



SERVING WOMEN FOR OVER ONE HUNDRED YEARS

President’s Message

Arlene Groch

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Dear AAUW-AC Members,

Between April 7th and May 17th each of us will have the opportunity to vote on an issue that the AAUW National Board and Leadership believes is critical to the future of our organization. They have asked us to vote “yes” to eliminate the degree requirement for membership.



I have personally been very uncomfortable when inviting people to join AAUW, not knowing whether they might be rejected if they do file an application. Even someone who is articulate and appears in every way to be well educated --- like my own son--- might be rejected. Alan fought all the rules of high school and just barely managed to be graduated. So he would be denied membership. The fact that he then went on to build a very successful international wholesale and retail art importing business would be irrelevant to AAUW, as would the fact that he is very well read and can give a great impromptu speech!

I agree with National’s statement that, “The exclusionary membership requirement is not fair, is not right, and is not equity. [Eliminating it] is simply the right thing to do.” aauw.org/resources/member/governance-tools/national-election/2021-comment-bylaws

It may also be existential to the survival of this organization. How will tomorrow’s Membership Chairperson attract today’s youth who value inclusion as a core principle? Today’s average member is 70 years old. Most branches, like ours, are predominantly white women. Attracting younger, more racially and ethnically diverse members has been a daunting challenge in spite of our most sincere efforts. The women of color I’ve approached more than met the university requirement, but the message that qualification sends is an obstacle I could not overcome in several instances.

And yet we persevere.

1. Our new By Laws now positively affirm that “AAUW values and seeks a diverse membership. There shall be no barriers to full participation in this organization on the basis of sex, gender identity, race, creed, age, sexual orientation, national origin, disability, or class. “
2. We also created a new voting Board Position: Diversity Officer.
3. Most importantly, Sherry Brown-Jackson, who has been a quiet but participatory member for years, has decided to become more active and has agreed to allow me to nominate her as our first Diversity Officer. Please attend our March 10th Board Meeting and welcome Sherry to the Board.

PS - Some sharing and some shameless promotion!

During shut down, many of us have taken up creative endeavors, from baking bread to photography. I returned to my first love, abstract impressionist painting. I am so passionate about it that I take two hour virtual private art classes 3



mornings a week. And in between I paint, a lot! Several are hanging at the Nashville North Gallery across the street from Central Square. It is open very carefully and safely, so I’m going to today’s 4th Friday show, open from 3-8 by appointment. Here’s a photo of their front room wall with my painting in the center! How exciting. This exhibit will be up for a month, starting today. If you’d like to visit the Gallery, call 609-504-5044. Thanks for reading this personal note.



Arlene

It's nice to see that the days are getting longer and the sun is setting later. Spring is now right around the corner. That's a good thing after the past snowy and cold month.



Our chapter has many nice activities planned and Zoom makes it so easy to attend. We have many interest areas, so I'm sure some will be attractive to each of us. It's wonderful to have so many things to look forward to since we are still mostly at home due to Covid.

Our membership goal for 2021 is to add at least one new member each month. Please let me know if you have any friends that would like to join our chapter. Send me her name and contact information and I'll reach out to her.

Stay Safe. Social Distance. Wear a mask!

Here's what you missed about the good work being done in Atlantic County!

"People Deserve as Many Chances As Possible"

--Sheriff Eric Scheffler during our February program.



Outreach to Atlantic County residents battling the disease of addiction and mental health is an important part of Sheriff Scheffler's and Lisa Bee's life's work. The sheriff has implemented several programs to place people suffering from addiction into recovery programs rather than prison. The Hope One Mobile Outreach Unit is staffed with social workers and recovery experts and travels all over the county to meet people where they are. They establish personal connections and help bridge the gap between people suffering from addiction and mental health issues and getting them into treatment. Hope One has connected 1500 people into treatment and sober living assistance. They also provide Narcan training sessions, which can reverse an opioid overdose and save a life.

Lisa Bee, the Executive Director of the Matthew Bee Memorial Fund raises funds to help individuals and families battling the disease of addiction and mental health issues by providing scholarships to addiction treatment, recovery support services, resources and sober housing. Lisa is also Director of Community Outreach and Support in Atlantic County for Angels in Motion a volunteer nonprofit providing love, compassion, and services to the addicted, homeless and most vulnerable in our community. Every Wednesday, she holds a food program in Atlantic City where 100 or more people are fed. Donated clothing, blankets and Blessing Bags that are assembled by people just like you are also available.



