

**PROMOTING WOMEN'S EQUITY THROUGH EDUCATION FOR OVER 100 YEARS**

**HAPPY NEW YEAR 2024!**



**Fundraising Event's Distinguished Guests and Speakers  
Gina Roche, Zoey Rosenberg, Olga Kurkowska and Nakesha Lawrence-Chowdbury**

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## **Presidents' Message**

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Dear AAUW-Atlantic County Members,

Happy New Year to all AAUW friends and family. Last year, our chapter engaged in several major events and community-wide activities. Thanks to Virginia and her team, PRAXIS tutoring has continued through the Educational Equity initiative. The STEM camp at Stockton University was a success thanks to the tireless efforts of our volunteers. Our luncheon hosted by Atlantic Cape Community College in October was well attended and our speakers, Dr. Claudine Keenan, Dean of Education and Interim Provost, and Dr. Josette Katz, Executive Vice President of ACCC, spoke about COVID's impact on higher education.

The November fundraiser at the Italian Gourmet, through the efforts of our fundraising committee headed by Kathy Zeigenfus and event coordinator, Lisa Goodwin, was a great afternoon. Funds were raised for scholarships through the generosity of all in attendance as well as the donations made by many members in support of AAUW's mission. Music by Gina Roche was a highlight of the occasion.

The holiday potluck luncheon coordinated by MaryLou Briedenstein, Teresa Sartorio, and Aida Colon was a wonderful gathering of AAUW members at the Linwood Library. The trivia game facilitated by Kathy Zeigenfus was fun with thoughtful questions in three categories that were challenging but very entertaining. It was another lovely afternoon with friends.

Kristine Baker, our membership chairperson, has been busy with membership updates and I would like to welcome our newest members, MaryLou Stephano, Rina Terry, Anna Marie Sabatini, Lori Golden,

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Rosemarie Yazdanseta, and Diane Alverson. We are excited that you joined and will certainly recruit you for committees.

Please mark your calendars for Saturday, April 6, 2024, for our Woman of Distinction Luncheon. Lisa Goodwin is planning the event along with Shelley Cohen's programming committee and more details will follow. We will be honoring Dr. Claudine Keenan at this year's luncheon. For those who may not know her, Dr. Keenan is a long-time member of AAUW and is instrumental in our STEM summer camp at Stockton University. In addition to her position at Stockton as Dean of Education and Interim Provost, she is also a member of the New Jersey State Board of Education. Her influence in education is significant and it is because of her insight and knowledge, there are many innovative programs at Stockton and state-wide that benefit our students.

In closing, I wish you all a Happy New Year and best wishes as we continue working together for the "advancement of equity for women and girls through advocacy, education, philanthropy, and research."

Shelly Meyers, Co-President of Atlantic County Chapter of AAUW      sfmecllc@gmail.com  
Jean McAlister, Co-President of Atlantic County Chapter of AAUW      mcaliste@atlanticcape.edu

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<b>Program Vice President</b>	Shelley Cohen	cohen2475@gmail.com
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Since the last published newsletter, there have been two well-attended programs, our November fundraiser and our December Holiday Get Together, both events reflecting the creativity and camaraderie of our members.

The Fundraising Committee planned a well-organized November event, our first in-person fundraiser since 2019. Members and guests heard from a local AAUW nursing scholarship recipient, a teacher who benefitted from our Tutors for Educational Equity outreach initiative, and a Rutgers doctoral engineering student, who is a graduate of our TechTrek camp and the daughter of singer Gina Roche who provided the program's entertainment.

On December 16th, our annual holiday meeting at the Linwood Public Library was a great success thanks to Mary Lou Breidenstine who coordinated the potluck luncheon offerings that our multi-talented members baked/sliced/sauteed/etc. and brought to the event. Kathy Zeigenfus facilitated a trivia quiz that provided food for thought which our members enjoyed.

There will be no January program as our committee will be on Winter Break. 😊 Actually our committee will be meeting early in January to begin actively planning our April Woman of Distinction luncheon honoring Dr. Claudine Keenan, Dean of Education at Stockton who helped spearhead our branch's TechTrek camp at the university. Please mark your calendars for Saturday, April 6, 2024 for this important event.

February's program will be offered via Zoom from State AAUW highlighting the accomplishments of Madame C.J. Walker, a prominent African American entrepreneur and philanthropist. We hope to be able to run this program on the third Wednesday evening in Feb. A flyer will follow in early February with more details.

In March, we plan to hold an in-person luncheon meeting to learn about our own local celebrity, Sarah Spencer Washington. More information to follow in 2024.

