

Promoting Women's Equity Through Education For Over 100 Years

Presidents' Message

Dear Fellow AAUW Members:

Oh, what a year it has been! A special thank you to our membership for your support this year. We are honored to have worked alongside all of you, particularly in supporting scholarships for students at Stockton University and Atlantic Cape Community College, as well as the young women who will be attending Stockton University this summer in TechTrek. Our fundraising event was terrific, and the programs were outstanding.

We have supported our local community by hosting a clothing drive for Atlantic Cape students and providing period products to girls in need through the Community Food Bank of South Jersey. Together, we are making a positive impact in our community.

We are grateful to all our board members who have worked tirelessly to ensure that the last two years have been engaging and stimulating for our members, featuring memorable programs and specialty clubs. We are so grateful to our board and our club leaders.

We congratulate Jeanmarie Mason and Lynn Caterson, who begin as the new co-presidents on June 1.

All our best for a wonderful summer,

Jean McAlister McAliste@atlanticcape.edu

Shelly Meyers SFMECLLC@gmail.com

Officers' Reports

Program Officer

It has been an honor and a privilege to serve as AAUW-Atlantic County Program Vice President for the past two years alongside my hardworking committee. I appreciated everything we did together to provide a variety of programs to our membership.

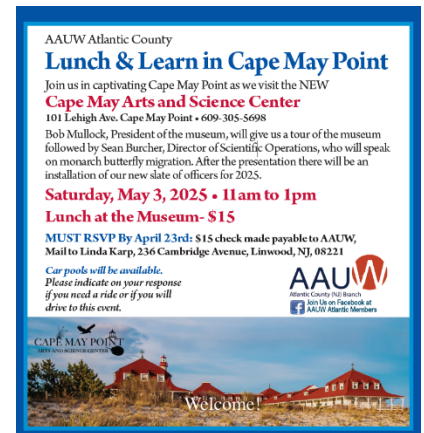
I look forward to working with Shelly Meyers and Jean McAlister, co-Vice Presidents, and the committee members in the upcoming year ahead.

A great big thank you to Matthew DeNafo, President of the Atlantic County Utilities Authority (ACUA), who presented in April about the microplastics recycling efforts and all the other innovative programs the Authority is undertaking. The presentation was excellent, and the conversation among our members was stimulating.

We look forward to the final program of the year on May 3 at 11:00 a.m. at the Cape May Point Arts and Science Center, featuring Dr. Sean Burcher. Dr. Sean Burcher works with Cellular Tracking Technologies and serves as the Director of Science at the Center. He will be presenting on the Monarch Butterfly project. Lunch will be served. A special thank you to Bob Mullock, who coordinated a lunch from the local Chalfonte Hotel for us at only \$15 per person.

We are excited to see you there. Well, in closing, it has been a great year! Thank you to everyone who supported our programs. We are excited to hear your ideas for upcoming programs in the year ahead.

Shelley Cohen cohen2475@gmail.com



Membership Officer

I am pleased to announce that we currently have 117 members. During the past month, we welcomed several new members from both Atlantic and Cape May Counties, and many of our existing members have re-enrolled.

Please join me in welcoming Meryl Baer, Elaine Geller, Charmaine Piacentino, Elizabeth Price, Eileen Iaconangelo, Lisa Stein, Deb Rosman, and Emely Aiken. Your membership "makes our powerful voice even louder on critical issues affecting women and girls." Defending higher education, advocating for equity in education that emphasizes the removal of bias on gender, economics, race, and ethnicity, and recognizing the power of women in STEM initiatives are only a few of AAUW's efforts both nationally, state-wide, and locally.

I am proud to be a member of AAUW because I know that all sides of an issue will be presented, which equips me with the information I need to make an educated decision on the stance I wish to adopt. To our newest members, I hope that you will contact me or the other officers and interest group leaders, who are listed for you in our newsletter. Let us know how we can best assist you in actively participating in our organization and whether you have expertise in areas that you would share with us.

