



Atlantic County (NJ) Branch

THE NEWSLETTER

September 2021

Vol. 121 no. 01

PROMOTING WOMEN'S EQUITY THROUGH EDUCATION FOR OVER 100 YEARS

THANK YOU TO THE TECH TREK LEADERSHIP TEAM



Gail Davis, Ann Marchesani, Linda Harmon



Claudine Keenan

President's Message

Jackie Shelley-Tasoff

jacalyn_shelley2003@yahoo.com

Dear Friends,

With all the chaos in the world, I keep asking the question, "What good can I do?" The answer, it seems to me, is two-fold – be on the look-out for any opportunity to advance women's equity and acknowledge our members' efforts in this endeavor.

Our most ambitious and successful effort to promote equity through education for women and girls is the ongoing work by long-time members of AAUW-AC, Linda, Ann, Gail, and Claudine. See photos above.

Through their endless hours of hard work, middle school girls across NJ attended Tech Trek NJ 2021 Virtual Camp at Stockton University. This one-week, usually residential, hands-on STEM (Science Technology Engineering and Math) camp started in 2015.

Linda, as part of her work for AAUW-NJ, recruits and trains volunteers across the state. Ann Marchesani, Camp Director, hires teachers, coordinates the curriculum and keeps volunteers on track to deliver an encouraging learning experience. As Assistant Camp Director, Claudine Keenan manages the finances and coordinates the camp's activities with Stockton University staff. And Gail, our STEM Board Officer, coordinates the interviews of girls applying to camp from Atlantic County.



Thank you to all of our members who've volunteered during Tech Trek Camp week, and those who've contributed so generously to fund scholarships for students. You too are an important part of this effort.

You might be thinking, What can I do to promote equity for women?

- Check out the Tech Trek Camp website at <https://techtrek-nj.aauw.net/>. Interested in volunteering for Tech Trek 2022? Contact the team at AAUWSTEMCAMP@outlook.com.
- Please attend our “You’ve Got a Friend Program” on September 23rd at 7 pm via Zoom to celebrate the comradery we share and learn about a new community initiative. We have informative and interactive programing scheduled for this year. We’ll return to in-person meetings once it’s safe for everyone.



Tula Christopoulos, Sharone Brown-Jackson, Me and Janet Yunghans.

- You can also welcome our first time Board members Tula our Program VP, Sharone our Diversity Officer, and Janet our Public Information Officer.
- Share with Tula your ideas about programs you’d like to see during 2022.
- Please read Sharone’s informative article on Diversity and consider attending Stockton University’s workshop “Anti-Asian Hate: History, Law, Culture and Coalition Building” with her.
- And, if you’re daring, look for Janet’s article in our October issue to learn how to use Instagram and share “All the Good We Do!” with a younger cadre of women.

Membership Vice-President

Kristina Baker

kristinabaker2014@gmail.com

Welcome two new members who have joined over the summer:

Allison Abbate Daub and Arlene Halpern

A listing of all members of the Atlantic County branch is sent each month along with this newsletter. Look for the button “Member Directory” on the monthly email that links to this listing. It is there so you can contact other members when desired.

The membership committee is in the process of being formed to encourage individuals to join AAUW, to keep in touch with members and their concerns. If you would like to join a meeting each month, presently on Zoom, let me know.

Also included in the email with this newsletter is the "Application for Membership". Feel free to share it with friends etc. who have expressed an interest in joining. Instructions are on the form as to the process for joining our chapter.

If you have questions or concerns about membership issues, feel free to contact me by email or at 609-602-4467



If the Atlantic County Branch meetings of Summer 2021 are any indicator, you are in for a jammin' year of cultural, educational and entertaining programs! In June, Bernadette Getzler showed us how to successfully plant an organic garden in pots. In July, amateur chef extraordinaire Eric Brafford demonstrated the preparation of a delicious seafood dinner we could almost taste and in August we had the distinct honor of having two exceptionally talented artists and members, Arlene Groch and Carol Zerbe, show us how they create their masterpieces.



