

UPCOMING BRANCH PROGRAM - *WOMEN IN EDUCATION* WEDNESDAY, MARCH 31st, 6:00 - 7:30 pm via Zoom

Please join us for an informative evening as we celebrate women who work in education. The following panel of accomplished and inspirational women will share their success stories, including what has enabled them to persevere and how diversity has shaped their experiences. There will be time for questions.

REGISTER TODAY FOR THE PROGRAM:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84307524880?pwd=dGNjZEHlU3k1OGV2aldLUIld1VlFHUT09>

Share the flyer with friends and colleagues: [3-31-21 AAUW State College Program: Women in Education flyer](#)

--Naana Nti and Nina Cowart, AAUW State College Program Co-Vice Presidents



Dr. Seria Chatters is the Director of Equity and Inclusivity for the State College Area School District and an Adjunct Associate Professor at Penn State University in the Counselor Education Program. Dr. Chatters has been providing training in the area of diversity, equity, inclusion, mental health, and diagnosis for over a decade. She has worked in public schools as a professional school counselor, in private practice as a Licensed Mental Health Counselor, and Licensed Professional Counselor. She chairs the College of Education's Diversity and Community Enhancement Committee and is a member of the College of Education's Equity Team. Dr. Chatters' research interests are centered on the intersection of bias, bullying, and harassment in K-Post-Secondary settings.



Dr. Priya Poehner is an Associate Professor and the Program Coordinator for the Elementary/ Middle Level Education Program at Lock Haven University. She serves on the Executive Board of the Pennsylvania Association for Middle Level Education and is an Association for Middle Level Education (AMLE) reviewer for the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP). Dr. Poehner also is the faculty advisor for the Student Pennsylvania State Educators Association at LHU. She is an advocate for the arts in schools and is involved with several music and theatre committees within the State College Area School District.



Dr. Andrea Tapia, a Professor of Information Sciences and Technology at Penn State, is also Director of the 3C Informatics: Crisis, Community and Civic Informatics Center. She seeks to develop information and communication technology solutions that promote better decision-making across emergency response organizations. Her research contributes to the solution of one of the stickiest problems currently facing emergency response organizations—the organizational inability to take advantage of an abundance of citizen-produced social media data. Dr. Tapia's research has directly contributed to the policy-making bodies of the United Nations, the Obama administration, and international relief and development organizations.

Postponed

USED BOOK SALE POSTPONED

The AAUW State College Used Book Sale, originally scheduled for **May 9-12, 2021** at the Penn State Snider Ag Arena, has been **postponed until further notice**. We are working to reschedule the event for later this year because we know that this is an important community event that people look forward to all year and we are eager to find new homes for the 3,100+ boxes of books in our workshop. In addition, this is our primary annual fundraiser, with proceeds going to scholarships for women and community grants that advance equity for women and girls.



VOLUNTEERS NEEDED to HELP US MOVE APRIL 5th to NEW BOOK WORKSHOP

AAUW State College plans to move into its new Workshop on **Monday, April 5**. **Volunteers are needed to unload approximately 3,000 filled boxes of donated books from 8:00 am to 4:00 pm, working in two-hour shifts**. Because the loaded trucks can be driven directly into our new facility, the boxes will need to be carried just a short distance and there are no stairs. With this being a weekday, we must widen our search for able-bodied people able to lift a 25-pound box - a little brawn is best! Can you help? If so, or if you know someone who can, contact Suzanne Kerlin, suziekerlin@gmail.com, text (814) 360-1177.



BRANCH MEMBER ANN ECHOLS is a WINNER OF AAUW's ART CONTEST

Branch member Ann Echols has received word that she is one of six artists whose work (out of 400 entries) has been selected for recognition in the 12th Annual AAUW Art Contest. The work of the six winners will be featured in a collection of note cards that will be mailed to members this spring. Congratulations, Ann!

Ann's painting, *Indian Paintbrush* (left), measures 3' x 4' and is painted in the impasto style, where thick paint is

applied to add dimension and emphasis. As Ann describes it, with this type of expression painting the experience of doing the painting, not the outcome, is the reason for doing it. It is completed without pressure or vision. Ann stumbled upon this style of painting as therapy some years back when she was going through a tough time. She put six months into *Indian Paintbrush*, revisiting it frequently, or whenever she needed a mental health respite.

About six months ago, Ann started taking art classes for the first time including an online acrylic painting class from Robert Placky, a teacher with the Art Alliance of Central Pennsylvania. She says that the beauty of acrylic paints is that one can almost always paint over something if it needs changing and it is easy to do. While she states that she is not a trained artist, Ann says there are many techniques that she wants to learn, commenting "I simply enjoy having fun and experimenting, seeing where colors and textures take me without expectation."

