



Fort Atkinson Wisconsin Branch of AAUW

Special Events Committee Update

Due to continued COVID restrictions, and increased cases locally, the Holiday Event Committee has decided to cancel the in-person holiday auction this year. This decision was not made lightly, but the continued safety of our members was at the heart of our thinking.

Since the auction at the December meeting traditionally generates a large portion of our annual operating funds we are suggesting that this season members take the money they would normally spend or donate at the auction and make a donation to AAUW Fort Atkinson Branch to help with general expenses.

Here are some suggested donations:

- Instead of making delicious Fudge and Cookies or Pie- Donate \$10
- Instead of knitting warm and fuzzy mittens or a beautiful scarf- Donate \$50
- Instead of bringing White Elephant gifts - Donate \$10
- Instead of making soup to go - Donate \$15
- Instead of making a beautiful quilt - Donate \$40
- Instead of donating a \$50 gift card - Donate \$50
- Instead of donating a \$100 gift certificate for entertainment - Donate \$100
- Instead of bidding on any of these wonderful items - Donate what you spent last year.

You can go one step further and spend the two hours you would have spent gathered with your AAUW sisters and do something for others...visit the homebound, volunteer a couple hours of your time, send holiday cards to military personnel serving overseas, shop for coats for families in need, check in on your neighbors...you get the idea.

We look forward to gathering in person again and sharing laughs, delicious food and fellowship in the coming years. Please consider sending a holiday card to an AAUW member you miss seeing and let them know that despite not being together you are thinking of them! Better days are ahead.

If you would like to donate to this year's holiday un-auction, make checks payable to AAUW Fort Atkinson Branch and mail to Beverly Dahl, care of the address listed in the annual directory.

Happy Holidays!

Special Events Committee: Donna Lehman, Leslie LaMuro, Renee Barr, Bonnie Babcock, Pam Bakkeen, Brittany Noe, Carolyn Nord, Margaret Bare

The President's Corner

By Kathy M

Happy Holidays! For many of us this is not only our favorite time of the year it is our busiest time of the year. We have gifts to buy and wrap, cookies to bake, cards to write, parties to attend and family to visit...goodness, I just got exhausted writing that list!

As you have already heard, we have one less event to attend this year. The Special Events Committee has made the decision to cancel our annual Holiday Supper and Auction due to Covid and the impact it is still having on our community. The committee has asked members to donate the money they would have normally spent at the event to our Chapter to go towards our operating expenses. But what I would like to emphasize here is their suggestion that we take the **TIME** we would have spent at the event and give back to the community in some way. I love this idea! Two to three hours of our time could really go a long way to making the holidays much happier for others in Fort Atkinson. I personally encourage you to take up this

challenge and run with it. I know what I'm going to do with my extra time. What will you do?

Our speaker last month, Leslie Brunsell from the Janesville AAUW Branch did an excellent job in outlining the basics of AAUW's resources for DEI - Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. DEI is a major focus for AAUW at the national level and now at the state level. I plan to devote time and energy -- and space in our Branch Beat -- to making it a focus at the Fort Atkinson level. Fort Atkinson has become a much more diverse community than it was even twenty years ago and I think it's time we shine a little light on it within our branch. To that end, follow the Branch Beat for information and resources on DEI.

To all of you I wish a blessed and joyous holiday season!

Kathy M



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Special Events Committee.....	1
President' Corner.....	2
November Meeting Minutes.....	3
Treasurer's Report.....	4
Membership Spotlight.....	5,6
News You Can Use.....	7
D, E, and I Report.....	8
Membership Committee Report.....	9
Washington Scene.....	10,11
Upcoming Events.....	12
Marketing Committee.....	13

AAUW Fort Atkinson Branch – General Meeting Minutes

Monday, November 1, 2021 – 7p Library

Kathy M called the meeting to order.

5-Star Program: Kathy M is looking for volunteers to join a committee to develop a strategic plan as part of the 5-star program. The plan is due in June. Please contact Kathy M to join!

Membership: Christine Y presented new AAUW advertising cards. One side has information on AAUW and the other has information on how to join. Members were encouraged to take a few cards and pass along to potential new members.

