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This year's Humphrey Fellows program includes **Abby-Gail Sharonne Blanchard** (Suriname), and **Shehrenna Gulamani**

## February 13 luncheon program with Humphrey Fellows – RSVPs due February 6

Our annual Humphrey program is here! The Penn State Humphrey Fellows will present *International Perspectives on Women in Society* on **Monday, February 13, 11:30 am – 1:30 pm** at **The Graduate State College** (formerly the Atherton Hotel).

Event co-sponsors include Altrusa International Centre County, the Community Diversity Group, Global Connections, Soroptimist International of Centre County, and Ten Thousand Villages, State College.

This annual event features a panel discussion, moderated by branch member Charlene Harrison. Registration, including lunch buffet, is \$23.

**Reservations are due February 6** to Christine Bishop, 205 First Avenue, State College, Pa. 16801. Late payments will be accepted at the door but advance reservations are required.

**Details:** [February 13 Humphrey Fellows program flyer](#)

--Naana Nti, AAUW State College Program Committee

## January 14 program focuses on reproductive rights



At the January 14 Reproductive Rights watch party, AAUW State College members had the opportunity to learn how limiting access to reproductive health care in Pennsylvania has a negative cascading effect on the health of women and the economic stability of families. It is particularly harmful to marginalized communities.

Our generous host, Vasundara Varadan, provided some traditional Indian dishes along with sharing her unique perspectives on the issues.

*Above, program facilitators Anne Ard and Carline Creveceour with Susan Chyczewski.*



A few new branch members attended and the discussion ranged from medical issues, emotional ramifications of forced birth, to economic consequences. **Carline Crevecoeur, MD** shared her knowledge and experiences caring for women's health and **Dr. Anne Ard** contributed insights gained from her experience at Centre Safe and her knowledge of the current legislative workings.

*Above, Nina Cowart, Jan Jenkins, Sharon Hyde, and Vasundara Varadan.*

Susan commented, "We all need to pay close attention to our state legislature and listen to our Public Policy co-chairs for possible actions we can take-- such as calling our representatives and making our expectations of them clear."

*--Susan Chyczewski, AAUW State College Program Co-VP*

**Editor's note:** The Women's Law Project continues to be a watchdog regarding reproductive rights legislation in Pennsylvania. Their January 23 communication includes the following:

"Abortion is still legal in Pennsylvania. Though the law hasn't changed yet, it's important to understand that Pennsylvania law could radically and quickly change soon.

Pennsylvania's anti-abortion lawmakers have signaled they will spend this new session continuing to ignore the needs of constituents and instead obsessively strategize how to restrict and ban abortion in Pennsylvania. Right now, the biggest threats to abortion access are constitutional amendments." **Learn more:** [Women's Law Project](#)



## Nominations urgently needed for branch leadership positions

AAUW State College is a thriving and growing branch, but it faces the same leadership challenges as many non-profits - not enough people stepping up to share the responsibility of leading the group. Most of the current branch leaders have held several different offices over time, or served multiple terms *in the absence of others stepping forward*. We have tremendous resources among our membership whose help is needed. Let us hear from you!

The Nominations Committee is currently seeking nominations for most of our branch leadership positions - two-year terms starting July 2023. Those who are elected will receive an orientation from the person who formerly occupied that position. They are listed at the top of page 3 in your branch *Handbook/Directory* as follows:

- Co-Presidents (two)
- President Elect
- Finance VP
- Membership Co-VPs (two)
- Program Co-VP
- Co-Secretary
- Treasurer

The rewards of a leadership position are clear, from sharing a valued skill, gaining new skills, working together as a team, to addressing our mission of advancing equity for women and girls. To learn more about any of the positions listed, **please contact [Mary Dupuis](#) by March 1** with a self-nomination or to nominate fellow branch members. The name(s) of those nominated and their nominators will be kept confidential and the final slate will be presented to the board at the April 3 board meeting.

--Mary Dupuis, Nominations Committee Chair



## Fair Districts PA Update

“**Fix Harrisburg**” is a campaign organized by Fair Districts PA and The League of Women Voters of Pennsylvania. Presently the push is to promote Rules of the Pa. House of Representatives that focus on collaboration, accountability and bipartisanship. The Rules are established at the beginning of each new session, usually on the first day after election of the speaker. In the past they were written by the leadership with very little time for input from rank-and-file members or constituents. Members of the Assembly also are given very little time to review the Rules.



This year the Pa. House has not established Rules so it is an ideal time to send input to your representative about reforming the Rules. The goal is to develop Rules that allow bipartisan solutions. In the past, the leadership controlled what bills were voted on. This has resulted in the Pennsylvania Legislature being near the bottom of states in bills passed in spite of being one of the largest full-time state legislative bodies with the 3<sup>rd</sup> highest salaries.

