

THE FORUM



ATLANTIC COUNTY BRANCH 2020 VOL. 119 NO.11

Serving Women For Over One Hundred Years

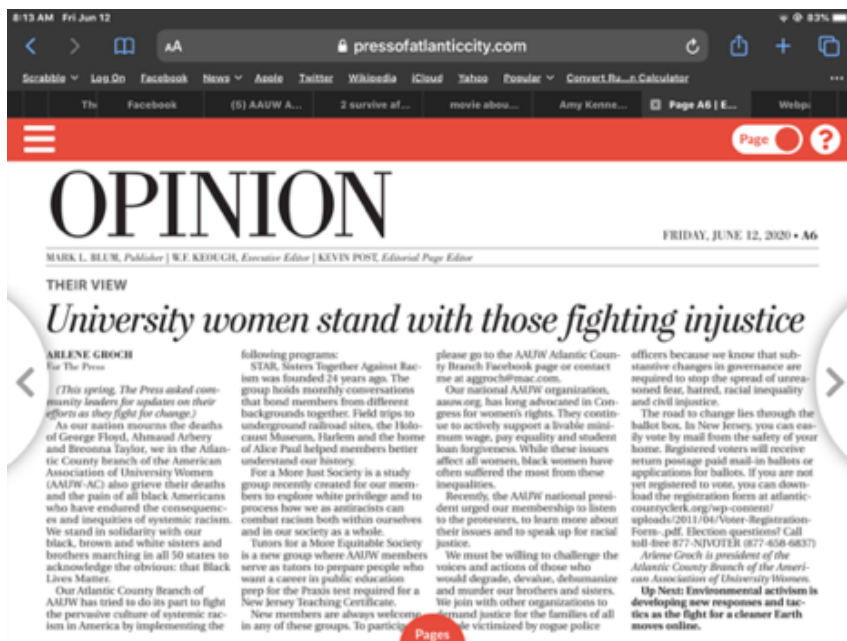
President's Message

Arlene Groch

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For the past month and counting, peaceful marchers around the entire world have protested the inhumane police killing of George Floyd and of so many other Black men. They and we shout our affirmation that Black Lives Matter. For some of us, our days of marching in protests for justice are behind us; but our Branch has helped us express our outrage and our determination to be part of the solution in other ways. One or more of these options may speak to you.

1. I am immensely proud that our AAUW Branch Board of Directors was, I believe, the first AAUW entity to approve public release of our opposition to system racism, our support for Black Lives Matter and our recognition that those of us who are White and want to be part of the solution, need to learn how to be anti-racists. Our letter was published as the Editorial of The Press of AC on June 12th. See copy here and readable copy at the end of the Forum.



2. Carolyn Bassett's "For a Just Society" group continues its bi-weekly study of these issues, begun in 2019.
3. Rosalind Norrell-Nance is leading the reopening and revival of STAR, Sisters Together Against Racism, which began 24 years ago.
4. In every discussion I hear our women yearning for ways to become part of the solution to the racial, economic and educational injustice that has fueled the marches everywhere. Read Jackie's Program Report to learn what else we are planning to make sure that AAUW is part of the solution.

And finally, a reality check.

Running and growing our Branch, especially during the Covid-19 pandemic, has brought new expenses. We purchased the professional level Zoom (unlimited meeting time and participants, breakout rooms, shared screens, etc.), at \$15 @ month for non-profits. And we purchased a shared interest (with the Clayathon group) for an advanced mail management and flyer creation program called Constant Contact (CC). Fortunately, after some negotiations with the CC, our shared cost will be only \$13 per month for each organization, but other expenses continue even during the shutdown. So please pay your \$79 National dues (of which we get a big \$10 per member per year!) before June 30th. if you are able, please send Bev an additional contribution to our Branch operating account.

Program Vice-President

Jacalyn Shelley-Tasoff

jacalyn_shelley2003@yahoo.com

Save These Dates and Times!

