



## NEWSLETTER

### Season of Giving



For this is the “season of giving” as we have come to know it. This time of year is especially important to us as we continue to recover from the COVID-19 pandemic. Many of us may be having difficulties during this season. Let’s be mindful of those who have suffered and lost so much over the past 18 months. We have so much to be thankful for during this time. Let’s take this season to reflect on ourselves, our families and our communities. All of these people have been affected in some way during this pandemic. As we reflect, think about how you can give to yourself, your family and your community. There is much to be given to each.

Giving can be more than tangible things we do. There is nothing more rewarding than giving in the form of love and kindness. We are great at changing the lives of others and there is no better way than to show love and kindness during this season of giving.

AAUW is the perfect organization to give to during this season. Remember, we can’t do the work needed to support women and girls without your help. Giving to AAUW will help change the lives of women and girls, and giving before December 31st will have a double impact. This is because of a \$75,000 matching fund event the AAUW National Board is offering (see page 3) for details.

No matter how you define giving, it is important to know that there are other ways to bring happiness and joy to others. Whether it is through old-fashioned gift giving, or spreading love and kindness, any time of the year can be meaningful and a season of giving. It all starts with you. Happy Holidays to each of you.

Janice Brown, President

AAUW-NYS

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# AAUW-NYS Dues Reduction

## Barbara Van Itallie-Treasurer

### Dues Reduction for 2022-23

The AAUW-NYS Board of Directors is pleased to announce that the dues for 2022-23 will be reduced to \$7 per member, from the usual \$13.

As you know, the state dues for the current fiscal year, 2021-22 were waived, in order to help our branches during this difficult pandemic time, and to help offset the dues increases from National AAUW. This proved to be helpful to many branches in retaining members and attracting new ones. While we previously announced that dues would return to \$13 in 2022, the Board felt that with another National dues increase coming up, this dues reduction would continue to support our branch memberships.

The State continues to be in a good financial position to offer this dues reduction. A financial report will be presented at the annual meeting in June.

## Branch Archives

### Helen Engel- Historian

What your branch is doing and has done is important to you, your branch, and your community. Make sure your branch records and accomplishments are saved for the future. If your branch doesn't have a branch archives, start working on it. It helps to have more than one person involved.

If your branch already has archives, do you know where your records are stored? Maintaining these records is important, but just as important is having a satisfactory place to store them. This should not be in the basement, under the bed or in the closet of a current or former branch member. If the records are not available to your members, to say nothing about others who may in the future want to learn more about your branch, they are not of much use. If you need a place for your archives, check with facilities in your area. Most universities maintain archives and this is an excellent choice. If you do not have a university in your area, other possibilities include local museums, public libraries, and private special collections.

In deciding what to save for your branch archives, think of its historical significance. Use your best judgment about what should be kept. If you are unsure, ask other branch members what they think about a particular item. Certainly founding documents, your branch bylaws and all revisions, and all your minutes should be included. Past audits and budgets, publications, news clippings and press releases should be kept. Your old directories and membership list, correspondence, including emails of a significant nature and other branch memorabilia are all important. Photographs with names and dates, if this is possible, and audio visual recordings help to give a human aspect to your history when saved. Finally, scrapbooks should be included as they are a good primary visual source of your yearly activities.

It is important to keep your branch archives up to date. Remember, **history was once today.**

If you have questions, please contact me at [hengelosw@gmail.com](mailto:hengelosw@gmail.com) or 315-343-9678.

## **Diversity, Equity & Inclusion**

### **Suzanne Mercer-Young –Diversity Chair**

Happy Holidays to all my AAUW sisters and their families as we continue to advocate for Women and Girls during this season of peace and giving.

I have been fortunate to be participating with a multi-state group of like-minded advocates of DEI. It has been a very informative journey on how other members in other states are addressing the issues of DEI within their State and branches.

What I have learned is that it is very different from State to State and even Branch to Branch but many members are addressing DEI definitively in both small and large ways.

I recently sent out a missive asking AAUW members to consider participating on a DEI committee at the state level. There is so much to do to ensure that AAUW-NYS lives up to its statement of inclusivity to all. So please consider reaching out to me if you are interested.

I want to encourage you to visit the AAUW National Website and visit the DEI Toolkit that is under continuous development with input from members of the multi-state group I mentioned above. There you will find a wide array of tools and ideas to update or start your own DEI group in your branches. I will also encourage you to view the webinars on DEI topics that National has been disseminating every other month on different DEI topics. The next webinar is scheduled for January 27, 2021 @ 4pm.

Finally, I am available to work with any branch on its DEI efforts big or small. I thank you for all you do in making AAUW the leader in advocacy for women and girls in the U.S. and around the world.

