

## PENN STATE HUMPHREY FELLOWS EVENT SCHEDULED

Mark your calendar for **Thursday, February 25, 6:00 – 7:30 pm**, for *International Perspectives on Women in Society*, a virtual program with the Penn State Humphrey Fellows.

The program is hosted by AAUW State College and co-sponsored with the Penn State Humphrey Fellows, Altrusa International Centre County, the Community Diversity Group, and Soroptimist International of Centre County.



Ms. Mekdes Abera



Dr. May Zin Oo



Dr. Maria Rendon

The program is a panel discussion, moderated by AAUW State College member **Dr. Charlene Harrison**. The panelists will share their perspectives on women in their own country. **Mekdes Abera** is the dean of students at St. Mary's University, Ethiopia. She is interested in international and comparative education, early childhood education, education policy, higher education administration and multiculturalism. **Maria Luisa Rendon** is an administrator at National University of Honduras. Her interests include best practices and models of online management of higher education. **May Zon Oo** is a professor at Mandalay Technological University, Myanmar. She wants to learn more about U.S. higher education administration, university autonomy governance systems and improve her communication skills.

**Register to attend today:** <https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZlIduirpz0iHNDLi-5voA2cWAVTajSiT0s> After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting. **Share an event flyer:** [February 25 Humphrey Fellows Panel Discussion Event Flyer](#)  
 --Naana Nti and Nina Cowart, Program Co-Vice Presidents



## JUDICIAL GERRYMANDERING AMENDMENT UPDATE

Republican leadership in the Pennsylvania legislature has proposed a constitutional amendment that would create districts for Pennsylvania Supreme Court and intermediate appeals court justices to run in. A great many practical problems exist with regard to how this Amendment would be applied, and no evidence suggests it is necessary.

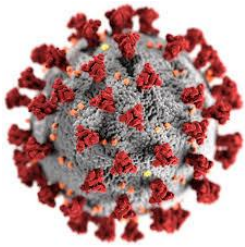
The latest update is that this bill will not come up for a vote in time to go on your ballot for the spring primary. The reason is lack of Republican votes in the State House. In addition to opposition from organizations like the League of Women Voters, we understand that the Republican business community has weighed in against this bill.

We consider this a temporary victory. The bill is poised to run at any time when public opinion shifts. Having passed in the prior legislative session, this bill is live until the end of 2022.

How do we prevent that? Please note that Letters to the Editor have proven remarkably effective lately in keeping on the pressure for justice and reform. We encourage you to add your voice.

--Dianne Gregg and Mary Dupuis, Public Policy Co-Chairs

## BILLS ADDRESS LEARNING GAPS AND AN INCREASE IN TRANSPARENCY IN EDUCATION



The pandemic didn't create fiscal problems in education, but it further strained district budgets. The Pennsylvania Association of School Business Officials *2021 School District Budget Report: "The COVID Impact"* looks at state trends in school revenue and instructional aspects of the pandemic. Of the responding districts, 75% reported higher instructional costs, 73% saw higher special education costs, and they still had to make payments to charter schools. Concurrently, cyber school enrollments increased by 20,000 students, translating into a statewide increase of about \$350 million. HB 197 was just introduced to make cyber charter management companies subject to audit by the Auditor General.

The pandemic also gave new meaning to the digital divide. Some school districts reopened online within two weeks, while others needed months to develop virtual education programs. Due to these delays and problems with technology, many students received far less education than others. The state's constitution requires the state to provide "maintenance and support of a thorough and efficient system of public education". In response, state representative Dan Miller (Allegheny Co.) introduced House Bill 86 to create a grant program to ensure that our low-income students have both computer and internet access, and to ensure that the schools are better prepared for future emergencies. Let's hope that HB 86 and 197 are successful.