Booksale: The Booksale committee is looking to recruit a new Co-Chair. Anyone interested in a leadership role or who has ideas for the Booksale, please reach out to Kathy C.

AAUW Holiday Auction: The Holiday Auction Committee has decided to postpone the event this year. There will not be a December meeting. Instead, they request that members spread holiday cheer by sending cards to current members, previous members, and other members of the community. In lieu of the auction, members can make a donation to the general fund (if they wish). Details will be provided.

The WI Nicaragua Group is taking a sabbatical. If anyone is interesting in working on that project, please contact Kathy C.

This Month's Speaker, provided by the Diversity Committee, was Leslie M who spoke about DE&I – Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion. Leslie M discussed some of the resources AAUW has available including the DE&I Toolkit which is a great resource to access and brainstorm ways to better incorporate DE&I into our branch in the future.

Motion to adjourn by Renee B, second by Pat H.

Submitted by Brittany N, Secretary



Factoid: There are more than 1,000 AAUW branches across the United States!

Treasurer's Report

By Bev D.

November 1, 2021 meeting

Last On-line Bank View: October 31, 2021

Checking Account \$6404.84.61 (\$1500 allocated to G2)

Saving Account \$2,020.17

Expenses since October 4 meeting

10/13	Disbursement to Fort Community Foundation to supplement 2022 scholarships	\$2000.00
10/14	Payment to Jaeckel Bros. Inc. for Booksale dumpster	\$499.77 *
10/31	Payment to AHT Insurance for 2022	\$200.00 *

Deposits since October 4:

10/5	Deposit of Happy Cash contributions from October meeting	\$66.00
10/15	Deposit from National AAUW for dues paid online	\$39.00

** not reflected in above account balances*

Planned Philanthropic Disbursements (previous fiscal year):

FA AAUW Grants for Gals Fund	\$1500
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Membership Spotlight

By Vicki W.

Christine Yeager

Christine Yeager joined the Fort Atkinson Chapter of AAUW in 2016 after moving back to Wisconsin from the Chicago area. At her first meeting she was thrilled to see her elementary school brownie leader J Jones, HS buddies Pam O, Lisa T and Leslie L to name a few. She has made many more friends since joining.

Ms. Yeager has a diverse education and career. She obtained a BA in Communication Theory from Winona State and a MBA from The Keller School of Management. Chris has worked as a Business Analyst for most of her career with sidetracks of business ownership and management. Best kept career secrets are that she wrote and sold her own agency management and finance software and owned and managed an award winning photography studio. Currently she is a Business Analyst for Cerner, the provider of technical solutions for Fort Healthcare.

A third generation "Fort Atkinsonite", you may know her family, the Heussners. Chris' daughter, Jessica, is a rep for a Chicago medical supply company. Her daughter, Ruby "Guin" is a senior at Whitewater High School and is very happy to report she will be in the top 20 of her class. Christine is currently obsessed with bringing back to life her home - a neglected 1940 cottage in Janesville. Other times she enjoys community events, art appreciation, ethnic dining, dinner parties and estate sales.

Christine loves being a member of the Fort Atkinson chapter because of the warm atmosphere, great snacks, amazing speakers, and the excellent, respectful questions her fellow members ask. Oh yeah, helping other women is cool too!

Thea Reeves

Thea Reeves has worked in the publishing industry for the past 10 years. She is employed with a company called Leverage Lab, and is responsible for executing, organizing, and optimizing integrated advertising campaigns and paid media strategies. Outside of work, she can often be found at AnyTime Fitness in Fort Atkinson or driving her 15-year-old son to school, activities or various friends' houses!

Marianne Bardenwerper invited Thea to join AAUW at the 2016 Holiday Auction. However, her introduction to AAUW in Fort Atkinson was in the late 1970's when she watched her mom get dressed up for the monthly meetings and events. She states, "Knowing my mom's history and participation in this organization made it an easy decision for me to join." Since joining, Thea has served as our branch President, been a member of the Scholarship and Funds Committees, assisted with the 60th Anniversary Celebration, and helped with the development of the Grants for Gals Scholarship.

Kathy Cheek

Kathy Cheek has been a member of Fort Atkinson AAUW since the early 1990's (or back in the 1900's as her grandson would say). With an invitation from Patty Row, Kathy joined this great organization for the work it does for women and girls, for its encouragement and support of education in all forms. She had recently moved from Appleton and began a nursing career in public health, plus wanted to be involved in community, and meet new and old friends.