I look forward to another year working with the AAUW membership. Best wishes for a fun-filled summer.

Warmest regards,

Shelly Meyers SFMECLLC@gmail.com

Community Partnerships Officer

A huge thank you to everyone who donated period products for our Period Drive in support of the Community Food Bank of NJ! Thanks to your generosity, we collected 14 pounds of products, which were dropped off on April 12th.

We're also excited to share that our Clothing Drive has been completed! We (Jackie Shelley-Tasoff and I) are so grateful to all who took the time to donate. Arrangements are currently being finalized to deliver the collected items to the ACCC Campus Closet.

Looking ahead to next fall, we will be hosting a Diaper Drive, sponsoring the Community Food Bank of NJ. And, for the spring, we're exploring two exciting projects that have the potential to generate profits while supporting great causes: "Stuff the Truck" and a sneaker recycling program (Soles4Souls or Sneakers4Good).

Stay tuned!

Nicola Tasoff nicolatasoff@gmail.com

Scholarship Officer

Thanks to the generosity of our members at AAUW-Atlantic County, we were able to provide \$11,600 in scholarships to two deserving students this year.

At Stockton University, \$8,600 was awarded in memory of Carolyn Bassett to a senior majoring in Education (Language and Culture) with a minor in Jewish Studies and World Languages. A student at Atlantic Cape Community College will be awarded \$3,000 to a deserving nursing student.

Thank you for paying it forward to the next generation of students.

Lois Fried loissfried@gmail.com

STEM Officer

TECH TREK 2025 – July 20-26. During the month of March, Kathy Ghanavati, Gay Laubert, Shelly Meyers, and me (in teams of two) interviewed the seven students nominated for Tech Trek in Atlantic County. Many thanks to these volunteers for their time and dedication to the program! In response to outreach by the County Selection Committees throughout New Jersey, 58 girls were nominated this year, as opposed to about 35 each in 2023 and 2024. Currently, funding is available for 48 students, so ten of the candidates have been waitlisted, and two of those are from Atlantic County. As ever, fundraising continues.

Please consider volunteering for Tech Trek in whatever capacity you can. There are several opportunities for service. The volunteer form at the link below allows you to choose how, when and what times you are available to support camp activities:

<https://techtrek-nj.aauw.net/volunteer/>

Theresa Basquez Tbasquez_86@hotmail.com

Diversity Officer

Happy Mother's Day – Sunday, May 11, 2025! I'm taking my sister – a proud Mother of one son and grandmother to two granddaughters – to the Southern Charm Mother's Day Brunch at the Claridge Hotel in Atlantic City!!

In response to the current DEI debacle, it's a shame that a Teacher from Idaho was recently requested to take down a sign – **Everyone Is Welcome Here** – in her classroom that she had displayed for several years but she demonstrated bravery by refusing to do so! And on that note, we salute all Teachers on Tuesday, May 6, 2025 to celebrate Teacher Appreciation Day!!

Are you aware of Wear **Red** for National Day of Awareness for Missing & Murdered Indigenous Women. Girls and Two Spirit People on Monday, May 5, 2025? Whether you are or not, wear something **red** to reflect and express gratitude for our blessed lives...

DO NOT FORGET TO **VOTE** – Tuesday, June 10, 2025

I was elated and honored to have my photo taken with our esteemed AAUW Past President Arlene Groch at a recent campaign fundraiser!

Take the time in your busy schedules to attend the **Juneteenth** Celebration of Freedom hosted by Stockton University, CRDA and the African-American Heritage Museum of Southern New Jersey (AAHMSNJ) on Thursday, June 19, 2025 at the Noyes Arts Garage (2200 Fairmount Avenue, Atlantic City) from 12-4 pm! There will be Storytelling, Speakers, Video, Music, Art & Food – contact (609) 350-6662 for more information...