The September 23rd meeting is the official start of the 2021-22 year of events for our Branch. For new and seasoned members, Atlantic County Branch is there for you, whether you seek friendship, advice, education or to be better informed. We're setting the tone with the theme, "You've Got a Friend." Fun activities are planned for that night and member Virginia Rettig will tell us about our expanded

community initiative Tutors for Educational Equity. On October 20th, Dorrie Papademetriou will show the good that can happen when we help others outside of our comfort zone. MudGirls Studios has successfully inspired hope and motivation in local homeless women. November and December, respectively, are the Scholarship Fundraiser and Holiday Party.



Due to concerns over the spread of the Delta variant and breakthrough Covid cases, the Board has wisely chosen to hold the Fall programs on ZOOM. Now, no one prefers ZOOM to in person, but, at this uncertain time, we want to take every precaution necessary to keep us all safe. There will come a time, once again, when we will all, safely, socialize together and in person.

I leave you with the following thoughts:

- I hope that you will support the hard work your Program Committee does for all the members by attending these programs.
- Feel free to contact me with your opinions and thoughts about programs you've attended, and...
- ...with ideas for 2022 programs. This is not about the Officers and Committee Chairs; it's about all of us. Actively participate and speak up.

Looking forward to an exciting 2021-22!

Tutors for Educational Equity

Virginia Rettig

rettigva@yahoo.com

I attended the first in-person board meeting of AC Ed Equity (<https://www.acedequity.org/>) in May. Our TEE is leading their effort to increase the diversity of teaching staff in Atlantic County, but ACEE is working on several efforts to ensure all Atlantic County children have the same opportunities in school. We have a long way to go! We will soon be conducting training sessions for anyone that wants to start tutoring teachers to pass the State-required Praxis test (it's really complicated: <https://nj.gov/education/license/FinalTestingRequirements.pdf>). Please contact Virginia even if you aren't interested but are simply curious!! 609-408-2065



Scholarship Committee

Karen Poorman

karenpoormansjawe@gmail.com

During the summer we received a generous bequest of \$5000 from Dr. Jo Frances Stowe. Although she was not a member, Dr. Stowe frequently attended our Fundraiser luncheons and supported our efforts. Because she worked in the healthcare field, the Scholarship Committee and the Board approved a \$5000 scholarship in her name to a second year female ACCC student and resident matriculating in a healthcare field. ACCC will identify three candidates for this award. The Scholarship Committee will interview the candidates and make the final selection.

What Is Diversity?

Diversity is defined as variety in what makes us unique. It is multi-dimensional and has been historically used to differentiate groups such as ethnicity, gender, religious beliefs or socio-economic status. Given the United States' history of discrimination and exclusion, dimensions of diversity fall into two categories – primary which can't be changed and secondary which we have some control over. The beauty of diversity is being able to appreciate it and designing an environment where it can grow and thrive. Our focus is to explore our differences in a respectful way that helps us to understand our individual value and celebrate what diversity brings to AAUW.



As an added note, I recently participated in the [Amistad Commission Summer Institute 2021](#), attended the [NJ HEART](#) (Helping Empower Anti-Racist Teachers) Summer Workshop; I am currently reading *Caste* by Isabel Wilkerson. Please join me and attend Stockton University's Workshop – [“Anti-Asian Hate: History, Law, Culture & Coalition Building”](#) – presented by Professor Lorraine Bannai on September 21st via Zoom. Please contact me for more information.

Fundraiser Officer

Kathy Zeigenfus

kzeigenfus@aol.com



We will once again be participating in the “Friends Helping Friends,” Fundraiser at Bosco’s on October 20. You can purchase \$5.00 coupons which will give you a 25% discount on all of your purchases in store that day. It’s easy to sell these coupons and

all the money we raise will go to fund AAUW’s programs and our expanded Tutors for Educational Equity initiative. Please send a check for the number of tickets you’d like to purchase and write the check to AAUW-Atlantic County. The coupons will be mailed to you.

Send the check with your contact information to:

Kathy Zeigenfus
127 Garnett Lane
Egg Harbor Township, NJ 08234

We are so appreciative of your contributions to our Fundraiser in 2020. Unable to meet in person, our letter campaign with our friends, Lucy and Ethel, brought in a generous amount of money which helped support our Scholarships and our Tech Trek 2021 program.

Please join us for our Zoom Fundraising event in November to see for yourselves what your contributions have done to help college students with scholarships and middle school students with our tremendous Tech Trek program.