Enjoy the remaining two Wine, Women, Whatever [WWW] programs this summer. For the first time in recent AAUW history we have continued programming throughout the summer for our members' pleasure and enlightenment. WWW is a three-part series in which talented AAUW members share their passions with the rest of us. Here are the two we have left to look forward to:

July 15th 7 pm – WWW Part Two

- Those who imbibe in the fruit of the vine may wish to pour a glass of wine – your favorite or something new – and follow the ancient Greeks' advice to enjoy wine as food of the grape, a part of the meal. And all of us will learn from Tula Christopoulos the history and basics of winetasting.
- Arlene Groch and Susan Gross will turn packages of solid colored polymer clay into multicolored clay sheets that can be converted into jewelry, wall art, covered bowls, or "Whatever" you envision.
- To close our hour together, Jackie Shelley-Tasoff will read two of her poems: *You Are My Clay Grandmother* and *Why Does My Son Call Me?*

August 19th 7 pm – WWW Part Three

- Linda Karp will share summer recipes made with NJ vegetables,
- Mary Rydzewski will talk about collecting sea shells at the Jersey Shore
- Kathy Zeigenfus will lead a quiz on Women in American History to commemorate the ratification of the 19th amendment.

Sunday, September 13 – Our first 2020/2021 Zoom Branch Meeting

This will be a very special full day, community wide, Conference on structural inequalities that disparately impact women of color. It is a work in process, but here's an advance. We are planning to start the day with a two hour morning panel of presentations by knowledgeable leaders, followed by open discussion.

After a "lunch" break we will resume for another two hour session starting with break- out sessions on specific topics probably led by teams of black and white AAUW members. These small group workshops will give everyone time to express concerns and ideas. After these sessions we report to the whole group on how we plan to be part of the solution.

Watch for the August Forum for all more details.

Treasurer

Beverly Schechtman

bevschech@hotmail.com

Thank you to the members who have paid their dues. If you have waited, please send your checks ASAP made out to AAUW to me at 100 S. Berkley Sq. Unit 9G, Atlantic City NJ 08401, or go online to pay. If you pay online, please pay as

an existing member and not as a new member. See MEMBERSHIP below for more details. Thanks in advance for your checks.

Membership

Linda Karp
Diane Koob

Lindakarp@gmail.com
dwkoob@gmail.com

Let's talk about MEMBERSHIP DUES, which are due by June 30th. Thank you to the many members who have paid their annual dues. In spite of three reminders from our Treasurer Beverly, 56 of our 130 members have not yet paid National's \$79 /year dues, of which \$10 goes to our Branch.

Please pay your dues now! Then we won't have to call to remind you! Send your checks ASAP made out to AAUW to Beverly Schechtman at 100 S. Berkley Sq. Unit 9G, Atlantic City NJ 08401, or go online to pay with a credit card. You should have received an email from memberinfo@aauw.org in early April with a link created specifically for you to follow to renew your membership.

Let's achieve our goal of 100% renewals!

We value you and want you to remain as an AAUW member!

I'm asking each of you to try and bring in at least one new member! Even with the changes in our lives due to the virus, AAUW has been active and providing programs and activities for our members. Our monthly Zoom meetings provide an opportunity to meet with other members as well as to enjoy interesting and enlightening programs on a variety of subjects. **NOTE:** Please send me the names of anyone you think would be interested and I'll contact them.

Please welcome our new member:

Karen Brundage-Johnson
14 Brielle Avenue
EHT, NJ 08234
609-432-1442 karenbjohnson75@gmail.com

AAUW Dues/Fees Tax Deductibility information from National

The following is tax information to assist you with your personal taxes:

- AAUW National Individual Membership dues are \$59: \$56 is tax deductible, and \$3 is not tax deductible because it supports the AAUW Action Fund's Section 501(c)(4) (Lobby Corps and get-out-the-vote) activities.
- AAUW National Student Affiliate fee is \$18.81: \$16.81 is tax deductible, and \$2 is not tax deductible (because it supports the AAUW Action Fund's Section 501(c)(4) Lobby Corps and get-out-the-vote activities).
- AAUW National Life Membership dues (one-time payment) of \$1180 are fully tax deductible. NOTE: Branch members — Full national dues are to be paid through your branch as usual. Individual members (MALs) — Full dues are payable to AAUW. *Branch/state membership dues are not tax deductible unless your branch/state is classified under the Section 501(c)(3) entity by the Internal Revenue Service. Consult your branch/state finance officer to verify status.

Corresponding Secretary

Kristina Baker

kristinabaker2014@gmail.com

As Corresponding Secretary, each month I send out The Forum to members who need a paper copy in the mail. I also send cards by mail to members for: Get Well, Thank You, Sympathy on the death of a member or someone in the member's family who has passed away. Just send me a message at kristinabaker2014@gmail.com if you know of someone you would like to receive a card on behalf of AAUW.