Respectfully,

Sharone Brown-Jackson brownjacksonse@aol.com

Fundraiser Officer

Many thanks to all of you who contributed to our fundraising projects last year. We were able to generously give money to support our scholarships and STEM programs.

The Boscov's Friends Helping Friends coupons will be available in early summer. I will e-mail all of you as soon as I receive them. You can contact me as to how many you'd like, send a check, and I will mail them to you. Many organizations participate so we want to start early. They are great little thank yous or gifts for family, friends, staff members, hairdressers and anyone else to whom you'd like to bring a smile.

We are working on plans to do a trivia fundraiser as well as our main Scholarship/STEM luncheon in November. Our committee is very small so we could use some more active members to help us in these important activities. Happy Spring!

Kathy Zeigenfus kzeigenfus@aol.com

Special Interest

Your Help is Needed

I belong to a county-wide " unofficial" volunteer group that is focusing on access for physically disabled folks. We would like to honor all post offices in Atlantic County which are handicapped accessible, at the Accessibility Forum [an open-to-the-public information program] which we will hold in June.

Would you be willing to check out your area post office and advise me? Remember, having a ramp is not enough. A person in a wheelchair needs to get through the door and if there are other doors inside, he/she needs to be able to get through those doors as well.

Please email me - jecaterson@verizon.net - if you can help. Thank you.

Lynn Caterson

Interest Groups

Short Films & Documentaries

Jeanmarie Mason Jeanmariemason54@gmail.com



This year has showcased a variety of documentaries and short films of various genres and topics. We watched films about food, school shootings, music, homelessness, animated shorts and education. Hopefully, the topics and discussions were of interest to those of you who attended. I am always open to your suggestions, and we welcome everyone to a fun "Chew and Chat" after each film.

We end the year with some award winning animated short films. I try to go to a theatre each year to watch the Oscan nominated films.

MAY is Animation Month:

Hair Love - <https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=833767997094550>

Spring- a surprise trailer

Angela's Christmas - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qKzDh5cy0y4>

JUNE features **The English Teacher**. "He lost his wife, finally made friends, and lost his friend too. His fear of losing someone is bigger than his anger."

Watch the trailer - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?app=desktop&v=fMpjENF1VDc&t=131s>

I hope to see you for the final months of the AAUW Documentary/Short Film Interest group. We will begin again on the first Monday of the month at the Linwood Library at 1:00 PM. We start in October since the first Monday in September is Labor Day. Enjoy your Summer.

Explorers Club

Kris Baker kristinabaker2014@gmail.com

Our interest group meets on the second Friday of each month, usually about 1PM.

In March we traveled to Newfield for an interesting presentation by the editor of American Vegan Magazine - Freya Dinshah. She explained how we can modify our diet to eat more healthy foods (not becoming a strict vegan but incorporating some of their food choices).

April brought us to Ocean City for a visit to a women's owned bakery shop - Barefoot Bakery. Jennifer talked about how she decided to begin her bakery and the challenges involved with running a business.

Date: May 16 Time: 1 PM

Location: Head of the River Church

Address: 600 New Jersey 49, Estell Manor (5 minute drive west on 49 from the intersection of 55 and 49 in Tuckahoe) Church is on the right surrounded by a cemetery

Program: Church was built in 1792 and added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1979

Cost: Free

Considerations: The church is not heated or air conditioned, so dress accordingly

After the tour, Lorraine and I plan to go for a walk (depending on the weather), all are welcome to join us

RSVP: to me if you plan to attend - respond "to all" if you need a ride or want to carpool with others

Save the Date:

Details will be sent out closer to the event

June 13 - will be given a docent tour of "The Longest Yarn"

There are 80 individual panels of knitted and crocheted works that honor the 80th anniversary of the Normandy Landing

July 11 - we will visit the owner of a microgreen farm and learn about the health benefits of microgreens and his nonuse of pesticides or fertilizers

August 8 and September 12 - to be announced

If you have a question or concern, I can also be reached at 609-602-4467.

