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## Join us for Lunch & Learn: *Women Behind Bars*, Monday, April 10<sup>th</sup> 12:00 noon via Zoom

Join us on April 10<sup>th</sup> for a virtual lunch (lunch is on you this time!) for ***Women Behind Bars***. The program will be presented by Centre County Community Conferencing members **Elizabeth Siegelman** and **Leslie Laing**, who will share their

experiences working with the justice system to preserve human dignity and prevent recidivism. Elizabeth is the Facilitator Coordinator for Centre County Community Conferencing. Leslie is also a volunteer for the Pennsylvania Prison Society.

Community Conferencing Centre County is under the Center for Alternatives in Community Justice (CACJ) and in collaboration with Centre Peace. Conferencing is a voluntary process of intentional dialogue between individuals directly impacted by a conflict, dispute, or crime. More: [Centre County Community Conferencing](#).

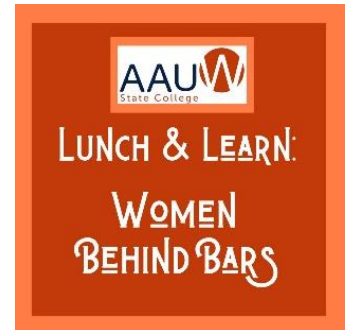
Learn about local reform efforts and how we can contribute to reforming attitudes, policies, and practices.

The ways in which women are impacted by their time behind bars will be addressed.

**Share flyer:** [April 10 Lunch & Learn: Women Behind Bars](#)

**Join Zoom Meeting:**

<https://drew.zoom.us/j/97675241508>





## Honoring Vasundara Varadan, AAUW State College Treasurer at April 27 CCCHS Volunteer Dinner

This year's Centre County Council of Human Services Volunteer of the Year recognition dinner for nominated council member organizations volunteers will be held on **Thursday, April 27 at the Penn Stater**. The Cash Bar will begin at 5:45 pm and Dinner will be served at 6:30 pm. The cost of the dinner is \$45 per person.

We plan to fill a table there to honor our CCCHS volunteer, branch treasurer **Vasundara Varadan**. If you would like to attend, please send a check for \$45 made out to "SCAUW Inc." (one "A," not 2) to Vasundara Varadan, 746 East McCormick, State College 16801 **by April 15**. Write "CCCHS dinner" in the memo line.

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## NOMINATIONS

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### AAUW State College Officer Slate for 2023-2025

Leadership: No nominees were identified for Co-Presidents. We recommend that the Executive Committee continue its leadership role for 2023-24.

Co-Presidents Elect: **Grace Hampton** and **Lizette Kopco**

VP for Finance: Not filled at the recommendation of the current VP Finance

VP Membership: **Carline Crevecoeur** and **Sophie Penney Leach**

VP Program: **Claire Milner** and **Betsy Manlove** (Nina Cowart continues)

Secretary: **Nancy Weinreb** (Chriss Schultz continues)

Treasurer: **Vasundara Varadan**

With the exception of the President-Elect position (serving for one year with the option to run for President after that), terms are for two years. The election will be held on or before the annual Membership Meeting/Awards & Scholarship banquet (date in early June, TBA). Additional nominations from branch members will be allowed (with permission of the nominee).

I commend the members of the Nominations Committee for their hard work and attentiveness to our tasks: Carol-Beth Book, Sherry Crassweller, Nancy Weinreb, and Amy Wilson.

*--Respectfully submitted, Mary Dupuis, Nominations Chair*

## Spring Primary Election - May 16

If you requested a mail-in ballot to vote in the May 16 primary election, please hold off on sending it in until you have reviewed the AAUW State College column on the election from our Public Policy Co-Chairs that will be sent via eblast as soon as the information is available.

School board candidates are being interviewed on C- NET **Thursday April 13, 9 am - 12:15 pm** and **Friday, April 14, 1:15 pm - 5:45 pm**. The interviews will include all primary candidates including potentially eleven SCASD candidates. Visit [C-NET](#) for additional information.



### Important voter deadlines

Thank you to the League of Women Voters of Centre County for their efforts assembling and sharing this information.

**Last day to register to vote - Monday, May 1**

**Last day to request a Mail-in or Absentee Ballot – May 9**

**Primary Election Day – May 16**

[Voter Deadline Details](#)

[Voter Registration Application](#)

[Absentee Ballot Application](#)

[Mail-in Ballot Application](#)

## My First Year on the SCASD School Board: Reflections and Lessons Learned



Winning a seat on the school board in 2021 was both exciting and daunting. As a mother of five adult children, an obstetric and gynecologic physician, a 16-year-plus community member, and the first Black woman to hold this seat, I have a vested interest in the education of our children and felt honored to have the opportunity to contribute to the decision-making process. Looking back on my first year, I can confidently say it was a challenging but rewarding experience.