The causes of addiction are many, but there are ways you can help:

- Donate to the Matthew Bee Memorial Fund at MatthewBee.com.
- Help Angels in Motion by donating blankets and bags with sturdy handles for the homeless and/or assemble Blessing Bags. If you're interested in making a donation, OR would like belong to a group that assembles Blessing Bags, please contact Kathy Zeigenfus at kzeigenfus@aol.com or lisabeenj@gmail.com.
- Donate to Hope One at www.hopeoneac.com.

March 17th at 7 pm – Racism in America: The Native American Experience.

Dr. Daryl Thorne, Assistant Professor of Human Relations at Trinity University in Washington, DC will help us understand the real world impact of US Native American policy over the past 400 years.





April 21st at 7 pm - Climate Change in NJ and What We're Doing About It. Sea level rise, changing weather patterns, and human actions are taking their toll on the New Jersey coastal plain. This panel discussion, led by Virginia Rettig, Refuge Manager of Edwin B. Forsythe National Wildlife Refuge, will highlight the biggest challenges we face, and share what our scientists are doing to “stem the tide.”

SAVE THE DATE!

May 13th at 7 pm – Our Annual Officer Installation – Let’s Celebrate Us Together!

Corresponding Secretary

Kris Baker

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As Corresponding Secretary, each month I mail 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 an email message if you know of someone you would like to receive a card on behalf of AAUW.

STEM

Gail Davis

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Our 2020 Tech Trek camp will be virtual in July this year. A 2021 will NOT be chosen. We hope to have an Alumni camp in the future if funds permit. We will have a virtual Meet & Greet on May 15th. STEM Campers will get to meet what would have been their roommates. Possibly a virtual campus tour with Alumns. Then we need to ascertain IF they all will have internet access after schools end in June. At camp they will have a morning YOGA class, then 4 core classes, workshops in the afternoon, possibly virtual field trips. Professional Women’s Night is being worked on by Virginia Rettig.



My interview team may be asked to help assemble the kits each camper will receive.

Community Foundation of SJ

Lois Fried

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The Trust Fund has a balance of \$61,692.01.



To learn more about the Community Foundation of SJ, watch [this three-minute video](#).

Facebook

Karen Poorman

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Closed group Facebook page. Every AAUW-AC member on Facebook should join. To join, go to “AAUW Atlantic Members,” answer the questions and you will be sent an invitation if you are a member. *Conversation is welcome*. It is a social/informational page for members of the Atlantic County Branch and members need to be involved to keep it active.

There is also a public page. “AAUW Atlantic County Branch.” You can “like” the page and receive notifications when something is posted. That page can be seen by everyone. It should deal with AAUW Atlantic business only. If you submit a picture of anyone, be certain that they have approved it. We generally do not put names on the public site.

Items of Interest

AAUW National Art Contest

In the art world women are underrepresented and undervalued. Only a third of artists represented by commercial galleries are women and women working in arts professions are paid on average 74 cents to every dollar paid to men. This is what motivates AAUW to host an annual art contest — to give women artists the attention they deserve.



The 2021 entry period has closed. [Voting is now open and will close on March 3](#). The six winning entries will be featured in a collection of notecards mailed to AAUW members in the spring. Click the link above and then click on the Vote Now Button.

How Voting Works

The art contest winners are chosen by AAUW members. The images that receive the most votes will appear on note cards that are mailed to tens of thousands of AAUW members across the country.

You must be a current AAUW member or affiliate when voting opens in order to vote in the 2021 AAUW Art Contest. The voting period is February 10 – March 3, 2021.

Members may VOTE ONE TIME for their 10 favorite images. During the contest, members can log in online and see which entries they've voted for. Rally votes for your favorites by sharing with other members!

Other Information

The note cards will acknowledge the name of the artist and the artwork. If the artist belongs to a branch, the name of that branch will also be acknowledged.

The following members have made submissions and it is easiest to find them by searching for the name of the work.

- Carol Zerbe, "Spring Floral" "It is a watercolor with two very bright yellow flowers centered in a vertical presentation."
- Arlene Groch, "Hidden Woman 1" She describes it as "The joy of abstract impressionist painting is that the viewer controls the message. Women's lives were hidden for far too long. Find yours in my paintings."
- Anne Carson, "Summer Bouquet" is a photograph.