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**Membership Vice President**

Kristina Baker

kristinabaker2014@gmail.com

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As of December 26, 2023, the Atlantic County chapter has 122 members. Welcome two new members to our chapter: Annamarie Sabatini from Ventnor and Diane Alverson of Egg Harbor Township.

New Interest Group starting in February

For details on the "Bon Appetit" demonstration cooking group, look to the Interest Group section of this newsletter.

If you know of someone who may be interested in joining our chapter, the "Application for Membership" form is attached to this email. Directions are on the form explaining how to join.

Kristina Baker 609-602-4467 or Kristinabaker2014@gmail.com

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**Tutors for Educational Equity**

Virginia Rettig

rettigva@yahoo.com

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As we celebrate another successful year of supporting teachers through tutoring, the NJ legislature passed a law that will allow people to forego the Basic Core Reading, Writing and Math Praxis tests if they scored a 3.0 GPA or higher in college. This helps many but still leaves us with opportunities to continue tutoring and working with AC Ed Equity. Additionally, we will be presenting a proposal to AVANZAR to work with people who need their GED. Please consider helping with GED tutoring. Were you a little hesitant to help with teacher tutoring? GED is much more straightforward! And we really want this to be a wholly AAUW-supported project. Call or email me if you have any questions!

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**STEM Officer**

Theresa Basquez

tbasquez\_86@hotmail.com

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AAUW STEM outreach has a full program this year in Atlantic County:

TWEEN TECH hosted on Wednesday, January 3, 2024, at Stockton University, had an impressive AAUW volunteer turnout! Many thanks to all for your participation.



TEEN TECH on Friday May 10, 2024, at Atlantic Cape Community College. Teentech is a one-day event designed to demonstrate that STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) education and careers are exciting, relevant, and accessible to girls and women. Teentech participants engage in laboratory, engineering, and math workshops presented at a host college/university, giving them confidence-building experiences in a real college setting. The event is run on a school day as an approved school field trip from each attending district. The educators who accompany the girls participate in their own hands-on workshop in the morning and a panel discussion session in the afternoon.

TECH TREK the week of July 21-27, 2024, at Stockton University. This one-week, residential, hands-on STEM camp for rising eighth-grade girls got its start more than 20 years ago. New Jersey joined the expansion at Stockton University and expanded to host 60 girls. Campers take part in activities like programming robots, extracting their own DNA, formulating lip gloss in a chemistry lab, visiting the FAA Technical Center or e-Sports Lab or coastal waters or Pinelands Preserve, and much more! Tech Trek has been shown to significantly increase girls' self-confidence and their interest in and excitement about the STEM fields, which is why AAUW New Jersey continues to host Tech Trek at Stockton University each year.

Mark your calendar and volunteer if you can! Please send an email to me at tbasquez\_86@hotmail.com

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Keep in mind that the mission of AAUW is “to advance equity for women and girls through advocacy, education and research” so who said :

“The time is always right to do what is right.” As well as “Faith is taking the first step even when you don’t see the whole staircase.” And “Life’s most persistent and urgent question is ‘What are you doing for others?’” Why, the answer is: Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. (1929-1968) whose birthday is January 15!

Let us not forget Holocaust Remembrance Day on January 27...

Black History Month (2/1-3/1) was created to focus attention on the contributions of African-American and this year’s theme is African-Americans and the Arts.

Almost 20 years before AAUW (1881) was founded, an amazing African-American woman was born named Ida B. Wells. I mentioned Ms. Wells because she took part in the first suffragist parade in 1913 in Washington, D.C. as the only black woman in the Illinois delegation. She marched with this group despite being requested at the last moment to move to the back of the procession with the segregated contingent. She referred to Susan B. Anthony as her “dear good friend” when they debated in 1894 about keeping African-American women at bay for convenience.

And lest we forget Susan B. Anthony Day on February 15!

National Wear Red Day is February 2 and on that note, let’s support AtlantiCare’s 15th Annual Red Dress/Red Tie Reception on Thursday, February 8, 2024 – dedicated to raising awareness about heart disease in women!!

Being different from each other is called DIVERSITY and it’s an amazing thing.

--Felecity Brooks

We all should know that Diversity makes for a rich tapestry, and we must understand that all the threads of the tapestry are Equal in value no matter what their color.

--Maya Angelou 1928-2014



Sharone Brown-Jackson with her painting of Ida B. Wells

Our first in-person Scholarship/STEM Luncheon in four years was a huge success, bringing members and friends together as well as raising funds for two of our most important programs. As we approach the new year, 2024, we can be proud that our generosity will provide the needed support for Scholarships and STEM programs.