STEM

Gail Davis

ghdath@comcast.net

REALLY NOT MUCH STEM NEWS in the middle of a pandemic. You are all aware that we will be hosting two back to back camps next year. Our need for dorm moms and day counselors will double plus the finances. We wonder if we'll have to provide face masks and hand sanitizer in their backpacks! The interview team is already in place for the 7th graders to be selected next year- yeah!!

There is still a funding shortage of approximately \$17,000 for the first week, so if you are not still sitting on your stimulus check, please consider donating some to AWCO among your other favorite charities. If any of you would like to volunteer in any capacity for the camps next year. PLEASE contact me by phone or email- I KNOW you will find it interesting and FUN. I hope you are enjoying summer now that we are finally able to get haircuts, etc. and moving towards actually going to church or a restaurant.

Public Policy

Jenine Brown

jb1nj@aol.com

Bias toward others has been fueling public policy discussion in recent weeks.

Some of us attended a Zoom forum earlier this month, sponsored by the National Coalition of 100 Black Women in partnership with Planned Parenthood of Northern, Central and Southern New Jersey for the first part of the Implicit Bias Training.

We were enlightened on the effects of racial bias on worldwide maternal healthcare. The speaker, Dr. Joia Adele Crear-Perry MD, FACOG, founded National Birth Equity Collaborative which provides research to promote healthier birth experiences and health outcomes. The doctor has studied the health outcomes of pregnant women in several nations, finding that race and poverty change the success rates in birthing. A fact I noted from the presentation is that the United States has the highest maternal mortality rate in the world among similarly wealthy countries. At 17.45 deaths per 100,000 that is more than Russia and more than Germany. The maternal death rate for black women is more than double that of white women. Her organization and others identify racial inequity due to implicit bias as being part of the problem. Dr. Crear-Perry spoke truth and provided great resources such as the Ibram X. Kendi text, "Stamped from the Beginning: The Definitive History of Racist Ideas in America."

Birthequity.org is the web address for National Birth Equity Coalition (NBEC). Their training sessions for strategic racial equity cover how racism shows up in levels of power, leadership, and worldviews, and how to identify and apply this knowledge to dismantle the root causes of health inequities.

Links to videos, websites, studies and texts were sent out after the forum. I would be happy to forward any or all of them to members. Contact me via email.

Sources: National Coalition of 100 Black Women; Birthequity.org; vox.com2020

Member Recognition

Marion Ingram, from Strathmere, Cape May County, has been a dual member since July 1, 1999. She was profiled in "Volunteer Spotlight" by AARP National in the New Jersey news section for her volunteer work focusing on legislative advocacy. Follow this link to read about her work and well-deserved recognition.

<https://states.aarp.org/new-jersey/volunteer-spotlight-with-marion-ingram>

INTEREST GROUPS

Conversational Spanish

Jeannette Flax

jcflax@yahoo.com

The Conversational Spanish group continues meeting via Zoom until the Northfield Library opens. Thanks to the technological prowess of our members, we continue to discuss our current lives and world affairs in Spanish, and we also laugh quite a bit. Consider joining us Monday afternoons from 4:00 to 6:00. If you need information, please call me (609) 653-6177 or send me an e-mail.

Book Group

Mary Lou Breidenstine

breidensti@aol.com

The dates for summer book club have been changed. This August we will attempt either Zoom or in-person meetings. They are as follows:

- August 7 "The Doll's House" and "Miss Brill" by Katherine Mansfield
- August 14 "The Pursuit of Love" by Nancy Mitford
- August 21 "The Prime of Miss Jean Brody" and "The Abbess of Crewe" by Muriel Spark

All meetings are on Friday mornings at 10:30. Our first meeting in the fall will be a discussion on "Unsheltered" by Barbara Kingsolver. Looking forward to seeing everyone.

Travel Group

Carolyn Bassett

geoca41@gmail.com

The Travel Group is regrouping and will resume meetings in the fall (via ZOOM). Let Carolyn know if you have a trip you would like to present. Phone: 609 937-9095

For A More Equal Society

Carolyn Bassett

geoca41@gmail.com

This group is meeting about every two weeks via ZOOM. We are reading Ibram Kendi's **How to Be an AntiRacist**, and we cover two chapters at a time. During our meetings we discuss what we have read and also current articles, podcasts, etc. suggested by group members. Please let Carolyn know if you would like to join: geoca41@gmail.com. Phone: 809 927-9095

Film Group

Terry Dailey

johnd4photo@aol.com

The movie group is active via email with suggestions for each other that we can see on TV or streaming. If you are interested in being added to the list, send me an email.