Kathy had graduated from a wonderful 3-year diploma nursing school, St Mary's, in Madison 20 years before and had recently earned her BSN from Marian College. Her incentive for returning to school was not being hired for a position only because she did not have a degree. This was the motivation for her to complete her BSN.

Married for over 50 years to Bob, they have two daughters living in the area, one in Watertown and one in Madison. Each family has a daughter and son. Both granddaughters attend college in Wisconsin. Returning to Fort Atkinson over 30 years ago has brought many positive experiences with family and community for Kathy.


Kathy has served as the branch president, chair of the book sale committee, and as a member of the scholarship committee .



Time Capsule

Did you know?

When Marie Curie was conducting her break-through research on radioactivity back in 1920, AAUW (or the Association of Collegiate Alumnae, as it was known back then) members raised \$100,000 for a grant which allowed research, a price out woman to win the and only woman to AAUW had something in...including



Madam Curie to purchase 1 gram of radium for her of reach to her at the time. Curie went on to be the first Nobel Prize for her work. She also became the first person win the Nobel Prize twice! It's pretty amazing to think that to do with the great work that Madam Curie was involved championing the development of the X-Ray! The importance of the sciences was already recognized by AAUW back in the early days of the twentieth century! (Info found on AAUW.org)

News You Can Use

Social Media Scraping – Reprinted in part from the State AAUW Newsletter

Social media scraping. How many times have you seen a quiz on Facebook that asks you some seemingly fun question like “What was your high school prom song?” or “Name the first street you lived on,” or worse, “What was your phone number when you were a child?”

It drives me crazy when I see intelligent friends answering these questions! Questions like these are put on social media sites by hackers so they can do something called “data scraping.”

When you put information about yourself online, hackers scrape the data from your answer and compile it into a profile about you. Eventually they will be able to use your scraped profile to make guesses about your usernames and passwords. How do they do that?

By giving a hacker your high school prom song, he can figure out your graduation date and hence a good idea of your birth year. How about your childhood phone number or street? That gives him data about your family of origin.

All these clues help hackers derive passwords. So DON'T answer these quizzes! And please, don't share your vaccination card online either!

Here are two articles in case you'd like to read more about these scams. <https://blog.avast.com/how-social-media-scraping-happens-avast> <https://www.cnn.com/2021/03/18/tech/vaccine-cards-sharing-online/in>

Ann Brice, State AAUW IT Coordinator



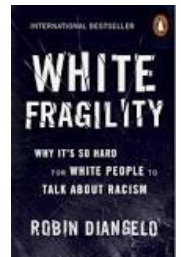
DE & I – Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

By Kathy M.

Last month we were fortunate enough to have Leslie Brunsell, of the Janesville Branch and our State DE&I Chair, speak to our Branch about the initiative and available DE&I resources on the AAUW national website. At that meeting I promised that I would continue to bring more information regarding this important topic to the membership via the Branch Beat on a regular basis. This will be a regular column going forth and I hope that you will bring to me ideas and ways that we can link our AAUW knowledge and tools directly to improve our chapter and community.

As a refresher, there is an excellent toolkit available to you on the AAUW website. All members have access to that tool kit via this link: <https://www.aauw.org/resources/member/governance-tools/dei-toolkit/>. This toolkit contains an abundance of information that can help in educating each of us. I personally recommend spending some time going through it. I will be doing my best to become proficient in the subject and if others would like to join me in discussing the topic or forming a working committee, I think that would be fantastic.

A great place to start on your journey to better understanding DE&I would be reading the book White Fragility: Why It's So Hard for White People to Talk About Racism by Robin D'Angelo, recommended by Leslie. I have read this book and can personally recommend it as a great read and great starting point. If anyone would like to borrow my copy please feel free to ask me, or it is available at the Dwight Foster Public Library.



One thing Leslie recommends is that we not get overwhelmed by the amount of information available of the subject of diversity and equity, there is a ton of it, but to just start by taking one thing at a time. Jump in and start learning and see where you go. The fact of the matter is that even our little corner of the world is beautifully colored in many shades and rich in many languages and cultures and we all need to know how to help everyone thrive in our shared world.