Ann would like more people to freely take up art as a mental health activity. The outcome is not as important as the process of creating. She also wishes more women artists were showcased in galleries, as there are so many wonderful artworks by women world-wide that the public is not yet privileged to view.

Ann's thoughts about membership in AAUW:

The AAUW women I have met are inspiring soul-sisters. To learn of their achievements is energizing. Members have rich stories to share about women's advancement, hardship, and memories of when life for women wasn't at all what it is like for women today. That history is important to me. I admire how our branch actively advocates for public education, supports community grants, and funds STEM programs; and I am thankful that we offer many leadership opportunities every year so that many women have a chance to lead and grow. I enjoy the camaraderie, compassion, strength, and an opportunity to serve. I embrace AAUW's values: research, education, justice, equity, and inclusiveness.

Ann says that like her painting, AAUW is bold, positive, and colorful.



**AAUW-PENNSYLVANIA SUMMER RETREAT CHANGED
to JULY 24th ZOOM EVENT**

The AAUW Pennsylvania Summer Retreat will occur via Zoom (not in-person) on **Saturday, July 24th**. **A detailed agenda and registration details will be sent directly to all AAUW members in Pennsylvania via email early in May.**

The program was originally planned as both an in-person and Zoom event to run July 23-24 in Harrisburg, but earlier this month several factors contributed to a change in plans. Considerations included the following:

- There is no guarantee everyone will have access to a vaccine (many members aren't eligible until Phase 2 and many members have children at home who aren't going to be eligible until the Fall).
- While masking and social distancing would be required and practiced, we feel many members won't be comfortable attending an indoor event as early as late July.
- Dr. Fauci and persons we trust are telling us that while cases are declining, positivity has plateaued at too high of a level, causing concern for another spike. On Sunday, it was reported in the news that Italy is closed effective March 15 because of a new spike.
- President Biden hopes small family gatherings will be OK for July 4. Our meeting is neither small nor family. We don't want to be a super spreader event.
- Spending money to hold an in-person event and have it canceled at the last minute and/or not well attended is a huge cost financially and to our reputation.
- Making the decision now provides ample time for the committee to focus the planning on one type of event.

We appreciate your support during these unprecedented times. We are looking forward to a huge turnout on July 24th. Stay tuned for meeting details.

--Ann Pehle, President, AAUW-Pennsylvania



**FAIR DISTRICTS and LACRA WORK TOWARDS
REDISTRICTING REFORM**

The goal of Fair Districts is to make the next drawing of legislative and congressional districts fair by engaging citizens in the reform process. The **Legislative and Congressional Redistricting Act (LACRA)** (House Bill 22 and Senate Bill 222) has been introduced in the current Pennsylvania legislative session to provide guidelines for

making redistricting transparent. Briefly, LACRA proposes a framework for reform, greater transparency, meaningful public engagement, and clear and measurable redistricting criteria. For more information on LACRA go to <https://www.fairdistrictspa.com> and click on the Details box under PA Voters Want Fair Districts.

Please write your state representative and Senator Jake Corman to ask them to co-sponsor this legislation.

Senator Jake Corman – (814) 355-0477, www.senatorcorman.com/contact

Representative - Kerry Benninghoff – (814) 355-1300, www.kerrybenninghoff.com

Representative Rich Irvin – (814) 644-2996, www.repirvin.com

Representative Stephanie Borowicz – (570) 748-5480, www.repstephanie.com

Representative Scott Conklin - (814) 238-5477, www.pahouse.com/conklin

We were not successful in changing the way that districts are drawn every 10 years so LACRA is the next best thing. We are not advocating for more red districts or blue districts; we just want them to be drawn fairly so citizens can pick our next legislators rather than legislators picking their constituents, i.e., no gerrymandering.

--Sue Johnston, AAUW State College Liaison to Fair Districts-Centre County



AAUW MEMBERSHIP DUES CHANGING in 2021-2022

Good news! For the coming membership year (starts July 1) branch dues for AAUW State College members will remain at \$8 and AAUW-Pennsylvania dues will remain at \$10. After making dramatic cost-cutting measures to meet expenses, national AAUW will limit its increase in dues to \$3 for 2021-2022, from \$59 to \$62. **This is the first dues increase in three years.** Therefore, total dues for the coming membership year will increase from \$77 to \$80. Membership renewals begin later this spring, stay tuned!

Why is it important to financially support organizations like AAUW?