Although we wanted to have an in-person luncheon this year, the Board has decided not to do so because of further COVID concerns. You can look forward to another letter from Lucy and Ethel and perhaps another TV friend. We thank you for your continued support.

Public Policy

Jenine Brown

Jb1nj@aol.com

September brings with it the sound of school bells, literally for some, or a memory for others. I am not sure if bells are still used to begin classes in colleges and universities but it is certain that women and family members of all ages are returning to a complex environment this year.

Public policy for higher education has seen growing public discussion and concern, accompanied by important policy innovations in recent years. Several states have proposed or passed “free college” plans. Total outstanding student loan debt has grown to over \$1.5 trillion, surpassing in volume all other forms of debt except home loans.

To increase access equality, the State of NJ targets some urban schools whose students can participate in the Gear Up program. Students are being aided by tutoring, summer programs, mentoring, counseling, test preparation, information about financial aid, and college visits. Parents and teachers of NJ



New Jersey GEAR UP
Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness
for Undergraduate Programs



GEAR UP students benefit with information about college options and professional development.

Related to health public policy, the Chronicle of Higher Education states that more than 700 schools are requiring vaccination against Covid 19 as students and faculty return.

Sources: University of Chicago, Harris Public Policy; NJ.gov/Higher education; USA Today.com

Facebook

Karen Poorman

karenpoormansjawe@gmail.com

What you need to know about our presence on Facebook: There is an AAUW Atlantic page and an AAUW Atlantic group. The page can be read by everyone and anyone can join it. The group is members only and can only be seen by members. Fifty of our members are having daily discussions, posting information, photos and updates on our activities on the group page.



Join Facebook. Go to Facebook.com and click "Create New Account." Enter the information they ask for. Click "Sign Up." To finish creating your account, you need to confirm your email or mobile phone number. I have a separate email account for Facebook...one that I don't even check.

Once that is done, type "AAUW Atlantic Members" in the Facebook search bar. It will bring you to a screen that will ask if you are a member. I will receive a request from you and will approve you. That is the closed group page. You can "like" the AAUW Atlantic County Branch page.

It is good to "like" or post on Facebook at least occasionally because inactive accounts are the ones that tend to get hacked, so post on our group page. I hope to hear from you soon.

Treasurer Report

Linda Karp

lindakarp@gmail.com



Membership renewals can be completed online at aauw.org. If you'd prefer to pay by check, please send payment of \$82 and send to me at my address noted in our Member Directory.

Items of Interest

AAUW NJ Special Event

Linda Harmon

linda.harmon@gmail.com

Sans 2020, every year, AAUW NJ has sponsored an annual event. I have been to the United Nations, the Underground Railroad and the new American Revolutionary Museum in Philadelphia, and our last trip was to Seneca Falls NY, home of the birthplace of the Suffragist Movement as well as the Harriet Tubman NY home.



Attendees find the AAUW NJ events enjoyable and rewarding. You get to meet AAUW members from across the state. Staying closer to home this year, the AAUW NJ State District Coordinators are sponsoring our next in-person fun event.

Allaire State Park, Monmouth County
Saturday September 11, 2021 11:00 am
Cost: \$40.00 (includes lunch)

Travel is on your own. This event is limited in number, first come, first serve. More details are in the flyer at the end of the Forum. Questions can be emailed to Linda Harmon at linda.harmon@gmail.com. For registration, go directly to <https://aauw-nj.aauw.net/>

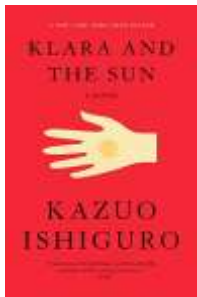
INTEREST GROUPS

Book Group

Mary Lou Breidenstine

breidensti@aol.com

Book club will be held on Friday, October 15, at 10:30. The meeting will be held on the patio of the home of Mary Lou Breidenstine. Carolyn Bassett will lead the discussion of "American Dirt" by Jeanine Cummins. This book is the gripping story of the journey of a mother and her son as they execute their escape from the drug wars in progress in Acapulco. It is sure to provoke a lot of discussion.



The next book is "Klara and the Sun" by Kazuo Ishiguro, date and location (zoom or not) TBA.

