

**Coming Branch Events
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**AAUW National thank yous
for support from the field**



Editor Note: *Last month, AAUW Pennsylvania President Cindy Hall wrote a [Letter to AAUW CEO Gloria Blackwell](#) about Pennsylvania branches standing strong and committed to advocacy in today’s public policy landscape. Below, she shares their response.*

From Megan Kissell, AAUW Public Policy Chair - We appreciate the continued encouragement to be bold and steadfast in pushing back on efforts to reverse our progress. AAUW Pennsylvania members are some of our strongest advocates and a great example of engaging in advocacy at all levels. We are paying close attention to the attacks on Title IX, higher education, and the Department of Education itself.

From Gloria Blackwell, AAUW CEO - Thank you so much for your support. I admit that I was very moved when I read it. The nightmare that we are currently experiencing is unreal and we appreciate you all having our backs. We know how much our members’ tireless efforts have helped to move our

mission forward and these days it will be needed more than ever. Our National Staff are navigating this whirlwind, recommending action, and helping us keep our issues front and center to continue the fight for equity and access to higher education for women. We are not backing down and appreciate your resolve to stand with us!

PUBLIC POLICY



Get ready for the May 20 municipal primary election

Under Pennsylvania’s voting law, permanent means *annual*. That is why, if you vote by mail, you must reapply every year to maintain that service. If you do not have it already, you should be getting a letter

from our county Elections Office with the form you need to apply to get mail-in ballots for our two elections this year.

You will see the deadline is shortly before our Primary Election in May. Please do not wait that long! The legal deadline is well after any practical deadline to actually get your ballot and return it in time for it to be counted.

We do not know yet how much excitement there will be in the primary. The odds are high that any drama would involve local elections, particularly for school boards. We will be able to tell you more after the deadline to get candidates' names on the ballot, March 11. Nominating petitions began to circulate on February 18, so please do sign to help candidates in your party get on the ballot. And as always, encourage good people you know to run for local office. The stakes never have been so high.

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

Editor note: Visit [Centre County Elections Office Calendar](#) for all key dates.



Explore the issues; get empowered; take action: Join the AAUW Action Network

Join AAUW in the fight for gender equity! Sign up to get regular alerts on how and when to engage. We provide all the tools you need to call or send messages to your members of Congress, contact your state legislators about pressing issues, and more. Join AAUW in urging Congress to improve and expand legislation protecting equity in education, economic security, and civil rights. Check here for actions for the 119th Congress: [AAUW Action Network](#)



Branch Education Committee call to action

The Federal Department of Education is on the chopping block of the present administration. This is of particular concern for educational programs integral to pursuing equity for women and girls.

Program examples of the Federal Department of Education include:

- Title I - distributes money to schools in lower-income communities
- IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act) - distributes money to school districts to serve students with disabilities
- Manages college financial aid and federal student loans
- Oversees National Assessment of Educational Progress, the nation's report card
- Implements Title IX, prohibiting sex-based discrimination in education programs and activities that receive federal financial assistance

The Department of Education has no control over what is taught in schools. That is left to the individual states and their communities, who establish schools and colleges, develop curricula, and determine requirements for enrollment and graduation. Learn about the U.S. Department of Education from their website – [U.S. Department of Education](https://www.ed.gov/) – and compare to the 2/4/2025 NPR story: [A guide to what the Department of Education does \(and doesn't\) do.](#)

We are asking all of you to call your legislators regarding the projected closure of the U.S. Department of Education. You may need to leave a message and the time is limited, so plan what you are going to say. Here is a [Suggested Script](#). If the message center is filled, please send an email. Direct your message(s) to: **Sen. John Fetterman** – (202) 224-4254; **Sen. David McCormick** – (202) 224-6324; **Rep. Glenn Thompson** – (202) 225-5121

--Sue Johnston (Chair), Mary Dupuis, Leslie Laing, Branch Education Committee



New bills being introduced by Fair Districts

Pennsylvania has not eliminated gerrymandering, which is the drawing of legislative districts to lean towards one party, so the legislators choose their voters rather than a competitive election. When lines are drawn again in 2031, the amount of gerrymandering will depend on the composition of the redistricting commission as it does every 10 years.