## **\$140 for 140th Anniversary Challenge**

### **Carol Griffith-President Elect**

On November 17, 2021, AAUW marked its 140th anniversary with a special award ceremony. for Dr. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, Director-General of the World Trade Organization was the recipient of the AAUW Alumnae Recognition Award for 2021. She was a past recipient of an AAUW Fellowship or grant who has attained outstanding success and distinction in her chosen profession. This recognition ceremony demonstrated to all girls and women that the AAUW mission is very successful in making a difference in the lives. In honor of the AAUW 140th year anniversary our AAUW- NYS President, Janice Brown, along with the Board of Directors, is requesting that all AAUW-NYS members consider donating to the Greatest Need Fund a donation of one hundred forty dollars. The AAUW National Board is offering to match our donations up to \$75,000. All donations must be received by December 31, 2021 to be eligible. [DONATE HERE](#) Please consider making a donation in honor of AAUW's 140 years of striding toward equity. The third quarter donations have been reported from AAUW National as \$21,031.69, for AAUW-NYS.

# Around the State: Featuring Kingston AAUW

## Are Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Still Relevant?

The American Association of University Women Says “Yes!” Equity means everyone gets the same access to, or amount of something. Inclusion is accommodating people who have historically been excluded. Diversity is being asked to the party. Inclusion is being asked to dance. If you don’t have both, neither works. That’s how Suzanne Young-Mercer explained these issues to AAUW Kingston Branch members at their Fall Fundraiser Luncheon held on Saturday, November 6, 2021. “Many people experience multiple forms of discrimination such as racism, sexism and classism. That doesn’t mean their oppression is greater. It’s simply a way of recognizing that our experiences may not be the same. Inequality is a complex phenomenon.”

Who is Suzanne Young-Mercer? Introduced by Branch President, Lynn Gore, Young-Mercer described herself as a former marathon runner and a retired Director of Administrative Services at Mount Sinai Hospital. She is now working to become a Yoga instructor. As AAUW-NYS Diversity/Cultural Director, she collaborates with members from other states to create a National Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Toolkit.

Engaging Her Audience “Let’s play a game,” Young-Mercer announced. “The Diversity Ball” throws out questions to audience members. Doris Goldberg read the first question. Where do you see prejudice? She replied quickly, “Among people who have power.” How important is diversity to you? SUNY Ulster student, Samantha Wolven, was asked. “My life is more interesting, more thoughtful, educational, and joyful because of my diverse population of friends.”

Controversy at the National Level Young-Mercer continued to push the audience to think and to feel. “The AAUW is a premier women’s group but we discriminate against women without college educations. 38.3% of women in the U.S are college educated. That means we are leaving 62.7% of like-minded women out of helping us achieve equity for all.” Most in the room agreed. Another SUNY Ulster student and a participant in the “New Start for Women” program shared her story. Gigi Smith told us that she didn’t start college until she was 44 years old. School was hard for her and she dropped out of high school. “I always felt dumb and didn’t realize I had undiagnosed learning disabilities. It is hard to get tested as an adult because it is expensive and most insurances don’t pay for it. I persevered, got tested and I now get learning support at SUNY Ulster. I always did well at the jobs I had. I work hard. And now I know I’m not dumb. I resent people who assume a college degree means you’re smart.”

Branch Treasurer, Marjorie Bot, felt differently. “I voted for dropping the educational requirement yet I fully understand the members who want it to stay. The organization was formed by college educated white women to encourage women to get an education. AAUW has evolved, changing with the times. It includes women of all races and men.”

The Take-Away is that we live in an ever-changing world. Young people today understand sexual diversity, institutional racism, and ageism. They are fluent in their use of a new term, Cisgender, which describes a person whose gender identity is the same as their sex assigned at birth. “I am Cisgender,” declared Young-Mercer. The upcoming generation sees the benefits we’ll gain when we achieve equity and inclusion for all. The world

will be a better place if we work toward that goal. But don’t wait for it to happen. As Shirley Chisholm said, “If they don’t give you a seat at the table, bring a folding chair.”



Pictured in photo from left to right are : Geraldine Popko, Lynn Gore, Suzanne Young-Mercer, Dorothy Draper-Silberg, Maryanne Kalin-Miller, and Marjorie Bot

# Special Bylaws Meeting

## Carol Griffith, President-Elect (Bylaws Chair)

A special meeting will be held on January 22, 2022 at 1pm to vote on the following bylaws amendments to the AAUW-NYS bylaws. This will be a virtual meeting and a delegate vote will be held at that time. Each branch must have delegates present to vote on the bylaws changes.

The Bylaws and Governance Committee thanks the group of concerned members for their thoughtful presentation at the AAUW-NYS November board meeting and helpful suggestions. The board also thanks our Parliamentarian, Beth Haynes, for her review and comments.

A special meeting of the board will need to be called so that the below revised recommendations can be voted on, and then the membership can be notified for a special bylaws vote:

### **Article XII. Officers**

Section 1(a).

#### **Existing Language:**

The officers for AAUW-NYS shall be president, president-elect, public policy vice president, treasurer, and secretary. The president-elect is elected in odd-numbered years, and the treasurer, public policy vice president, and secretary are elected in even-numbered years. The president-elect succeeds to the office of president.