On February 1, Pa. Speaker of the House Rozzi (far left) visited State College for a “listening



tour” to address partisan gridlock. AAUW Pennsylvania President **Cindy Hall** and **Sue Johnston** (AAUW State College members, left), attended along with other Fair Districts members.

Fair Districts PA is advocating for rules that allow bills 1) with bipartisan support to be guaranteed a vote on committee, 2) voted out of committee with bipartisan support to be guaranteed a vote on the chamber floor, and 3) passed in one chamber with bipartisan support to be given consideration in the other chamber. See [Fair Districts PA](#) for more information. [Rules can promote collaboration-accountability-bipartisanship](#), a January article on the Fair Districts site, provides detailed information including talking points. Another Fair Districts PA report, [Dysfunction by Design](#), is very eye-opening. Advocate for Rules by contacting your legislators - by phone, in person, by email, or snail mail: [Kerry Benninghoff](#); [Scott Conklin](#); [Paul Takac](#)

--Sue Johnston, AAUW State College liaison to Fair Districts PA



## February 9, 7:00 – 8:00 pm, Zoom webinar **War on Ukraine with Dr. Lena Surzhko-Harned**

Join AAUW Pennsylvania for the *WAR on UKRAINE*, February 9, 7:00 -8:00 pm. Speaker Dr. Lena Surzhko-Harned has authored several papers dealing with issues of nationalism and ethnic conflict, identity politics, electoral politics, comparative democratization, and political behavior in the post-communist states of Eastern Europe.

**Details:** [Program description](#); **Register here:** [War on Ukraine](#)



## Mayor Nanes offers proclamation for National Day of Racial Healing

NATIONAL DAY OF

# RACIAL HEALING

Teamwork makes the dream work. The AAUW State College Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) committee, chaired by Naana Nti, collaborated with State College Borough Mayor Ezra Nanes at the January 9 Council meeting. He read a proclamation (left) recognizing the National Day of Racial Healing. Naana and Sophie Penney Leach attended and Sophie shared a few words of thanks following the reading. The DEI Committee plans to collaborate with other local organizations to provide more activities in 2024. If you are interested in the discussions, contact [Naana Nti](#).

*--Sophie Penney Leach, Diversity Committee*



*Leslie Laing (center)*

Photo: Laura Waldhier/Penn State

## Leslie Laing receives Humanitarian Service Award

This year's recipient of the Forum on Black Affairs Humanitarian Award is **Leslie Laing, director of Adult Learner Programs and Services within Penn State Student Affairs**. She is pictured here with 2022 awardee Michael Phillips, left, and FOBA (Forum on Black Affairs) President Andre Culbreath. The Humanitarian Service award is granted to those who have shown exemplary service to the African-American community of Pennsylvania.

“Leslie has worked tirelessly to meet the needs of Penn State students who are typically returning to school to pursue an undergraduate degree, while they either work full time, raise families, or conclude their military service, among other things,” commented award presenter Suzanne Adair, Penn State Associate Vice President for Affirmative Action.

As a member of AAUW State College, Leslie serves as branch Scholarships Co-Chair.

## Penn State groups hold Black History month events



Penn State student groups and units are several holding events in honor of [Penn State Black History Month](#). A few of the University Park events are highlighted here:

### **February 8, 6:00 pm, virtual - *The Frederick Douglass Project***

Emmy Award-winning actor Keith David will deliver a dramatic reading of a speech by the legendary 19th-century American abolitionist Frederick Douglass. **Details:** [The Frederick Douglass Project](#)

### **February 9, 6:30 pm, Freeman Auditorium, HUB - *His Name is George Floyd***

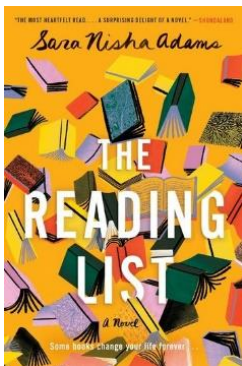
Author and award-winning Washington Post reporter Robert Samuels will discuss his book, *His Name Is George Floyd: One Man's Life and the Struggle for Racial Justice*.

**Details:** [His Name is George Floyd](#)

### **February 16, 6:00 pm, Freeman Auditorium, HUB - Film: "Six Triple Eight"**

This film chronicles the story of the 6888th Postal Battalion, an 855-member, all-Black, all-female unit that served in England and France during World War II with the mission of clearing a two-year backlog of over 17 million pieces of mail.