The gold standard for redistricting is an Independent Redistricting Commission (IRC) vested with the full authority of redistricting rather than one primarily of legislators such as we have in Pennsylvania. Fair Districts has written two bills that address this: **HB31** and **SB131**. They are asking for co-sponsors. Fair Districts looked to other states' (Michigan, California, and Colorado) IRCs and based the proposed IRC for Pennsylvania on their successes and problems. Two-thirds of Pennsylvanians support an IRC. Details: [Fair Districts](#)

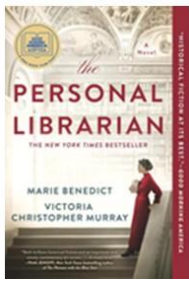
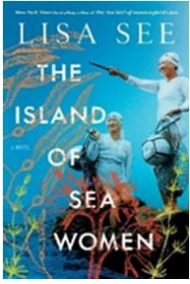
Please ask your Pennsylvania legislators to co-sponsor HB31 and SB131: Rep. Paul Takac - (814) 308-2569; Rep. Scott Conklin – (814) 342-4872; Rep. Kerry Benninghoff – (814) 355-3523; Sen. Cris Dush – (717) 767-7084; Sen. Wayne Langholc, Jr. – (717) 787-5400.

--Sue Johnston, liaison to Fair Districts Centre County

MEMBERSHIP FOCUS

Read Between the Wines: Tuesday, March 11, 5:30 pm

For our next *Read Between the Wines*, we will read ***The Island of Sea Women*** by Lisa See. A work of historical fiction, this book explores “complexities of female friendship and an eye-

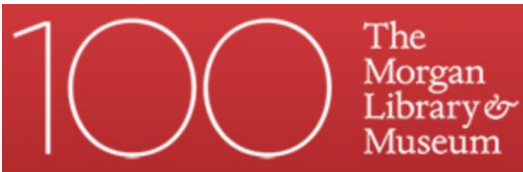


opening portrait of a country ravaged by decades of conflict and unrest.” **More:** [The Island of Sea Women](#)

We will also have a brief discussion on *The Personal Librarian*, by Marie Benedict. It ties in with our visit to the Morgan Library & Museum in April (below). The gathering will be held at Laurel Zydney’s home, d directions provided when you RSVP to

membership@aauwstatecollege.org.

Tuesday, April 22, Bus Trip to NYC to the Morgan Library & Museum Exhibition featuring *Belle da Costa Greene*



Invite a friend and send your reservation today!

Our Fullington bus trip to **New York City on April 22, 2025** coincides with the 100th anniversary of the [Morgan](#)

[Library & Museum](#). Our primary interest is the [Belle Greene Exhibit](#), featuring the life of J.P. Morgan’s personal librarian, whose fascinating life is detailed in *The Personal Librarian* by Marie Benedict. The Morgan describes this exhibit as the most important one of their centennial year. There will be time to explore New York City on your own after we visit the library (shopping, attractions, and more), including nearby [dining options](#). An itinerary for the day will be shared this month.

Sending your reservation: Costs are \$60 per person for the bus and the library admission is \$25 for adults and \$17 for seniors (65 and older), so the check will be for either \$85 or \$77. The cost of meals is on your own. Mail your check, made out to “SCAUW, Inc.” (just one “A”), with your name, phone number, and email, to AAUW State College, Box 735, State College, PA 16804. This promises to be a great trip and is a wonderful value. We hope you will invite a friend along for the adventure. **Questions?** Contact membership@aauwstatecollege.org.

Share flyer: bit.ly/April22NYCTripToMorgan

Time to renew your AAUW membership?



Time to renew your AAUW membership? Members receive an email renewal notification from AAUW the month prior to their renewal date. **RENEW ONLINE** through AAUW National – respond to the email reminder from National or go to [AAUW Membership](#) on

National’s webpage where you will be asked to reset your password. **RENEW BY MAIL** – go to bit.ly/AAUWSCMembership and click on “Join by Mail” at the page bottom. Print the form and send it with a check to address listed. **QUESTIONS?** Contact Membership VPs **Susan Chyczewski** and **Carline Crevecoeur** at membership@aauwstatecollege.org.

--Susan Chyczewski and Carline Crevecoeur, Membership Co-VPs

WELCOME, NEW MEMBERS!

Melissa Landrau Vega – mxl256@yahoo.com



Greetings. I am the director of Scholar Program Development for the Office of Scholars Programs, at Penn State. Born and raised in Puerto Rico, I arrived in State College 28 years ago to pursue my doctorate in Higher Education. I have worked for the Educational Equity unit at Penn State for 25 years and have enjoyed being a resource to the Latina/o community on- and off-campus.