The event was held at the Gourmet Italian Restaurant in Galloway Township. Lisa Goodwin made all the arrangements for the facility, meal, reservations and table placement. Our small, but mighty committee, including Carol Zerbe, Joan Leavy, Linda Karp, Anne Carson, Audrey Owen, and me, Kathy Zeigenfus, took care of invitations, basket donations, gift cards, flowers, fifty-fifty, and basket presentations, and entertainment.

We were extremely fortunate to have Gina Roche, musician, singer, and songwriter, perform for us to thank us for introducing her daughter, Zoey Rosenberg, to Astro-physics, her current college major, in our

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first STEM Camp eight years ago. Zoey spoke to us about her studies at Rutgers University and how our program helped her.

Nakesha Lawrence-Chowdbury shared her experiences with the Tutors for Educational Equity Program, in which she began as a receiver of tutoring and now serves as a tutor for those who need help in passing the Praxis test. Olga Kurkowska, a nursing student, shared with us her journey to becoming a nurse with our Scholarship help.

With generous donations from members, the proceeds from our basket giveaway and fifty-fifty, and the \$500.00 we earned from the Boscov's Friends Helping Friends shopping fundraiser, AAUW, Atlantic County, will be able to continue our valuable programs well into the future!

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## Public Information

Pam Tyson

pamtyson@herocampaign.com



I will be setting up a LinkedIn social media page for our Atlantic County Chapter. It has been suggested that this may attract new and younger members. When researching, it is suggested that each organization has a few administrators for the account. If you are interested in joining me as an administrator, please contact me at [pamtyson@herocampaign.org](mailto:pamtyson@herocampaign.org) or 609-703-1254.

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## Public Policy

Arlene Groch

aggroch@mac.com

### Effective Advocacy

We AAUW members are, by definition, highly educated. Our chapter's many stimulating programs inform and encourage us to be "lifetime learners". AAUW National urges us to "take action" to influence politicians and voters. The foundation for effective advocacy is knowing every vote taken by and every public statement uttered by an incumbent politician.

Fortunately, we no longer need to spend weeks reading old newspapers on microfiche as I did while working on Bill Hughes' 1973 campaign for Congress! So here are the 3 best internet research tools I've found in a lifetime of advocacy. Please let me know if you try them out and what you learn by doing so!

1. Ballotpedia.org. It's free, fast and a few clicks reveal the number and title of every bill sponsored, co-sponsored or voted upon by an incumbent and how he/she voted. Another click on the bill's number provides a summary, full text and much more. Also, the representative's home page even reveals the legislator's leadership status and effectiveness.
2. BillTrack50 is a comprehensive search tool for state and federal legislation and regulations. Pick a topic (e.g. guns, abortion, climate) and this site assembles your search's results into a spreadsheet-style grid for you to view and study. Want to share the results with others? BillTrack50 gives you lists, maps, tables, scorecards, even a phone app. to help you keep others informed.
3. Congress.gov is huge, comprehensive, and a bit more challenging to navigate.

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## Items of Special Interest

It's Art Contest Time! The annual AAUW Art Contest is nearly upon us and we hope that you are excited as we are to start spreading the word in your states and branches! The AAUW Art Contest is an excellent way to showcase members' talent while also supporting AAUW's mission. The winning art has been featured on notecards that are mailed to members and supporters every spring. The next AAUW Art Contest will begin on January 8! Be sure and check out National's Art Contest [page](#) and upcoming emails from AAUW to stay up to date on the schedule and how you can participate. For now, feel free to peruse the gallery of previous winners and perhaps find inspiration for your entry!

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## SAVE THE DATE

The next Board Meeting is Monday, January 8, 2024 at  
7pm (Zoom)

More information to follow!

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### Newsletter Publication Schedule

**September** - Welcome Back & plans ...

**November** - Fundraiser & Holiday Lunch

**January** - Happy New Year ...what's ahead

**March** - Nominating Committee Recommendations & Notice of Annual Meeting (April) & calendar year statement of income & expenses & recommendations for scholarships

**May** - Accomplishments, wrap-up information on any of the above & Installation of Officers & summer plans

To ensure that you are getting the most current information of our organization's events and happenings, check our Facebook Private Group Page (you must join this page and be accepted in order to view the posts) and reach out to the Interest Group Leaders by email to make certain you are on their mailing lists for information.