Tutors for Educational Equity

Virginia Rettig

rettigva@yahoo.com

AAUW is working with Christine Ruth of AC Educational Equity to provide tutors for teachers that need support taking and passing the required Praxis exam to teach in New Jersey. Christine started her 501(c)3 last summer as she was finishing up her PhD (!). We have a great opportunity to get in on the ground floor to support her organization which seeks to support all teachers, but focuses on engaging teachers of color and under-served communities because research shows that children learn better when taught by someone in which they better connect. Please contact me if interested or if you'd like more information and we can chat!

UPCOMING DATES TO REMEMBER:

June 30		AAUW Membership Renewal Deadline
July 15	7 pm	Program Event: Wine, Women, and Whatever
August 7	10:30 am	Book Club: "The Doll's House" and "Miss Brill" by Katherine Mansfield
August 14	10:30 am	Book Club: "The Pursuit of Love" by Nancy Mitford
August 19	7 pm	Program Event: Wine, Women, and Whatever
August 21	10:30 am	Book Club: "The Prime of Miss Jean Brody" and "The Abbess of Crewe" by Muriel Spark
Mondays	4 pm	Conversational Spanish

Photo Album

Fundraising Meeting June 24, 2020 at Kathy Zeigenfus's home



Jill Slotoroff, Ann Marchesani, Kathy Zeigenfus, Carol Zerbe, Linda Karp and Anne Carson

Press of Atlantic City Editorial June 12, 2020



OPINION

FRIDAY, JUNE 12, 2020 • A6

MARK L. BLUM, *Publisher* | W.F. KEOUGH, *Executive Editor* | KEVIN POST, *Editorial Page Editor*

THEIR VIEW

University women stand with those fighting injustice

ARLENE GROCH
For The Press

(This spring, The Press asked community leaders for updates on their efforts as they fight for change.)

As our nation mourns the deaths of George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery and Breonna Taylor, we in the Atlantic County branch of the American Association of University Women (AAUW-AC) also grieve their deaths and the pain of all black Americans who have endured the consequences and inequities of systemic racism. We stand in solidarity with our black, brown and white sisters and brothers marching in all 50 states to acknowledge the obvious: that Black Lives Matter.

Our Atlantic County Branch of AAUW has tried to do its part to fight the pervasive culture of systemic racism in America by implementing the

following programs:

STAR, Sisters Together Against Racism was founded 24 years ago. The group holds monthly conversations that bond members from different backgrounds together. Field trips to underground railroad sites, the Holocaust Museum, Harlem and the home of Alice Paul helped members better understand our history.

For a More Just Society is a study group recently created for our members to explore white privilege and to process how we as antiracists can combat racism both within ourselves and in our society as a whole.

Tutors for a More Equitable Society is a new group where AAUW members serve as tutors to prepare people who want a career in public education prep for the Praxis test required for a New Jersey Teaching Certificate.

New members are always welcome in any of these groups. To participate,

please go to the AAUW Atlantic County Branch Facebook page or contact me at aggroch@mac.com.

Our national AAUW organization, aauw.org, has long advocated in Congress for women's rights. They continue to actively support a livable minimum wage, pay equality and student loan forgiveness. While these issues affect all women, black women have often suffered the most from these inequalities.

Recently, the AAUW national president urged our membership to listen to the protesters, to learn more about their issues and to speak up for racial justice.

We must be willing to challenge the voices and actions of those who would degrade, devalue, dehumanize and murder our brothers and sisters. We join with other organizations to demand justice for the families of all people victimized by rogue police

officers because we know that substantive changes in governance are required to stop the spread of unreasoned fear, hatred, racial inequality and civil injustice.

The road to change lies through the ballot box. In New Jersey, you can easily vote by mail from the safety of your home. Registered voters will receive return postage paid mail-in ballots or applications for ballots. If you are not yet registered to vote, you can download the registration form at atlantic-countyclerk.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/04/Voter-Registration-Form-.pdf. Election questions? Call toll-free 877-NJVOTER (877-658-6837).

Arlene Groch is president of the Atlantic County Branch of the American Association of University Women.

Up Next: Environmental activism is developing new responses and tactics as the fight for a cleaner Earth moves online.