I have also concentrated my professional and personal efforts on guiding underrepresented students and on promoting and sustaining social justice initiatives in our communities. I am a board member of Young Scholars and have volunteered with my daughter to sort books for the AAUW book sale. Some of the AAUW/Community Diversity Group events I have attended sparked my interest in AAUW, and a member encouraged me to join. I am eager to explore ways in which I could assist the organization in the future.

Jan Mannino - janmannino@me.com



Thank you for accepting my membership to AAUW, an organization I have admired for many years. I look forward to getting involved with the local group and to promote the mission of the organization. I am a State College native, who left after high school to get an education as an RN, then a nurse anesthesiologist, followed by a law degree.

My professional practice was in several different places, and I ended up in Southern California, where I enjoyed the weather and the lifestyle. During those years, I was active in the nurse anesthesiology profession and served as national president. Medicare reimbursement, safety standards in surgery, and meeting the demands for anesthesia were key areas of policy development that were important to me. But, I was the happiest when doing anesthesia and making the patient experience safe and comfortable.

As all good things come to an end, I retired from clinical practice, but continued to write, lecture, and stay involved. Most of my family stayed in the Central Pennsylvania area and I decided to move back “home.” The Village at Penn State is a wonderful retirement community that has welcomed me and offers the best of activities, great food, and new friends. I want to devote my time and energy now to policy changes that promote the power of young women.

Explore Branch Engagement Opportunities



If you are not currently “engaged” with the branch, or would like to shift directions, check out the list of engagement opportunities today: [ENGAGEMENT](#)

RECOGNITION

Congratulations, branch award recipients!



The branch Awards Committee met in February to select annual award recipients from those nominated by branch members, and they were approved at the February board meeting on February 10.

We are pleased to announce the 2025 awardees: *Outstanding Woman* – **Michele Crowl**; *Member Making a Difference* – **Sherry Lonsdale**; *Gateway to Equity* – **Strawberry Fields**; *Named Gift Honorees* –

Strategic Planning Implementation Task Force; *Centre County Council for Human Services Volunteer of the Year* – **Amy Wilson**.

Congratulations to all the awardees for their contributions to the branch and to the community. The April *Branch Bulletin* will include a description of each awardee as well as details of the Award & Scholarship event, to be held in late spring.

Attend the CCCHS Volunteer Dinner Thursday, April 24, 5:45 pm Mountain View Country Club, Boalsburg



Mark your calendar for the Centre County Council of Human Services dinner, planned for April 24. We will honor board Co-Secretary and 2024 Nominations Chair **Amy Wilson**. Details of the event will be

shared in AAUW State College *Weekly Notes* and in the April issue of the *Branch Bulletin*.

Questions? Contact Awards Co-Chairs [Chriss Schultz](#) or [Suzanne Kerlin](#).

--Chriss Schultz and Suzanne Kerlin (Co-Chairs), AAUW State College Awards Committee, with Anne Ard, Sue Johnston, Betsy Manlove, Sue Poremba, Sue Werner

DIVERSITY

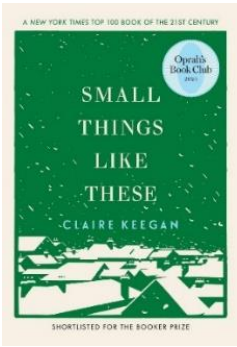
March 8 is International Women's Day



International
Women's Day

March 8, 2025, is International Women's Day. This year, the theme is "**#Accelerated Action**." If the equal rights movement continues at the current rate, the World Economic Forum estimates we will reach gender parity in 2158, over 125 years from now. "[Accelerate Action](#)" is a compelling theme for International Women's Day (IWD) 2025 because it emphasizes the urgency of making faster, more effective strides toward

gender equality. Learn more: [International Women's Day](#)



¡Adelante! Book Club: Thursday, March 20, 2:30 pm

Join us for our virtual book club on March 20, when we will read ***Small Things Like These*** by Claire Keegan.

The book is a New York Times bestseller that was shortlisted for the 2022 Booker Prize, and a winner of the Orwell Prize for Political Fiction.