## **¡ADELANTE! Book Club to meet February 23**



Our ¡ADELANTE! Diversity Book Club is modeled after the AAUW Diversity Outreach for Impact Program, featuring diverse cultures in both fiction and nonfiction offerings.

The next meeting will be on **Thursday, February 23 at 2:30 pm**. The group will discuss *The Reading List: A Novel*, by Sara Nisha Adams.

**More::** [Harper Collins review](#) **Zoom Meeting:** [February 23 Meeting Link](#)  
**Meeting ID:** 853 8286 1173; **Passcode:** 078545



### **March 14 Cultural Empowerment for Women program *True Stories of Women in Office: Past and Present***

The Cultural Empowerment for Women lunch, a collaboration between the Community Diversity Group and AAUW State College, will be held **on Wednesday March 14<sup>th</sup>, 11:30 am - 2:00 pm** at the Penn Stater Conference Center hotel. More details to come.

--AAUW State College Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee





*Christy Bartley  
pricing books.*

## Used Book Workshop closing moved to March 7

Due to the generosity of book donors and a lot of hard work, book workshop volunteers have already sorted, priced, and packed over **3,200 boxes of books!** This volume is close enough to the target number of boxes to bring to the sale, so the book workshop and sale leadership elected to close the workshop a week earlier than originally planned. Donations will now be accepted **through Tuesday, March 7**. The Used Book Workshop is located at 2197 High Tech Road.

**Books may be deposited into the outdoor bins anytime between now and March 7.** For help bringing books inside, the workshop is open: **Mondays 6 - 8 pm; Tues. and Wed. 9 am - 2:30 pm.**

Prior to packing your donation, learn more about [book donation guidelines](#).



## Book Sale volunteer scheduling to begin soon

Plans are underway to send used book sale volunteer schedules later this month to all branch members and other past book sale volunteers, **via an e-blast. Keep an eye out for it.** First, help is needed for **May 11**, Move-in Night. The sale runs **May 13-16**. For the first three days, hours run 9:00 am – 8:00 pm. On Tuesday, May 16, the sale closes an hour early at 7:00 pm. We are looking forward to a wonderful 2023 sale!

# Welcome

New Members

## Jackie Huff

[jgm.huff@gmail.com](mailto:jgm.huff@gmail.com)

Hello! I earned a BS (2004) and MS (2006) in electrical engineering from the

University of Illinois. After a few years working in industry, I wasn't particularly enjoying my job, so I made a decision to earn a teaching certificate in the state of Texas. In 2010, I began my teaching career as a secondary math teacher in the small town of Hearne, Texas. Teaching quickly became a passion and I spent six years in public schools before accepting a position teaching introductory engineering courses at Texas A&M University.



Upon leaving public education, I made a commitment to advocate for public school teachers after recognizing that they had no time to advocate for themselves. In 2018, I relocated to State College with my family where both my teaching and advocacy continued. In 2021, I ran for and won a seat on the State College Area School District board, working hard to support the students, teachers, staff, and administration of the district. Recently, I was elected as president of the school board. With my husband and three fierce and wonderful children, I am immensely glad to call State College home.

**Editor's Note:** Congratulations and best wishes, Jackie, on your appointment as SCASD School Board Chair! **More:** [SCASD appoints Jackie Huff school board president](#)



**Jan Jenkins** - [janjenkins416@gmail.com](mailto:janjenkins416@gmail.com)

Hello, I'm a relatively new AAUW member, so I'd like to briefly introduce myself. I grew up in northeastern Pennsylvania and attended Penn State where I received a B.S. in Geosciences, and then a Master's degree in Oceanography from the University of South Carolina.

After living in Rhode Island for a number of years, my husband, Mike Arthur, and I returned to central Pennsylvania where we were fortunate to find a small farm in Penns Valley. Our two daughters attended Penns Valley High School, participated in 4-H and soccer, and are now out on their own. Mike and I raise several breeds of sheep on our farm, as well as having a flock of laying hens, and a small area where Mike grows produce for several local farmer's markets (this area is well-guarded from groundhogs by Rex, the sheepdog.) The wool from our sheep is made into yarn and roving which I dye and then sell at the farmer's markets and at multiple regional wool festivals throughout the year.

I joined AAUW for several reasons: I love to read and your book sale has been something I've always looked forward to attending; I'm very concerned with the erosion of women's rights in our country and feel that this is a good time to band together with other like-minded women to protect those rights.



**Judith Todd** – [jtodd@psu.edu](mailto:jtodd@psu.edu)

I have been an at-large member of AAUW for many years and am pleased to now become a member of AAUW State College. For the last 20 years, I served as Head of the Engineering Science and Mechanics (ESM) Department at Penn State, stepping down in June 2022. I was the first woman engineering department head when I arrived at Penn State in 2002.