Bon Appetit

Kris Baker kristinabaker2014@gmail.com

This interest group meets monthly on the 3rd Monday of each month from 1 PM to about 2:30 PM to explore cuisine and cooking techniques in our homes. Each meeting takes place at a different member's home where they or a guest presenter will prepare a dish for us to sample (this is not a lunch meal). The cost at the door is usually between \$5 and \$10. Participants are informed ahead in order for you to have cash on hand.

Save the Date:

May 19 - learn how to make blintzes

June 16 - learn to make a vegan dish

July 21 and August 18 - to be announced

September 22 - a french dish

If you would like to join our group and be included in updates, I can be reached by email or at 609-602-4467.

The Salon Discussion Group

Valerie Koob vkoob@aol.com

Greetings! The Salon group is currently on hiatus, as our members are participating in AAUW's Great Decisions program. Our hope is to resume meeting in June. We are looking for a new facilitator, as I will be stepping down, having served for three years in this role. Please email me if you are interested in learning more about this position.

As a reminder, the Salon meets monthly to discuss a timely issue or a philosophical question. There are no right or wrong answers, and we are not searching for a consensus. The discussion is the point!

If you want to join the Salon group, or just learn more about it, email me at VKoob@aol.com.

Book Club

Dot Allison will lead a discussion of **Invisible Man** (not The Invisible Man) by Ralph Ellison on Friday, June 6 at 10:30 at the Linwood Library. This is a powerful story of a young African American man making his way in The American South in the 1930's.

It is the first entry in our study of "banned books" that will continue through the summer.

We will meet next on Friday, July 18 to discuss **Are You There God? It's Me, Margaret** by Judy Blume and **James and the Giant Peach** by Roald Dahl. Both are children's books that have been banned for reasons we can discuss.

On Friday, July 25 we will to discuss **Uncle Tom's Cabin**, which is believed to be the first "banned book" in the U.S.

Both summer meetings are at my house. Send me an email if you are looking for more information.

MaryLou Breidenstinebreidensti@aol.com

For a More Just Society

Ann-Maria Guevara amguevara@comcast.net

For a More Equal Society, aka Equal Justice, continues to meet monthly via Zoom to discuss issues of social justice, both historical and contemporary. Recently we examined the history of the rape kit and the 1885 massacre of Chinese laborers in Wyoming. Our goal is to educate ourselves in order to be more informed, proactive citizens. We welcome new members. If you're interested in joining us, please email me.

International Studies

Lynne Walters rrwalters321@hotmail.com

We are currently working on the last couple of programs of the Foreign Policy Association's Great Decisions series for this year. We have discussed problems that are occurring throughout the world including in countries such as China and India, along with ongoing issues like Climate and the Future of NATO. Members of our group have done a wonderful job moderating discussions after we have read the chapter in the Great Decisions book and watched the Master Class film on the subject.

If you are interested in joining us next year for this series of eight group meetings, look for an announcement in January's newsletter. For information, please contact me via email.

Stockton Theater

Volunteers are needed as ushers for the Stockton Children's Theater. The summer programs are yet to be scheduled.

The responsibilities are simple, we work together to get the students seated and make sure the students enjoy the show.

After the show, we all go out to lunch and enjoy each others company. If you would like to volunteer this summer, please call or email Theresa at 609 9659521 or theresasartorio@comcast.net.

Theresa Sartorio theresasartorio@comcast.net

Spanish Group

Jeannette Flax jcflax@yahoo.com

This lively group continues to meet year-round in the Linwood Public Library's meeting room from 4:15 to 6:00 every Monday that the library is open. We know that taking off three months in the summer is NOT GOOD for our goal - to retain and improve our fluency. We welcome anyone who would like to participate in our very informal meetings. Best of all - there is no homework!