Meeting link: bit.ly/AdelanteBookClub

Meeting ID: 815 5138 0837; Passcode: 410856



Branch Diversity Committee invite for coffee March 21

The Diversity Committee extends an invite for coffee and conversation to all interested branch members. We hope to provide a sense of community and encourage others to join our committee. Our next meeting is scheduled for **March 21, 9 am, at the new Kitchen Garden restaurant, located at 2137 South Atherton**. They have coffee, tea, and Turkish pastries. We hope to see you there. Questions? Contact diversity@auwstatecollege.org.

Naana Nti (Chair), Carline Crevecoeur, Denise Rupert, Malu Tejada, Sophie Penney Leach, Maria Schmidt, and Carmen Vanderhoof, AAUW State College Diversity Committee

BRANCH PROGRAMS

Branch sponsors program on food recovery



At the February 20 branch program, **Anna Janaszek** and **Adeline Peat** (left) gave an inspiring talk about how they established the Food Recovery Network (FRN) at Penn State in 2023. It began with Anna noticing how much food was thrown away and Adeline learning about the Food Recovery Network elsewhere.

Today the PSU FRN has approximately 25 regular student volunteers and many others who volunteer when they are able. Since its inception, the PSU FRN has redirected more than 10,200 meals to local charitable organizations and prevented more than 35,000 thousand pounds of greenhouse gas emissions. The

organization is the recipient of the 2024 Penn State “Outstanding Sustainability Efforts” and “Community Impact” Awards!

--Betsy Manlove and Renee Cloutier, AAUW State College Branch Program Co-VPs

BOOK WORKSHOP & SALE

Book Workshop closing for season Tuesday, March 18

CLOSING FOR
THE SEASON

After ten months of culling, sorting, and pricing book donations from generous community book donors, the job of processing books for the 2025 May sale is nearly done. **The last day the workshop will be open for donations is March 18.** The book donors and workshop volunteers are the behind-the-scenes heroes of the Used Book Sale. We anticipate bringing between 3,500-4,000 boxes of books to the sale, the perfect amount for our space limitations. Still have books to donate? Check this out first: [Book Donation](#). The workshop will reopen on **July 8, 2025**, as we start preparing for the May 2026 sale.

Book sale marketing begins at SCASD Reads Family Fun Night



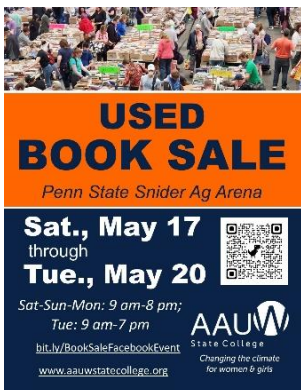
When SCASD High School librarian and branch member **Cathi Furman** invited the branch to participate in the February 5 *SCASD Reads Family Fun Night*, book sale co-chairs (at left) Donna Trapp and Mary Ann Blair jumped at the opportunity.

The fair brought out a record 2,200 parents and children. We anticipate having **25,000 children's books** at the sale, so our audience at the event was the perfect place to kick-off our book sale season.

To tie in with the animal theme of the fair, we shared this from Groucho Marks:

"Outside of a dog, a book is a man's best friend. Inside of a dog, it's too dark to read."

Help us spread the word about the Used Book Sale



It is not too soon to share a "mark your calendar" book sale notice with friends, family, and colleagues, with a reminder that the sale funds our work to help change the climate for women and girls in our community.

Share book sale flyer: bit.ly/May17-20BookSaleFlyer

Check us out on social media (and share): bit.ly/BookSaleFacebookEvent

Watch for information the sale in the next two bulletins. Contact [Connie Schroeder](#) if you have some special marketing ideas and are able to help.

May 17-20 Used Book Sale volunteer scheduling – sign up today



Volunteer scheduling for the May 17-20 AAUW State College Used Book Sale has begun! We need lots of help on **Move-in Night (May 15)** and over the four days of the sale. Sign up now. Questions? Contact [Donna Trapp](#) today!

Invite a friend to join you and sign up today:

bit.ly/BookSaleVolunteerSignup

COMMUNITY OUTREACH



Branch undergraduate scholarship application deadline Monday, March 31

AAUW State College Scholarship Chair **Leslie Laing** reports that applications for 2025 branch undergraduate scholarships will be accepted through **March 31**. Interested applicants may apply at <https://www.grantinterface.com/sl/bJCRww>. Scholarships range from **\$3,000 to \$7,000**, depending on the financial need and circumstances of the recipients. For additional scholarship information and eligibility criteria, see [AAUW State College Scholarships](#).