We will plan for the coming year as much as possible at the October 15 meeting. Please bring your suggestions. We need about six titles. It is always good to have a variety of genres. We have not read a play or a biography in a while. See you then. New people always welcome.

Film Group

Terry Dailey

johnd4photo@aol.com

For those unfamiliar with our group, we try to view movies featuring women either as director, writer or theme. When that is not possible, we view documentaries, foreign or independent films. We leave the teenage boy action movies to others. We used to screen our films at the Tilton and Northfield library, but the Tilton can no longer accommodate our small group at an affordable price. The Northfield Library is kind enough to let us use their community room on the second Wednesday of each month at 10 AM. Masks are required for anyone who is unvaccinated. I do not know yet if we will be allowed to eat lunch there afterwards as we discuss the film as we used to do. We can, however, stay to discuss it or go out to lunch locally to discuss it if desired. During the shutdown the members generously provided suggestions that could be safely screened at home. The group will continue to provide each other with suggestions to stream even though we will be IN PERSON at the Northfield library as above. For those able and willing to travel, I still highly recommend the Landmark Theaters in Philadelphia which have great small films and special events.



Our first screening will be on September 8 and will be *Portrait of a Lady on Fire* which is a French film directed by a woman. It is an 18th century romance that develops between a painter and her subject which "mines the emotional and artistic possibilities that emerge when women can freely live tighter and see one another in a world without men".

October's film will be the 2019 documentary *Margaret Atwood: A WORD AFTER A WORD AFTER A WORD IS POWER*. November's film will be a taping of a live production of the Royal Shakespeare Company in Stratford-Upon-Avon of *The Taming of the Shrew*. This 1590s

England is a matriarchy and gender roles are turned on their head as Bptista Minolta seeks to marry off her two sons.

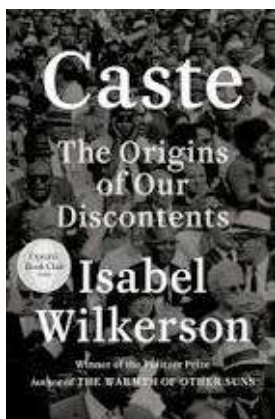
If you would like to be included in the group, please send me your email so that I can add you because occasionally there is a movie that some of us may choose to attend at Regal, Tilton or Ventnor. I monitor the sites to see if there may be anything of interest to us and I can forward suggestions from members.

For A More Equal Society

Carolyn Bassett

geoca41@gmail.com

The **For a More Equal Society** interest group began in 2019 to explore the existing inequalities in our society and to try to find ways to remedy them. We met in person until Covid forced us to go onto ZOOM meetings. We meet about once a month, and we usually have a topic which comes from a news article, a podcast, a documentary film, or a book. We read and discussed How to be an Anti-Racist and we are reading Caste by Isabel Wilkerson. We sometimes have guests from the state AAUW (the Diversity Chair) or the local NAACP. Members of our group presented a program on Race to the Branch looking at the invention of the concept of race, mass incarceration, and redlining and their aftermaths. We welcome new participants.



We will meet on Zoom on Thursday, Sept 9 at 1pm. I am asking you to watch a documentary called Priced Out on the effects of gentrification on neighborhoods, especially those that were initially created by redlining. The documentary is about Portland, OR and it is available on Kanopy (free) or Amazon Prime for \$3.99. Even though it is a west coast city, both Philadelphia and New York are facing similar problems. We are also continuing to read CASTE and we are up to Part 6. Let Carolyn know if you plan to join us.



Great Decisions Discussions

Lynne Walters

rrwalters321@hotmail.com

Our Great Decisions Discussion Group is an outgrowth of the Foreign Policy Association (FPA). This group helps us develop awareness and understanding of global issues. Our topics have covered many geographical areas of the world as well as problems facing us. This include subjects such as global warming, nuclear security, global migration, global health issues and others.

The format of the program includes reading a chapter of the FPA book on the issue to be discussed. There is a short film which we view on each topic before we meet for our discussion. Because of COVID-19, most of our meetings last year were held on Zoom. Information will be provided here in the newsletter for the next session. The group meets eight times each spring for weekly sessions.