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### INTEREST GROUPS

#### Documentary/Short Film Group

Jean Mason

Jeanmariemason54@gmail.com

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We have enjoyed several short films and documentaries during 2023. We look forward to many more in 2024 in a variety of genres. We meet on the first Monday of each month at 1:00 at the Linwood Library. We watch, chat and chew. While the group is small, we are mighty. We invite any and all of you who are interested in watching and discussing the films as well as any suggestions of documentaries or films. Listed below are the films for the next few months:

January- no film since the first Monday is New Year's Day and the Library is closed.

February 5- Twenty Feet from Stardom- "The backup singer exists in a strange place in the pop music world; they are always in the shadow of the featured artists even when they are in front of them .. A documentary film about the back up singers for artists like Michael Jackson, the Rolling Stones, etc." You can watch the trailer below for a sneak peek.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tWyUJcA8Zfo>

March 4- The Red Pill- this was actually recommended by my son. "When a feminist filmmaker sets out to document the mysterious and polarizing world of the Men's Rights Movement, she begins to question her own beliefs. The Red Pill chronicles Cassie Jaye's journey exploring an alternate perspective on gender equality, power and privilege." Watch the trailer below- it got me riled up!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wLzeakKC6fE>

We hope to see you there! Jean Mason, 610-761-3106, jeanmariemason54@gmail.com

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In November, the group had a tour given by the President Howard Kyle the National Aerospace Research and Technology Park(NARTP) and were given a tour by its President Howard Kyle. December brought the group to Atlantic City Jim Whelan Boardwalk Hall for a tour of the largest pipe organ in the world. Our docent, Scott Banks (Membership and Events Coordinator) arranged for a half hour concert and then a tour of the pipes.

**US Life Saving Station** Date: Friday January 12 , 1:30 pm, Cost: Free

The building was used from 1885 to 1905 for ocean rescue and has been maintained in that era. It evolved into the present day Coast Guard. Flairs that were used in that time period are still being used today and were designed by women.



Accessibility: Entrance, building and bathrooms are fully accessible

Location: Atlantic Ave. and 4th street Ocean City

Parking: on the street but should not be a problem in the winter

RSVP: Kristinabaker2014@gmailcom or phone 609-602-4467 if you plan to attend

**Tour of the Flanders Hotel** Date: Friday February 9, 1:30 pm, Cost: Free

In 2009 the hotel was placed on the National Register of Historic Places. It was built in 1923.



Accessibility: Entrance, building and bathrooms are fully accessible

Location: 719 East 11th Street Ocean City

Parking: Free in parking lot on 11th street almost to the boardwalk on the right

RSVP: Kristinabaker2014@gmail.com or phone 609-602-4467 if you plan to attend

Our Shelly Meyers will be demonstrating how to cook some traditional Jewish dishes. You will have an opportunity to taste the dishes she prepares (about 1/4 cup) , not a meal. Bring a bottle of water, coffee, tea etc. for your use.



Date: Monday February 19, 1:30 pm, Cost: around \$10 but will depend on what the presenter is cooking

Location: home in the garden's section of Ocean City

Accessibility: the house has an elevator from the street to the main floor (bathroom is located on this floor)

Parking: on the street but should not be a problem in the winter

Attendance: group will be limited so I will be keeping a log and those above the the number will be put on a waiting list therefore RSVP in a timely manner to Kristinabaker2014@gmail.com or 609-602-4467

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**The Salon Group**

Valerie Koob

vkoob@aol.com

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We are well into Year Two of our discussion group: The Salon! We meet monthly to discuss a timely issue or a philosophical question. A facilitator chooses the topic and prepares questions to pose at the meeting. There are no right or wrong answers, and we are not searching for a consensus. The discussion is the point!

A few of our past topics have included: Homelessness, Banned Books, Religion in Society, The Pros and Cons of Artificial Intelligence, Recent Supreme Court Decisions, Growing Old in America, Near Death Experiences, and Immigration in the US.

You can find us at the Margate Library, from 2:30-3:30, on the second Monday of each month, from now through March, when our Great Decisions group will resume. Our next meeting is on Monday January 8th. If you want to join the Salon group, or just learn more about it, please email meat VKoob@aol.com.

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**Great Decisions Group**

Lynne Walters

rrwalters321@hotmail.com

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GREAT DECISIONS DISCUSSION GROUP REGISTRATION IS NOW OPEN. SPACE IS LIMITED.

Our Great Decisions Discussion Group is part of America's largest discussion group on world affairs. The participants prepare for each session by reading a chapter in the Great Decisions Briefing Book. We meet together weekly for about eight weeks to watch a Master Class on the subject and then have a discussion about the most critical issues facing America and the world today.

This year we will learn about and discuss Mideast Realignment, Climate Technology, Science Across Borders, US - China Trade Rivalry, NATO's Future, Understanding Indonesia, High Seas Treaty and Pandemic Preparedness.