--Leslie Laing, AAUW State College Scholarship Chair

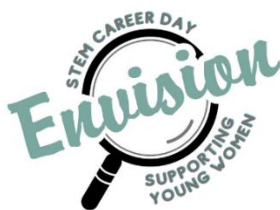
Youth Service Bureau to hold First Cash Big Bingo, Sunday, March 16



One of our Community Action Grantees, the Centre County Youth Service Bureau, is holding a **First Annual Cash Bingo** on March 16 to benefit the Big Brothers Big Sisters program. Sounds like fun and all for a great cause!

Details: [Purchase Tickets](#) [Become a Sponsor](#) [Flyer](#)

ENVISION: Penn State STEM Career Day, Saturday, March 29



A great example of AAUW State College community outreach are programs supported by branch STEM grants. Penn State ENVISION, a STEM Career Day Supporting Young Women is to help girls and young women see themselves in the STEM fields. This year's event will be held **Saturday, March 29, 9 am-4 pm**, at University Park.

Details: bit.ly/ENVISION25 **Share flyer:** [Penn State ENVISION March 29](#)

AAUW PENNSYLVANIA RETREAT

Branch to host AAUW Pennsylvania summer retreat June 27-28, 2025

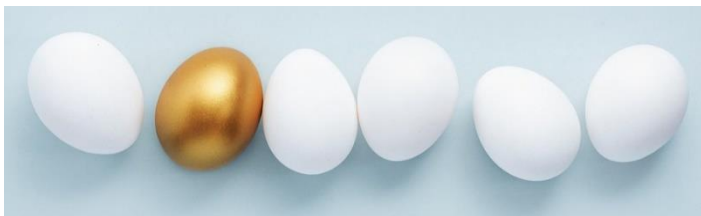


AAUW State College is hosting the AAUW Pennsylvania Summer Retreat on June 27-28. It will be held at the Wyndham Hotel in Boalsburg. AAUW members representing 30+ branches from around the state will attend.

The retreat represents a tremendous opportunity to network with members from other AAUW branches and strengthen both our branch and AAUW's impact overall. Watch for details in the next few bulletins and visit [AAUW Pennsylvania Summer Retreat](#) for updates.

BRANCH BEHIND-THE-SCENES

Nominations Committee seeking 2025-2027 board officers



The branch Nominations Committee, seeking to fill open officer positions for July 2025-June 2027, is off and running. Here are current [Officer Position Descriptions](#) and a [Nominations Form](#) for interested members to

nominate themselves or other members. Nominations will be kept confidential.

As you review the descriptions, please note that some have the possibility of a current officer actually remaining in that position. We would love to hear of your interest in that area regardless, because we also hope to strengthen our committees, which may lead to elected positions. Let's talk about it! Please feel free to contact any of us (listed below) with your questions. Leadership has its own rewards. **Nominations Deadline: Friday, March 14.**

-- [Nina Cowart](#), [Candace Davison](#), [Molly Kunkel](#),
[Dina Liberatore](#), [Vasundara Varadan](#)
AAUW State College Nominations Committee

Strategic Planning Implementation Task Force: next steps



On Monday, February 3, the Strategic Planning Implementation Task Force organized and hosted a town hall to provide updates on its work to date and ask members for their feedback and ideas. About 30 people

attended in person and via Zoom. We focused on three areas: succession planning and processes; internal communications and information-sharing; and financial health.

We are creating and will be distributing an online survey to branch members to obtain their thoughts about what the branch is currently doing and should consider doing in the future. Please look for the email with the survey link and share your thoughts and ideas. Thank you for all that you do on behalf of AAUW State College.

--Grace Hampton (Chair), Lee Carpenter, Ann Echols, Jackie Esposito, Linda Higginson
AAUW State College Strategic Planning Implementation Task Force

Monthly board meetings open to membership



Branch board meetings are open to *all members* and are a great way to learn about what is going on and to offer your input. To catch up on branch business, review the [February 10, 2025 board minutes](#).

The next board meeting will take place via ZOOM **Monday, March 10, 2025, 11:30 am–1:00 pm**. Meeting link: <http://bit.ly/AAUWSCBoardMtg>.

Branch Bulletin dates



The next *Branch Bulletin* will be issued **April 7**.

The submission deadline is **Monday, March 31**. send items to editor [Connie Schroeder](#).