INTEREST GROUPS

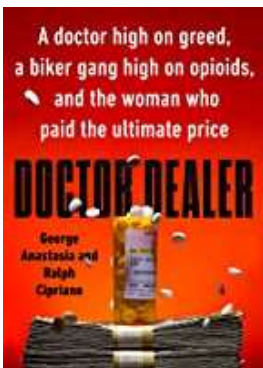
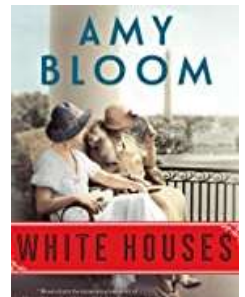
Book Group

Mary Lou Breidenstine

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The February Book Club, facilitated by Terry Dailey, was a great success. Terry provided interesting background on the life of author James McBride and his authorship of "The Good Lord Bird." Great member participation.

On **Friday, March 26**, Carolyn will lead the group's discussion of "White Houses" by Amy Bloom. This novel chronicles the relationship of Eleanor Roosevelt and journalist Lorena Hickok. Amy Boom happened to come upon a cache of letters written by both ladies and developed he letters into a compelling novel. This novel is also "true to the History."



In April Gail Vreeland will tackle "Dr. Dealer" by George Anastasia. This book is sure to provoke lots of discussion as it is the story of the murder of April Kauffman.

New people are always welcome. Carolyn will send the zoom link. Looking forward to seeing everyone.

Film Group

Terry Dailey

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Hopefully some of us have had or have appointments scheduled for our vaccine so that we can resume seeing films together in theaters some time this year. In the meantime, we continue to stream movies at home with suggestions given by members. If you want to be added to the group, just send me an email. Tilton Square Theatre is open and is screening four small, Golden Globe nominated films right now if anyone is venturing from their homes. They spent a lot of money on ventilation and are limiting seating in accordance with COVID protocols.



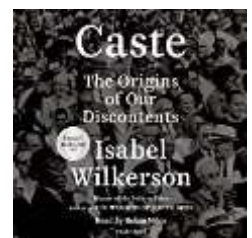
For A More Equal Society

Carolyn Bassett

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For a More Equal Society will meet March 11 at 1:30pm to discuss some of the ideas in Isabel Wilkerson's book *Caste*.

Members should watch the [half hour presentation](#) of Ms. Wilkerson interviewed by Errol Barnett on YouTube. If you have read some of the book, so much the better, but that is not a requirement. Please let Carolyn know if you'd like to come so she can send you a link.



Tutors for Educational Equity

Virginia Rettig

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We continue to tutor a few clients to help teachers get through their required Praxis test of Reading, Writing and Math. We are finalizing the formal package that can be handed to prospective tutors to guide them as they start up. We are excited to see what 2021 brings to this newly formed AAUW initiative! Contact Virginia Rettig at rettigva@yahoo.com if you are interested in tutoring.



Conversational Spanish

Jeannette Flax

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Despite occasional technological problems, we are meeting via Zoom Mondays from 4:00 to 6:00. We discuss teaching during the pandemic, gardening, South American culture, Spanish soap operas and films, and food. Our grammar isn't always perfect and we are patient with one another. If you'd like to join us, please contact me.



Travel Group

Carolyn Bassett

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The next Travel Group will meet Tuesday, March 16 at 1pm when Mary and Phil Ingraham will share their trip to Antarctica: "In March 2017, we took an amazing cruise to the Antarctic peninsula passing through the fjords of Chile and returning via the Falkland Islands and Montevideo. The penguins, seals and birds were fascinating, and the scenery was other worldly and pristine." This trip is the opposite of "The Joy of the Near." Maybe we should call it "The Wonder of the Far." Please join us for this incredible adventure, and let Carolyn know if you plan to come so she can send you a link.



UPCOMING DATES TO REMEMBER:

Mondays	4 pm	Conversational Spanish	Jeanette Flax
Mar 10 Wed	7 pm	Board Meeting	Arlene Groch
Mar 11 Thursday	1:30 pm	For a More Equal Society	Carolyn Bassett
Mar 16 Tuesday	1:00 pm	Travel Group Antarctica	Carolyn Bassett
Mar 17 Wednesday	7:00 pm	Branch Meeting Racism in America: The Native American Experience	Arlene Groch
Mar 26 Friday	10:30 am	Book Discussion White Houses	Mary Lou Breidenstine
Apr 21 Wednesday	7:00 pm	Branch Meeting Climate Change in NJ and What We're Doing About It	Arlene Groch
May 13 Mon	7:00 pm	Branch Meeting & Annual Officer Installation	Jackie Shelley