I am currently an ESM Professor (on sabbatical for 2022-2023), and finishing up my term as Immediate Past President of ASM International, the world's largest association of materials-centric engineers and scientists.

A highlight of my career was receiving a Presidential Award for Excellence in Science, Engineering and Mathematics Mentoring from President George W. Bush at the White House in 2007. I look forward to meeting you and I am a strong advocate of AAUW and the State College Branch.

## State College Area School District meeting with community

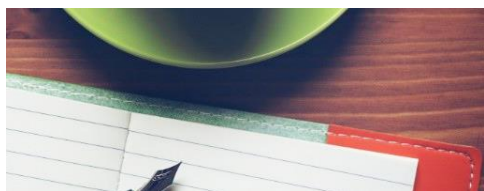


Members of the State College Area School board will hold an open meeting for community members at **Wegmans Café on Tuesday, April 25 at 8:00 am**. This is a good opportunity to address any district-related comments or questions to the local school

board outside of a formal meeting. The RSVP will be available on the SCASD Facebook page.

To learn more about school boards, The Education Law Center produces information to serve as background. Here is their fact sheet: [School Board Power and How to Advocate](#). Those with Facebook can view the event virtually: [SCASD April 25 Facebook Meeting](#). An additional way to ask questions or provide input to the school board is via [all-board@scasd.org](mailto:all-board@scasd.org).

*--Carol Hodes, AAUW State College Education Chair*



## Nittany Valley Writers Network

Branch member **Carline Crevecœur** recommends the [Nittany Valley Writers' Network](#), a supportive community for writers of all levels. It also promotes several local book clubs.



## Branch leadership transparency

Currently, the AAUW State College Board of Directors meet monthly, the first Monday of the month, alternating each month between an Executive Committee meeting, and a full board meeting. We are committed to transparency and invite members to attend the full board meetings.

**Any branch member** is welcome to attend AAUW State College full board meetings, which take place in the **College Township Municipal Building from 12:00 – 1:00 pm**. The next full board meeting will take place on **Monday, March 6**. To attend in person, please notify [AAUW State College Contact Us](#). The Zoom link is [Zoom link to March 6 full board meeting](#).

Meeting highlights are in the *Branch Bulletin* after the meeting minutes have been approved. The exact date varies depending on the timing of the bulletin and the board meetings. Members need to know what is going on, and we hope will become more engaged in our processes after attending the full board meetings.

## Board leadership notes – January 2023 board meeting



There was a consensus to produce minutes for the Executive Board (management team) meetings. The Board appreciated the summaries of Board meetings that have been published in the *Branch Bulletin*.

The Board endorsed the four strategic planning teams (Contributions to Society and Community Engagement, Organizational Stability and Sustainability, Communications, and Used Book Sale and Other Fundraising Initiatives).

The February 13 program and luncheon on *International Perspectives of Women in Society*, featuring two Humphrey Fellows, has an RSVP deadline of February 6. It will be held at 11:30 am at The Graduate Hotel.

New members Liz Kopco and Rebekah Grmela, both communications professionals, are helping with Marketing and Communications.

There is still a need for assistance with updating the website. More training has been scheduled for those updating the website.

In recognition of the National Day of Healing, the Diversity Committee authored a Letter to the Editor (*Centre Daily Times*) and asked Ezra Nanes, mayor of State College, to read a proclamation at the State College Borough Council meeting.

Concerns have been raised by some members who have volunteered for committees but have not received any responses from the committee chairs.

The Nominations Committee, chaired by Mary Dupuis, has a meeting scheduled on January 19. AAUW State College members are encouraged to send nominations to the committee. All communications will be kept confidential.

We gained 29 new members in 2022!

Donations continue to be received at the Used Book Workshop. Almost 3000 boxes of books have been priced.

The Board agreed that we need to continue to explore ways of increasing our visibility, including attending events such as Penn State's annual Martin Luther King dinner.

*--Sally Kalin, AAUW State College Immediate Past Co-President*



## A roaring good tail...

Branch Historian/Archivist **Jackie Esposito** shares a roaring good tail of her experience this January of helping to select the next Nittany Lion: [A Roaring Good Tail](#)



## July 28-29 AAUW Pennsylvania retreat

Save the date for AAUW-PA summer retreat in Gettysburg. Details available in March bulletin.

## Branch Bulletin deadline and publication date



Items for inclusion in the next issue should be sent to *Branch Bulletin* Editor [Connie Schroeder](#) by **Monday, February 27**. The Bulletin will be sent out by **March 6**. Bulletins are also available at [AAUW State College](#).