Conversational Spanish

Jeannette Flax

jcflax@yahoo.com

We are an enthusiastic group, speaking Spanish only from 4:00 to 6:00 on Monday afternoons via Zoom at the moment, but hoping to return to the Otto Bruins Library on Mill Road in Northfield once it is safe to meet in person. Our members include fluent speakers and those who are trying to retain and improve what they have learned. We are patient with one another and welcome new members. If you would like to join us, please contact me by e-mail or by phone (609) 653-6177.

Do you love to eat? Do you have an adventurous palate? Then the ethnic lunch group is for you! Every other month we gather at a new restaurant for lunch and spend an hour or two enjoying interesting cuisine and each other's company.

In the last few years, we've sampled Thai, Filipino, Mexican, Greek, Polish, Italian and Indian food and we're hungry for more! Stay tuned for the announcement of our September luncheon. We hope you'll join us! Send an email to Ann-Maria Guevara to be included on the list.

Travel Group

Carolyn Bassett

geoca41@gmail.com

The Travel Group is a venue for members to share travel experiences and trips they have had. Usually the presentation is by Power Point, although some presenters have chosen to simply speak, perhaps using maps or artifacts to illustrate their talk. Last year all presentations were made using ZOOM. Before that we usually gathered in one of the local libraries and the presenter ended with light refreshments evoking the country visited. The programs last year included a bike trip through Germany, a cruise around Russia, a visit to the Delaware and Raritan Canal suitable for day trippers, a program on small cemeteries of NJ, and Antarctica. I am always looking for volunteers to share their travels with the group. If you want to be on the email list, let me know.

The Travel Group will meet via ZOOM on October 6 at 1pm. Linda Karp will present "Travels to Asia" Asia has enchanted and bewildered visitors for ages. The continent's combination of energetic cities, traditional architecture and exotic landscapes will overwhelm and delight your senses. While some Asian countries have many similarities, each has its own unique culture and charm! Join us as we visit: Singapore, Thailand, Vietnam, Taiwan and Hong Kong. Let me know if you plan to attend.

**UPCOMING DATES TO REMEMBER:**

Mondays	4:00 pm	Conversational Spanish	Jeanette Flax
Sept 8 Wednesday	10:00 am	Film Group Northfield Library	Terry Dailey
Sept 9 Thursday	1:00 pm	For a More Equal Society	Carolyn Bassett
Sept 11 Saturday	11:00 am	AAUW NJ Special Outing Allaire State Park	Linda Harmon
Sept 21 Tuesday	6:00 pm	Stockton Presentation on "Anti-Asian Hate: History, Law, Culture & Coalition Building" via Zoom	Sharone Brown-Jackson
Sept 23 Thursday	7:00 pm	Branch Program You've Got a Friend	Tula Christopoulos
Oct 15 Friday	10:30 am	Book Club American Dirt	Mary Lou Breidenstine
Oct 20 Thursday	7:00 pm	Branch Program Mud Girls	Tula Christopoulos

AAUW NJ Special Project Event



- Sponsored by AAUW NJ and Coordinated by Central, Northern, and Southern Districts
- Allaire State Park, Monmouth County 4265 Atlantic Ave. Wall Township, NJ (Additional Information provided on Allaire State Park website or 732-938-2371)
- **DATE: Saturday September 11, 2021—11:00 am**
(Travel in groups on your own statewide to this Central Location)



Inclusive:

- Open Car Antique Steam Train Ride in Park
- Picnic Area Individual Lunch from Jersey Mikes (sub, chips, cookie, water)
- Picnic Tables available or bring your own folding chairs



- At your leisure tour Open Flea Market (creative vendors)
Historic Village (tour at leisure (All buildings open and appropriately staffed for information and questions)

- **Cost: \$40.00 Non- Refundable Checks made out to: AAUW NJ**

First Come First serve limited spots available

Send to Patricia Baroska AAUW-NJ Central District 2 Wisteria Place Howell, NJ
07731 H-732-458-5906, C-732-267-3127

Questions Pat: shorebeachgirl@hotmail.com Northern District Diane:

dianelcrawford@gmail.com Southern District Linda: linda.harmon@gmail.com

Donation: will be given to AAUW National Greater Needs Fund by AAUW NJ