--Carol Hodes, Ph.D., Education Sub-committee Chair



## APPLICANTS SOUGHT FOR AAUW STATE COLLEGE BRANCH SCHOLARSHIPS

AAUW State College seeks applicants for four undergraduate scholarships to be awarded for the academic year 2021–2022 (Fall 2021 until Summer 2022). An applicant must be a woman who:

- is a Centre County resident, with intent to maintain such residency for the duration of the grant, although she may attend a college or university located outside the county;
- is seeking her first associate or baccalaureate degree on a part- or full-time basis;
- has interrupted her studies for at least two years or delayed higher education for at least two years after graduating from high school, having enrolled in a post-secondary institution;
- has completed at least one quarter of the course work required for the degree (15 credits for an associate degree or 30 credits for a baccalaureate degree);
- demonstrates financial need, academic promise, clarity of educational goals, and community service

References and financial information are required. The awards range from \$3,000 to \$7,000, depending on financial need and the recipient's circumstances. The **Application Deadline is March 1, 2021**. For details, visit [https://aauwstatecollege.org/scholarships\\_undergraduate\\_centre\\_county/](https://aauwstatecollege.org/scholarships_undergraduate_centre_county/). For additional information, contact Falene Hamilton: [hfalene@gmail.com](mailto:hfalene@gmail.com) or Suzanne Kerlin: [suziekerlin@gmail.com](mailto:suziekerlin@gmail.com).



## AAUW FELLOWSHIP RECIPIENT PRESENTATION

2020-2021 AAUW American Fellowship recipients are in the process of presenting their work this spring, and the advantage of Zoom makes program-sharing far more accessible than in-person presentations. The AAUW American Fellowship Short-Term Research Publication Grants provide support to scholars to prepare research manuscripts for publication, and are designed to assist the candidate in obtaining tenure and other promotions. To learn more about such grants, visit: [AAUW American Fellowship Research Grants](#). This month, we are pleased to introduce AAUW American Fellowship recipient Mireille Rebeiz. The program is sponsored by AAUW Huntingdon and Juniata College.

### February 18, 7:00 pm - Mireille Rebeiz: *The Humanist Omniscient Narrator*

Mireille Rebeiz, Assistant Professor of French & Francophone and Women's, Gender & Sexuality Studies at Dickinson College, will discuss the role of the omniscient narrator in Andrée Chérid's works *La Maison sans Racine* and *Le Message*. The omniscient narrator is the most contested literary voice in literature. Abandoned in contemporary literature as outdated, it is a "morally suspect" voice that acts like God, that pretends to have a deep knowledge of human nature, and that has a privileged access to all the protagonists' thoughts and actions, irrespective of time and space. Rebeiz argues that the negative traits for which the omniscient voice have been abandoned are sought traits in narratives dealing with war and gender inequalities, where the narrative voice plays the role of moralist, reminding protagonists and readers of our shared human values.

Register in advance for this meeting: [https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZcld-GtazluEtZKc9gqzMG\\_-3zFUjt\\_OAuf](https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZcld-GtazluEtZKc9gqzMG_-3zFUjt_OAuf). After registering, a confirmation email with information about joining the meeting will be sent.



## AAUW MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS

AAUW's member benefits can enhance your professional and personal life and will save you money along the way. Every time you use one of your benefits, you are also supporting AAUW's vital work, which is what makes AAUW one of the nation's most powerful voices on women's issues.

With each purchase, AAUW receives a royalty that supports equal-pay advocacy, community programs, leadership development tools, the student leadership conference and so much more!

**Discounts are offered in several areas:** Insurance (Geico, LTC Global, Nationwide Pet); Travel (Hotel Engine, Collette Tours, Cruises Only, TNT Vacations, Thrifty Car Rental); Scholarships (IE University); Miscellaneous (Office Depot/Office Max, Constant Contact, UPS).

AAUW makes no representation or warranties with respect to these products and/or services. Benefits, services, and programs are subject to change without notice. **Learn about available incentives:**

<https://www.aauw.org/resources/member/why-join/discounts-and-perks/>

## JANUARY 14 RECORDING of ALLYSHIP PROGRAM NOW AVAILABLE

For those who missed the January 14<sup>th</sup> *Allyship and Racial Justice* webinar, use this link to watch the program:

<https://aauwstatecollege.org/2021/01/23/event-recording-01-14-2021/>



Submissions for the next *Branch Bulletin* are due to Connie Schroeder, [connieschroeder@gmail.com](mailto:connieschroeder@gmail.com), on **February 15**, and it will be issued on **February 22**. *Branch Bulletins* are accessible at <https://aauwstatecollege.org/blog/>.