#### **Proposed Bylaws Revision:**

The officers for AAUW-NYS shall be president, president-elect, public policy vice president, treasurer, and secretary. The president-elect and public policy vice president are elected in even-numbered years, and the treasurer and secretary are elected in odd-numbered years. The president-elect succeeds to the office of president.”

**Proviso:** To assure compliance with the bylaws during this transition to the new election/officer structure, the current president-elect will become president when the current presidential term ends in June 2022. At that time, a new president-elect will also be elected to fill the vacancy. All other elected officers will continue their terms. In 2023, the public policy vice president would be elected to serve a one-year term, ending in 2024. Thereafter, the public policy vice president would be elected in even-numbered years to serve two-year terms.

#### **Rationale:**

This would more evenly distribute the election cycles for AAUW-NYS and clarify any needed extensions or shortening of current officers’ terms until the completion of the transition, as well as to be in compliance with the bylaws.

The current president-elect was elected in 2021, but the current presidential term ends in 2022, so the president-elect would become president in 2022 with 11 months in the office and with no president-elect in the position. These revisions will avoid this gap.

These recommendations will provide for an easier and smoother transition than the proposal put forth to the board by the Bylaws and Governance Committee voted on at the November 13, 2021 board meeting, and would supersede that vote.

### **Article XII: Section 1(f)**

#### **Existing Language:**

No member shall hold the same office for more than two consecutive terms unless a qualified candidate cannot be secured by February 1st of the election year, pending approval of the executive committee.

#### **Proposed Bylaws Revision:**

No officer shall hold the same office for more than two consecutive two-year terms or until the successor is elected, except as otherwise stated in these bylaws.

#### **Rationale:**

This will bring this section into compliance with the bylaws, as the president is limited to one two-year term. RONR 12th Edition also recommends using language such as “or until the successor is elected,” which ensures that the board can continue to function when an election is not complete.

### **Article XIII. Duties of Officers**

#### **Article XIII, Section 2(b)**

#### **Existing Language:**

**Section 2.** President-Elect.

The president-elect shall be directed by the president.

#### **Proposed Bylaws Revision:**

The president-elect shall perform all duties of the office, support the president, as delegated by the president and/or the board of directors.

**Rationale:** To further define the role of the president-elect.

[www.aauw-nys.org](http://www.aauw-nys.org)

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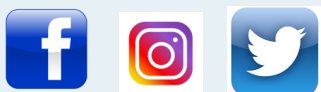
Questions and articles should be delivered to the State President,

Janice Brown, 27708 Rogers Rd, Evans Mills, NY 13637

Email: [president@aauw-nys.org](mailto:president@aauw-nys.org)

Submissions are accepted at the discretion of the editor

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## Special Bylaws Meeting –Delegates Needed

There will be a special bylaws amendment meeting held on January 22, 2022 at 1pm via zoom. Your branch must be represented by a delegate. Have your branch delegates register for the special meeting by emailing [AAUW.nysspecialelection@gmail.com](mailto:AAUW.nysspecialelection@gmail.com) no later than January 15th. The meeting will be open to all members. A zoom meeting link will be sent to all members.



# MEETING NOTICE!

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2020-2021

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## AAUW-NYS 5 Star Recognition Program Janice Brown– State President

AAUW-NYS goal is to become a 5-Star state by June 2022. We can all do this as branches too. Our work to achieve gender equity is more important than ever. We are doing the work and can be recognized as a 5 Star State. Some, if not nearly all the work across the state, will qualify. If we are aligning our work with the AAUW strategic plan and other initiatives that foster the organization’s mission of advancing gender equity for women and girls, we ALL qualify. The areas covered are Advancement, Public Policy & Research, Governance & Sustainability, Programs and Communications & External Relations. We need all branches to sign up to become a Star recognized branch. More information can be found [HERE](#) on how to sign your branch up and the criteria to receive a star.



### AAUW-NYS COMMUNICATIONS DR CHERYL MCKIEVER

Calling all branches of AAUW-NYS. The pandemic has given us the opportunity to share our programs with members around the state. If you have a program that you would like shared on the AAUW-NYS website, send program information to include any flyer to Betty Preble.



# AAUW-NATIONAL

## Taking Action: Activist Toolkit

**Mission**  
To advance gender equity  
for women and girls  
through research, educa-  
tion, and advocacy.

**Vision**  
Equity for All

**Values**  
Nonpartisan. Fact-based.  
Integrity. Inclusion and  
Intersectionality.

Women continue to bear a disproportionate burden of the ongoing health and economic crises. We need bold measures to ensure that both their short- and long-term needs are met. Let's make sure our elected officials hear us loud and clear: **Women and families must be at the center of a strong economic recovery.**



Contact your Member of Congress  
Write a Letter to the Editor  
Join the conversation on social media

Visit the AAUW website to get more information on taking action on issues that affect women and girls. [CLICK HERE](#) for more information.

American Association of University Women-New York State

In principle and in practice, AAUW values and seeks an inclusive membership, workforce, leadership team and board of directors. There shall be no barriers to full participation in this organization on the basis of age, disability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, geographical location, national origin, race, religious beliefs, sexual orientation or socioeconomic status.

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