ME & MY M&Ms

--Dr. Marilyn Kerns-Foxworth

I have always liked M&Ms. The most diverse multicultural integrated candy in the world.

You have your **red ones**, your **yellow ones**, your **orange ones**, Your **brown ones** and your **green ones** (and the newest **blue ones**.) All in the same package and all co-existing together.

One color doesn't think it is superior to the other. One color doesn't discriminate against the other. All the colors are the same size, shape and weight. All colors look different on the outside, But have the same ingredients on the inside. M&Ms all have the same flavor.

And they all taste G-O-O-D!

Not all M&Ms are perfect thought, some have nuts!! In the real world we call them racists and bigots. Wouldn't it be nice if, like M&Ms, our prejudices Melted into the abyss like chocolate melts in your mouth, And all people were judged by what is inside, Rather than the color you are on the outside??? **If candy can be prejudice-free, WHY CAN'T WE???**

Scholarship Committee Update

By Vicki W.

AAUW Jane Shaw Scholarships

The Jane Shaw Knox AAUW Graduate Scholarship is offered to women who are pursuing a graduate degree at an accredited college. Applicants must be either graduates of Fort Atkinson High School, residents of Fort Atkinson, or be employed in Fort Atkinson.

Fort graduate, Michele Colman, who is pursuing a doctorate in Public Health at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine was awarded \$2,000. Kory Scherer, a 2016 Fort graduate pursuing a master's degree in Clinical Mental Health Counseling at Mount Mary University will also receive \$2,000. Ashley Wiesmann, a 2015 Fort graduate is pursuing a master's degree in Physician Assistant Studies at Marquette University will receive \$1,250. Amy Lothary, a Fort Atkinson resident will also receive \$1,250 to Viterbo University completing her credits for a teaching licensure program.

AAUW promotes equity for all women and girls, lifelong education, and positive societal change. Local women returning to college to complete a degree are encouraged to review the AAUW scholarship eligibility requirements at either the Fort Atkinson Community Foundation at www.fortfoundation.org or the Jefferson Community Foundation at www.jeffersoncommunityfoundation.org. The application process for the 2022 scholarship opens on December 1. Encourage women you know to apply!



Coleman



Schere



Wiesman



Lothary

Washington Scene

By Kathy M.

Most of us are well aware of the disparity between men's and women's wages for similar jobs...we've all seen the "woman makes \$.79 for each dollar a man earns" poster. But have you given much thought to what that disparity would look like when accumulated over the life of your career? It isn't a pretty picture.

When that pay gap stays with us throughout our career it really shows its ugly face at retirement because it has an impact on all the main instruments of traditional retirement security – Social Security, pensions, and personal savings. As a result of this shortfall, women, on average, have only 70% on the retirement income that men do.

DID YOU KNOW? Women are more likely than men to be poor in their later years: In 2018, 62% of Americans over age 65 living below the poverty line were

A study from 2018 showed that 11% of women over 65 lived in poverty compared to men, and even many of those who weren't technically below the poverty line were still struggling to scrape by day to day. Black and Latina women often struggle even more, with incomes less than half what an average white male (\$44,200) has available in retirement.

The gender pay gap that generally starts with our first job causes women to miss out on literally hundreds of thousands of dollars in earnings throughout their working lifetime and this makes it almost impossible to accumulate enough savings. Also, many of these women are forced to work part-time and move in and out of the workforce as they find themselves tending to families and other responsibilities, which in turn means they are unable to take advantage of pensions and employee savings plans or save for retirement. And just to make things worse, less income means less Social Security savings.

5 Reasons Older Women Face a Pay Gap

1. Gender pay gap results in wealth gap
2. Women less likely to work in jobs with retirement opportunities
3. Caregiving effects women's work patterns
4. This impacts Social Security payments – smaller checks
5. Women have longer life expectancy

That's because, over the course of a lifetime, the gender pay gap causes women to lose out on thousands and thousands of dollars in earnings, making it difficult for them to accumulate savings. What's more, because women are more likely to work part-time, or to move in and out of the workforce as they juggle caregiving

responsibilities, they are less able to save for retirement and less likely to have access to an employer-sponsored retirement plan. Lower wages — coupled with time away from work — results in lower Social Security benefits. On top of all of this, women will generally live longer than the average man, meaning they will face higher living expenses for a longer time.