After attending the many committee meetings last year in the offices behind Memorial Field at differing days and times throughout the week, I was introduced to the complexities of education policies, school funding budgets, new



curriculum purchases, and infrastructural repairs. I quickly discovered the many regulations and guidelines to follow to receive funding and policies that needed to be written and amended to meet the changing landscape. I also faced the challenge of balancing the different needs and conflicting perspectives of parents, teachers, administrators, and taxpayers and the difficulty in finding common ground. However, one of the most challenging aspects of the job was navigating social and political issues in the current educational climate. Whether it is debates over curriculum content, school safety policies, or social justice initiatives, these issues are complex, divisive, and emotionally charged.

To resolve the many challenges that welcomed me during my first year, I learned that the best approach to most of them was to tackle them directly by engaging the community with an open mind, a commitment to listening to all viewpoints, gathering evidence-based information from a variety of sources, consulting experts in the field, and above all, proceeding with a focus on the best interests of all the students. Following this approach allowed me to make informed decisions that served the best interests of our students while helping explain to the community the rationale of my decision in informal meetings held at coffee shops or Schlow Library and on David Hutchinson's talk show: The Discomfort Zone.

However, after carefully listening to the community and analyzing all the data, I learned that as a board member, I must also stand up for my values and principles, even in the face of opposition or criticism. This means being willing to make difficult decisions that may not be popular with all stakeholders but are necessary to ensure safety and well-being of all the students.

Despite these challenges, my first year on the school board was gratifying. Seeing how the board's decisions positively impacted our students and families is beautiful. Whether it is approving a new curriculum, forming a new wrestling girls' team, allocating funds for much-needed infrastructure improvements, developing our sustainability project with the Solar Power Purchase Agreement Plan with other local groups, formulating a new strategic plan and an equity audit plan, or hiring a new DEIB Director, and a new superintendent, I feel that we are



*AAUW State College College boasts three SCASD School Board members: Lauree Zydney, Carline Crevecoeur, and Jackie Huff.*



making a difference in the lives of our community members. I also appreciated the opportunity to learn from my fellow board members, who came with diverse expertise and experiences.

Moving forward, I know more work is needed for our diverse student body and community, but I am excited to continue serving on the school board and building on the lessons learned in my first year. I am committed to working collaboratively with all stakeholders to ensure that every student has access to a high-quality education that prepares them for success in the 21st century. I believe that we can make a lasting difference in our students' lives through engagement, transparency, and staying focused on our shared goals.

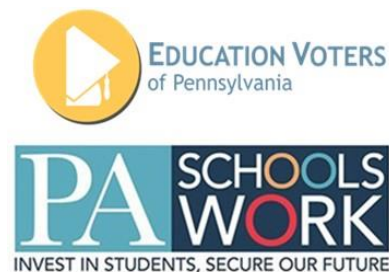
*--Carline Crevecoeur, AAUW State College*



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.

Those with Facebook can view the event virtually: [SCASD April 25 Facebook Meeting](#). Questions and input may also be sent to [all-board@scasd.org](mailto:all-board@scasd.org).

## Join branch public education group for April 26 Advocacy Day



Members of the Branch Education Committee will attend Advocacy Day with the PA Schools Work group in Harrisburg on April 26, to advocate for fair public school funding. Education Voters and PA Schools Work will provide trainings set up meetings with lawmakers, and provide lunch. We are hoping to carpool and all members are welcome. Registration is required. Contact [Sue Johnston](#) if interested in attending.

## Our poorest districts need more than an adjustment for inflation



With the Commonwealth Court's finding that Pennsylvania's school funding system is unconstitutional, followed by Gov. Shapiro's proposed billion-dollar budget increase for education, we should be celebrating. The reality is that there is no additional

funding for the state's poorest districts due to low tax base, several of which are in our area: Altoona, Blacklick Valley, DuBois, Huntingdon County, Mifflin County and Williamsburg. Students in low wealth districts still will be shortchanged of their constitutional right to an education that prepares them for success.

According to Susan Spicka, executive director of Education Voters of PA, Shapiro's 2023-24 budget is a 7.8% increase in basic education funding. According to Shapiro's budget brief, the proposed budget is "on par with recent inflationary and cost-of-living growth," which leaves our schools "treading water" without any real increase in funds. A coalition of education advocacy groups called *Level Up* is addressing this omission in the governor's budget. Please contact your legislators and ask them to vote for *Level Up* funding to close the equity gap for the state's 100 poorest districts; the list of these districts and information on the *Level Up* coalition can be found at <https://leveluppa.org/level-up-100/>.

