been to work with you,

and get to know each of you. Special thanks go to the following members who are transitioning off the Board: Liz Rempel, Paula Shields, Louise Ehmke, and Tresa Landis. I also want to thank Carolyn Dwire who transitioned off the Board last year, but was instrumental in helping us transition everything to the new Treasurer this year. To all of you, your leadership, time, and friendship are much appreciated!

We will have several familiar faces returning to the Board in July, and for that I am grateful! They bring a wealth of knowledge, and they know the history that I haven't been around long enough to know yet! I'm also excited to welcome several new faces to the Board in July! With new faces, comes new ideas, and I'm excited to hear some fresh new ideas from our new Board members.

The Board will meet in September this year and chart a course for AAUW of Kansas. There are two items that are priorities for me as we transition to a new year. As many of you know, recruiting new members is not easy, but I would love for us to increase our membership even if just by a few people. This is a challenge for almost every organization I know of, so it's not exclusive to AAUW of Kansas. Your branch works hard to develop great programs throughout the year. I'd encourage you to invite friends and community leaders to your meetings. If something sparks their interest, they may want to get involved. The other item that's near and dear to my heart is mentoring! Some of your branches have developed relationships with groups at your local colleges. I think it's so important that you continue to build these relationships, and that we promote ways to mentor more young women as we move forward. I know that I have an enthusiastic Board to work with, and I look forward to seeing the other wonderful ideas that they are going to bring to the table!

I look forward to working with all of you over the next couple of years!

Linda Ball, 2024-25 President-Elect, AAUW of KS



PHOTO GALLERY AAUW OF KANSAS ANNUAL MEETING

AAUW Newton Branch hosted the Annual Meeting of AAUW KS at Prairy Market & Deli on April 6, 2024. The event showcased many women leaders depicting the theme of “Women Making a Difference for the Future.”

Liz Rempel, President AAUW KS, welcomed the in-person and online participants to the annual meeting.



Micaela Ramirez, Executive Director of the Kansas Hispanic Education & Development Foundation, provided insights to higher education struggles and successes of people of the Latino culture. She noted one in five women in the US are Latino. The foundation assists Latino students with scholarships, then all the way through their college experiences to ensure successful futures. www.khedf.org



We engaged in small roundtable discussions with our speakers and Daisy Gonzalez-Soto, social worker from Hunter Health, a federally-qualified health center in Wichita. The discussions were on education, civic engagement, and access to culturally competent medical and mental healthcare.



Daniela Rivas, City of Newton Manager, welcomed the participants while Liz and Donna Becker, AAUW KS Vice President of Programs, listen.

Entertainment was provided by Azteca Dancers, students of Newton High School. Education about the dancers' apparel and dances was shared during the demonstration.



Attendees saw a close-up of the future mural by Kansas artist Phyllis Pease for the KS Suffragist Memorial to be in the KS State Capitol.



Calling ALL Kansas Suffragists!!

Calling ALL Kansas Suffragists!! The work of artist Phyllis Pease has started. The canvas stretched, treated and now even the outline ...how do I know this? Look and follow yourself at the Facebook page of *Kansas Suffragist Memorial*. Updates are given as the artist herself provides them. It is so exciting and fun to watch her progress and work. There's a reason I farm...I could never do what she does...just flat out remarkable.



SOOOO Calling all Kansas Suffragist supporters and Kansans to support this work...yes, we do pay for this marvelous work. If you have donated...do consider again or in a friend's honor for their birthday or honor a friend or loved one who has passed. How about a birthday gift for that grandchild! Find the donor form at kssuffragist.org and address to send your tax-deductible donation directly to the State of Kansas Suffrage Memorial Fund. It's time to stand up and VOTE with dollars for all those women in our heritage who stood up for us and our children and grandchildren. And all amounts are appreciated and count to noting and recognizing the 13 women depicted in the mural. And at some point, you will need to know their names. I am learning them and finding out their remarkable histories, contributions to the betterment of all Kansans. It's time you learned their names.

There will be a GREAT celebration on January 29th, 2025, when we dedicate this memorial to Kansas women's history and to ALL Kansans! Kansas Day will take on a whole new meaning with the dedication of the mural. COME to Topeka! We will party!!

And I want all AAUW KS members to note it is our witness, testimony, commitment and enthusiasm that helped bring the Kansas Suffragists to life. The League of Women Voters Kansas and AAUW of Kansas - A great partnership.

**Louise Ehmke, Member Kansas Suffrage Memorial
Committee**

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Find AAUW news for Kansas at our website -
<https://aauw-ks.aauw.net/>

MEET OUR NEW STATE OFFICERS

Rachel Finnell, PhD -

Public Policy

Dr. Rachel Finnell is an Assistant Professor at Bethany College of Political Science. She received her Doctorate of Philosophy in Political Science from the University of Kansas in 2021, Masters of Arts in Political Science in 2018, also from KU, and Bachelors of Science in Business Administration from University of Central Missouri in 2015.