Women deserve to be able to retire in relative comfort and security despite career choices they may have made. AAUW recognizes that laws and policies are needed to strengthen retirement programs, Social Security needs to be protected, and women need to be earning a fair and equitable wage.

Gender equity and pay equity are high on the national organization's radar and something they spend time and resources on. It is something our National dues go to support. We need to continue doing what we can locally to support efforts to reduce

the pay gap and to support National in their legislative and lobbying efforts for the same.



Many of us in the Fort Atkinson Branch of AAUW are probably in a better position than the “average” female in this country. We are all bright and educated and made some reasonably good choices along the way. One of them was joining AAUW. We need to share our abilities, good fortune, and connections to help other women whether just joining the workforce or somewhere along their career path.

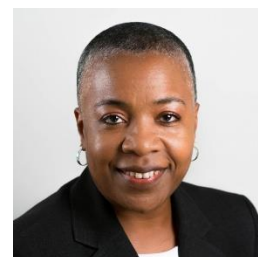
Note: Content for this article found on AAUW.com

AAUW National Update

AAUW Has a New CEO

AAUW's long-time manager of AAUW's fellowships and grants, Gloria L. Blackwell, has stepped up to become its new CEO. Under her leadership as Executive Vice President and Chief Program Officer, the fellowships and grants program has awarded more than \$70 million to women scholars and programs in the U.S. and overseas.

Blackwell has also been the driving force behind AAUW's signature including its salary negotiation trainings, which have reached nearly nationwide. She has initiated and built partnerships with major AAUW, Blackwell also established the Alumnae Recognition Award to outstanding Alumnae. Blackwell has been recognized for significantly AAUW's outreach to girls and women of color.



programs, 190,000 funders. While at honor expanding the

(Information found on AAUW.com)

Upcoming Meetings and Events

January Fireside Chat

The next Meeting of the Fort Atkinson Branch of AAUW will be **January 8th** at the Fort Atkinson Club where State Representative Don Vruwink, of the 43rd Assembly District, will be giving us a legislative update. The Janesville Branch has been invited to join us for snacks and the meeting. With changes to the legislative maps due in the Spring it will be very interesting to hear Don's thoughts on where the maps are heading. So have your questions ready!



Prior to being elected to the State Assembly in 2016, Representative Vruwink (D) taught History at Milton High School and coached basketball, football, and softball. He has also served on the Milton City Council and Milton School Board.

January !Adelante Book Group

The Book Group will meet at the Dwight Foster Public Library on **January 18th**. At 6:00. We will be discussing On Juneteenth by Annette Gordon-Reed.

Branch Board Meeting

The next Board Meeting will be Saturday, **February 5,** 2022, at 9:00 at the Fort Atkinson Club, just prior to our February Fireside Chat meeting.

Sunshine Chair

If you know of a member in need of a little sunshine in their life, please let our Sunshine Chair, Carla C. know! She will send get well, congratulations, or sympathy cards on behalf of the Fort AAUW members.



Marketing/Outreach Committee Report

By Marianne Bardenwerper

The Fort Atkinson Branch of AAUW will be represented at the Fort Atkinson Holiday Market on Saturday, December 4th. Members of the Membership/Outreach Committee and Grants for Gals will be located on the third floor of the Fort Atkinson Club. We will have chairs, displays, our new rack cards, our posters and our Grants for Gals promotional materials. In addition, our 68 new purses are quite spectacular.

This will be a great opportunity for the branch to be out and about in the community to meet and greet, raise awareness of our different programs and to recruit new members.

The cancellation of our Holiday event eliminated one of our best annual recruiting events, but by taking our message to the Holiday Market, we are hopeful that we can use this new venue and event to offset the lost opportunity to bring in new members.

We would like to invite any of you interested to please consider helping us during the six hours of the event from 9-3:00PM. Stop by for 20 minutes or spend the day. The more the merrier! Let us show the variety of members we have and the variety of endeavors we undertake within our Branch.



<https://fortchamber.com/holiday-open-house-market>