--Of the 400 billion dollars raised for non-profit groups each year, only 1.6% goes to the 400 organizations that advocate for and support women and girls.

--AAUW has millions of dollars in endowments, but these funds are designated for purposes such as fellowships. They cannot be used for operations.

--Only 15% of AAUW's budget comes from membership dues.

What has AAUW done to control its budget?

--For the past two years, AAUW has successfully balanced its budget.

--AAUW has reduced its annual budget from 24 million to 16 million.

--AAUW has reduced its staff from 117 to 45.

--AAUW is seeking increased financial support from foundations, corporations, etc.

--AAUW has squeezed its staff into tighter spaces in order to sublet some of its leased space.

For a more complete picture on what is planned in terms of dues for the coming few years, visit:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1ItL8L8loLjFLFbEZ6ajfHrj3qakD5uZm/view?usp=sharing>.

Avoid long lines at the post office, save postage and a paper check – **renew online!** During the last week of April, you will receive an email from memberinfo@aauw.org with your specific member information. You will be asked to follow a link directly to AAUW payment software to use your credit card to make payment. Please follow the instructions provided. You will receive an email confirmation upon completion. For additional information visit our membership page: https://aauwstatecollege.org/aauw_member_application/.



AAUW NATIONAL ELECTION (APRIL 7 - MAY 17) INCLUDES VOTE to ELIMINATE DEGREE REQUIREMENT for MEMBERSHIP

This spring, AAUW members will be asked to vote on amendments to the Public Policy Priorities and Bylaws, in addition to electing members to the national Board of Directors. Proposed Bylaws and Public Policy Priorities changes are provided here:

<https://www.aauw.org/resources/member/governance-tools/national-election/>.

The AAUW Pennsylvania Board discussed the proposed bylaw changes and agreed to unanimously support AAUW open membership. Their statement of support is [here](#). Learn more: <https://aauw-pa.aauw.net/>. Visit the **AAUW-Pennsylvania Discussion Group** with additional comments on dropping the educational requirement at: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1083253248845566>.

On March 30th at 7:00 pm, AAUW Pennsylvania will host a virtual Town Hall on Dropping the Educational Requirement. Register now for the March 30th Town Hall here:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZwrDQCpqDksG9HEkNRahIgpQXRyK1h3TB>

Join the discussion about the proposed bylaw change to remove the education requirement for AAUW membership. Dot McLane, AAUW-Pennsylvania Past President, and former AAUW national board member will introduce the change and the reasons it is being proposed. Then attendees will break out into smaller groups for facilitated small-group discussions.

APRIL SMALL GROUP DISCUSSIONS on Dropping the Educational Requirement:

If you cannot attend the March 30th Town Hall, or if you may want to have additional conversations after the Town Hall, attend one of the following small group discussions to be facilitated by Jordan Glover, AAUW Pennsylvania Diversity & Inclusion Chair.

Tuesday, April 13th 7:30 PM – 8:30 PM ([registration link](#))

Friday, April 16th 12:00 PM – 1:00 PM ([registration link](#))

Monday, April 19th 1:30 PM – 2:30 PM ([registration link](#))

Wednesday, April 21st 6:00 PM – 7:00 PM ([registration link](#))

Voting will begin April 7th and close May 27th, and a voting link will be provided in advance of April 7th. Be sure to review the proposed Bylaws change that would eliminate the higher educational requirement for AAUW membership. Removal of this membership requirement would provide access to all women who support our mission. More: <https://www.aauw.org/resources/member/governance-tools/national-election/2021-comment-bylaws/>

Branch Co-Presidents' statement on dropping the educational requirement for membership:

When AAUW was founded in 1881, the organization sought to provide an opportunity for women to come together for academic and cultural pursuits. Much has changed since that time. A degree is no longer necessary to make us like-minded. Our mission and our challenges have grown, we need all women to come together as one force if we are to be successful in our mission to advance women and girls in today's society. Moreover, to move our agenda forward, AAUW must have sufficient funding. In the most pragmatic terms, we simply cannot expect foundations and corporations as well as other organizations to support AAUW financially if we don't espouse our own values. It is time to drop the educational degree requirement as a barrier to joining AAUW and our branch. Vote to drop the requirement on the Spring 2021 national ballot.

--Cindy Hall and Sally Kalin, AAUW State College Branch Co-Presidents



Please send submissions for the **April 5 Branch Bulletin** to Connie Schroeder, connieschroeder@gmail.com, by **March 29**. Bulletins are sent electronically to branch members and friends by the date of issue and also are accessible at <https://aauwstatecollege.org/blog/>.