**FIND YOUR LEGISLATOR ONLINE** or here:

Hon. **Kerry Benninghoff**, (814) 355-1300, 140 W. High St, Bellefonte, PA 16823

Hon. **Scott Conklin**, (814) 238-5477, 301 South Allen Street, Suite 102, State College, PA 16801

Hon. **Paul Takac** (814) 308-0569, 216 W. Hamilton Ave. State College, PA 16801

Senator **Wayne Langerholc Jr.**, (814) 765-0555, 218 South 2nd Street, Clearfield, PA 16830

Senator **Cris Dush**, (814) 355-0477, 301 N. Spring Street, Bellefonte, PA 16823

*-- AAUW State College Education Committee*

## Volunteering at the Used Book Sale



Volunteers are the heart of  
the Used Book Sale. Join us!

Volunteer sign-ups for our May 13-16 Used Book Sale are underway! We need volunteer cashiers, table sorters, and in the Hospitality area (where we greet incoming shoppers).

### **Greatest Needs:**

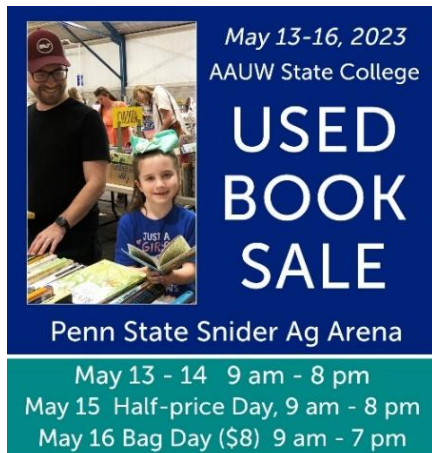
For Move-in Night (May 11) we need many more people to unpack book boxes and arrange books on tables. On Monday and Tuesday of the sale we need lots more help for the 3:00 pm – 8:00 pm shifts.

**SIGN UP HERE:** <https://forms.gle/AjsPcvuufdbvjYin7>

Please contact [Donna Trapp](#) or [Mary Ann Blair](#) if you have any questions. Thank you for your commitment to this sale – we could not do it without you!

*--Donna Trapp, AAUW State College Used Book Sale Co-Chair*

## Help promote the May 13-16 AAUW State College Used Book Sale



With our Used Book Sale around the corner, your help is needed to help promote this all-important event, which is the primary funder of the local grants we award for projects that reflect our mission, local scholarships to returning adult women students, branch programs, and more. How to help:

Forward the sale flyer (link below) to friends, neighbors, colleagues, book clubs, special interest groups, neighborhood associations, work groups, and any group you are a part of.

**FLYER:** [May 13-16 Used Book Sale flyer](#)

**USED BOOK SALE PAGE:** For complete sale information, visit: [https://aauwstatecollege.org/used\\_book\\_sale\\_centre\\_county/](https://aauwstatecollege.org/used_book_sale_centre_county/).

(The QR code on the lower right corner of the flyer directs people to the Used Book Sale page on the branch website.)

**SOCIAL MEDIA:** Like us and Follow us and repost our posts prior to and during the sale via [AAUW State College Facebook](#) and [AAUW State College Instagram](#). Most important, chat up the sale with your own followers. We are our own best promoters.

**BOOK SALE PHOTOGRAPHERS NEEDED:** We need some members who would be able to photograph shoppers and volunteers at the sale. If you have a good camera and a few hours to spare **May 13-16 (plus May 11, Move-in Night)**, contact [Connie Schroeder](#).

## STEM Committee updates, March/April 2023



ENVISION: STEM Career Day Supporting Young Women hosted by the College of Science Outreach Office took place February 25. Nearly 130 middle and high school students attended, with about 75 workshop volunteers shared hands-on science

activities, and about 30 Penn State students and community members served as STEM mentors. Our branch is a sponsor of this program.

The Eberly Sustainability Council is organizing an Earth Day event at Shaver's Creek for April 24, 2023 at 1-6 pm. Congratulations to STEM Co-Chair Carol-Beth Book who has recently become an Education Program Specialist!



Discovery Space and The Rivet hosted a special session of their Glow program, which is tailored to providing hands-on experiences to middle school girls in rural communities with

things they don't often get in school - like woodworking and digital design. Seven girls from Penns Valley participated in making a wooden clock. There are two Glow camps happening this summer at The Rivet for the same audience.