We will meet at the Margate Library on: March 4, March 11, March 18, April 1, April 8, April 15, May 6, and May 13. We meet from 2:30 - 4. The cost of the Briefing Book is \$35. We appreciate the Margate Library for providing the meeting space and additional program costs.



Please email Lynne Walters at rrwalters321@hotmail.com to reserve your place in the group. You will be contacted with information about picking up and paying for your book prior to the first meeting.

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**Book Group**

Mary Lou Breidenstine

breidensti@aol.com

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AAUW Book group meets on the first Friday of each month at 10:30 at the Linwood Library. Following are the selections through February:

Thanks so much to Karen Cifrese for leading an outstanding discussion of Barbie and Ruth. Look on the AAUW Facebook page for photos of this meeting. We had great attendance and participation.

Our next meeting is Jan. 5 and we will watch a movie of A month in the Country followed by lunch, all in the Linwood Library.

The book for Feb. 2 is The Marriage Portrait by Maggie O'Farrell.

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**For A More Equal Society**

Carolyn Bassett

geoca41@gmail.com

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This is a small discussion group which meets on the second Thursday of every month on ZOOM. We are educating ourselves on issues of racial and economic equity. We have been reading Uncle Tom's Cabin by Harriet Beecher Stowe. We are also reading commentary on the book. For January's meeting at 1pm on January 11 (on Zoom) we will be discussing Chapters 20 to 29 of Uncle Tom's Cabin and also the movie Marshall (on Netflix) about an early trial that Thurgood Marshall was involved with for the NAACP. Please let Carolyn know if you are interested in joining us.

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**Conversational Spanish**

Jeannette Flax

jcflax@yahoo.com

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After two Monday holidays, our conversation group starts the new year January 8th at 4:00 via Zoom. We are not a class, do not have any homework, but always find something to discuss in Spanish. We encourage one another to maintain and improve fluency and have fun along the way. Contact me for more information.



Happy New Year, Ethnic Lunchers!!! I hope your holidays have been filled with warmth and joy and, of course, good food!

Our next Ethnic Lunch will take place on Thursday, Jan. 25, 12:00 at Italian Gourmet in Galloway, just off Jimmie Leeds Rd. Here is the website: <https://gourmetitaliancuisine.com/>

(Note: Don't worry about the notice that they're not taking reservations now. I called and they said the main dining room is being renovated, but the large bar area, which has lots of tables, is open for business). Hope to see you there! Please RSVP to Gretchen or me.

**Stockton Theater Ushers Group**




Theresa Sartorio

theresasartorio@comcast.net

Volunteers are needed for the Stockton Children's Theater. The next show is "CelloGayageum" on Monday, **February 5th** at 10:30.

If you can volunteer between the hours of 9:45 to noon, please call or email Theresa at 609 965-9521 or [theresasartorio@comcast.net](mailto:theresasartorio@comcast.net) for details.



	<b>CelloGayageum Student Matinee</b> Imagination Station Stockton Performing Arts Center	Monday, February 5, 2024 10:30 AM (ET) <a href="#">GET INFO</a>
	<b>Bay Atlantic Symphony How Music Talks</b> Imagination Station Stockton Performing Arts Center	Tuesday, May 7, 2024 10:30 AM (ET) <a href="#">GET INFO</a>
	<b>Bay Atlantic Symphony How Music Talks</b> Imagination Station Stockton Performing Arts Center	Tuesday, May 7, 2024 12:00 PM (ET) <a href="#">GET INFO</a>



The Travel Group meets about once a month on the second Wednesday at 1pm on ZOOM In this group, members present interesting trips they have taken and give some background on the areas they have visited. Next up is a presentation in January where Linda Karp will regale us with her cruise to England, Norway and Iceland. That will be **January 10** at 1pm. We are going to skip February. In March, Tula Cristopoulos and Judy Courter will talk about their trip to England to study English wines which have come into existence due to climate change. That will be at 1pm on March 13. I will let you know about the programs after that. Please let me know if you want to get a link to the meetings. Let Carolyn know if you want to get announcements of upcoming programs, and also if you would like to volunteer to be a presenter.

Programs and Board Meetings			
Jan 8 Monday	Zoom 7 pm	<b>Board Meeting</b>	
February TBD	Zoom	<b>Monthly Program</b> Madame C.J. Walker	Shelley Cohen
March TBD		<b>Monthly Program</b> Sarah Spencer Washington	Shelley Cohen

Information on the dates, times and event details for Interest Groups can be found in the sections above or by contacting the Interest Group Leader directly.