Rana Razek, PhD – College/University Partnership Representative

Rana is from Wichita, KS, and is Assistant Professor of History at Bethany College. We appreciate her taking on the role to encourage AAUW student affiliates.



Marjean Harris, MSW - Secretary

We welcome back Marjean to the state board. She formerly served as the Co-Vice President of Programs. Marjean is a member of the Newton Area Branch and a retired Licensed Specialist Clinical Social Worker.



\$35,338*

With all the news about college debt, AAUW has the 2021 *Deeper in Debt Report* that showcases women and student debt. Learn more here...

[Deeper in Debt: Women & Student Loans – AAUW : Empowering Women Since 1881](#)

*Women anticipated average salary upon graduation.

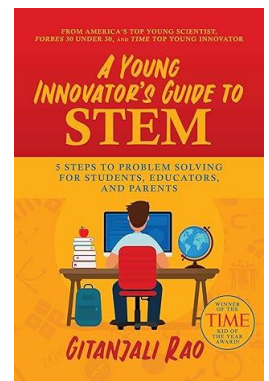
KANSAS @ NCCSWL 2024



Four Washburn University (Topeka) students attended the 2024 National Conference for College Women Student Leaders. (left to right) Jane Steinkuehler, Jayden Coover, Anna Stonebraker, and Taylor Redington.

From May 30th to June 1st, myself and three other young women in the Washburn University Leadership Program were given the opportunity to attend this year's National Conference for College Women Student Leaders (NCCSWL). The conference, held at the University of Maryland, offered many different sessions for participants to strengthen their leadership skills and awareness on issues women face day-to-day.

I enjoyed the Women of Distinction Banquet where we heard from five women with diverse cultures and backgrounds. One particular honoree stood out due to her age and accomplishments. At age 18, Gitanjali Rao has invented a number of unique health-related tools. The inventions are a lead contamination detection tool, a device for early diagnosis of opioid prescription addiction, and an anti-cyberbullying service employing AI (artificial intelligence) and Natural Language processing. She's even written a book, *Young Innovators Guide to STEM*, that is available in six languages.



It was a very positive experience for all of us and I plan on taking what I learned with me back to Washburn and beyond.

Taylor Redington, 2024 NCCSWL Attendee

HONORING OUR RETIRING OFFICERS



Paula Shields

Paula Shields has served as the AAUW of Kansas Secretary for five years. She is detailed oriented- just what a secretary needs to be. She never tired of asking for clarifications to ensure the history of the meetings was recorded properly. Paula is a member of the

Wichita Branch.

Tresa Landis

Tresa is really a jill-of-all-trades! She never stopped surprising board members with her talents of finding answers and organizing us! She has served the AAUW of KS as the Vice President of Programs for four years and, most recently, the AAUW Funds Chair for the past six years.

Tresa is a member of the Manhattan Branch.



Liz Rempel

We can't totally count Liz out of the AAUW of KS Board yet since she will serve in the role of Past President. Liz has provided leadership to the board by energizing ideas and pushing

members to think beyond the 'norm.' For a few years, Liz served as president of both the Newton Area Branch and State Board at the same time.



Women Changing Careers

Many of us have had or will face the need to change careers at some point. The Forbes' article from March 16, 2024, by Cheryl Robinson, *Women Changing Careers: A Guide to Successful Transitions* offers some great tips for those transitions. Here is the link to this article.

Article Link: [Women Changing Careers: A Guide To Successful Transitions \(forbes.com\)](https://www.forbes.com/advice/women-changing-careers-a-guide-to-successful-transitions)

GRANT ALERT



Does your branch have an idea for a new project? Do you know someone who has a great idea for the community and just needs a push to do it? Check out the AAUW Community Action Grants.

Funding: \$3,000-\$10,000

Opens: August 1 every year

Deadline: November 15 every year

Community Action Grants provide funding to individuals, AAUW branches and AAUW state organizations as well as community-based nonprofits for general operating support and innovative projects that promote education and equity for women and girls. Since 1972, AAUW has provided support to hundreds of communities across the United States. Go here for full details!

[Community Action Grants – AAUW : Empowering Women Since 1881](#)

AAUW CALENDAR 2024

- June 23 Title IX Anniversary
- June 30 2024-2025 Officer updates due to National
- July 1 NEW AAUW YEAR BEGINS 2024-2025
- July 2 Civil Rights Act 60th Anniversary
- July 9 Black Women's Equal Pay Day
- August 26 Women's Equality Day
- September 24 National Voter Registration Day



FOLLOW US





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/>

You may find this interesting...

The *Kansas Reflector* article on April 8, 2024, by Rachel Mipro starts with "It's 2024 and the gender pay gap still exists."

As an AAUW aficionado, you already know this, so you may find the full article/podcast interesting. Find it here...

[Kansas women 'still have a lot of barriers to break down' for workplace equality • Kansas Reflector](#)

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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June 2024 Bulletin

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/>

AAUW of Kansas:

website - <http://aauw-ks.aauw.net/>

email - aauwks@gmail.com

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