GaLS (Girls Loving Science, a long-standing AAUW program for Bellefonte middle schoolers), kicks off in the coming weeks with plans to visit and learn about local female STEM professionals. Our branch supports this program.

Penn State is hosting the national GWIS (Graduate Women in Science) conference this year. A lot of the speakers and workshops for this conference will emphasize the importance of connection and community to people in STEM. The keynote speaker is Dr. Pamela Harris (<https://www.pamelaeharris.com/>) who is a mathematician and is passionate about helping foster communities that reinforce self-identity as a scientist specifically for women and underrepresented minorities! Michele Crowl has been asked to be on a panel about careers in STEM. This conference is open to anyone. Registration opens soon.

--Michele Crowl, AAUW State College STEM Co-Chair

## DIVERSITY CORNER



### Cultural Empowerment for Women Lunch brings out a crowd

Over 70 people attended the March 14<sup>th</sup> Cultural Empowerment for Women lunch and program at the Penn Stater, sponsored by the Community Diversity Group with financial support from AAUW State College.

The focus of the spring lunch program was on *Women in Public Office*. The panelists included (left to right) **Amber Concepcion**, Centre County Commissioner; **Nalini**

**Krishnankutty**, State College Borough Council member; and **Vicki Wedler**, first female Centre County Commissioner. The panel was moderated by **Charima Young**, Assistant Vice President for Local Government and Community Relations at Penn State (far right).



### Join Community Diversity Group for April 12 program: *Navigating Interracial and Intercultural Relationships*

Join Community Diversity Group and State College Borough for their Cultural Conversation: *Navigating Interracial and Intercultural Relationships*. It will be



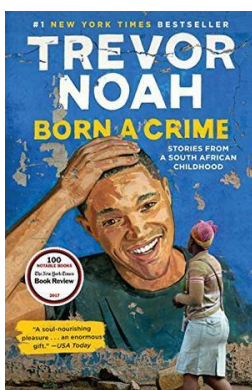
held on **Wednesday, April 12 from 5:30-7:30 pm in the State College Borough Building, Room 201.** The event is free and open to the public. Please RSVP at the link below to ensure there will be enough refreshments.

Interacting with people from different races, religions, cultures, and backgrounds can be enriching as well as challenging. Hear from individuals who will share their experiences, learn how they navigate interracial and intercultural relationships, and share your experiences!

**RSVP:** [Make April 12 meeting reservation here](#)

**SHARE FLYER:** [April 12 meeting flyer](#)

## ¡ADELANTE! Book Club to meet Thursday, April 20



The 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, April 20 at 2:30 pm.**

The group will discuss *Born a Crime: Stories from a South African Childhood* by Trevor Noah. Trevor Noah gives a heartfelt and funny recounting of his experiences growing up in South Africa as an oppressed person. Stories of Noah's life are interspersed with insights into South Africa's culture, systems, and history.

To participate with the group, please contact [info@aauwstatecollege.org](mailto:info@aauwstatecollege.org)

We warmly welcome new members. **Join Zoom Meeting:** [April 20 Adelante Meeting](#)

*Naana Nti, AAUW State College Diversity Chair*

## Penn State holds events for Sexual Assault Awareness Month



In recognition of Sexual Assault Awareness Month, the Penn State Gender Equity Center, in collaboration with other campus partners, will host the annual Sexual Violence Awareness and Prevention (SVAP) events. Events are open to campus and community members alike.

**Schedule of April events:** [Penn State Sexual Assault Awareness Month event schedule](#)

## Four Penn State women to attend NCCWSL, the AAUW student leadership conference



AAUW's National Conference for College Women Student Leaders (NCCWSL) brings together hundreds of young women from around the country for three days of leadership training, inspiration, and networking. The conference will be held in College Park, Maryland from May 31 – June 3. The workshops,

panels, speakers, and activities provide many opportunities to learn from experts, while peer networking allows attendees to learn from one another and make lifelong connections.

This year, four Penn State-University Park women will attend NCCWSL, thanks to scholarships provided by AAUW State College or AAUW Pennsylvania. They include **Lauren Katch**, a Ph.D. candidate in Engineering Science and Mathematics; **Megan Kelby**, Junior, Sports Journalism major with minor in History; **Lauren Mazzatesta**, Junior, Triple major in English, History, and French; and **Julia Raich**, B.S. in Engineering Science and Mathematics. Congratulations to all!

To learn more about NCCWSL, visit [NCCWSL Information](#)

## July 28-29 AAUW Pennsylvania retreat In Gettysburg – updates



The annual summer AAUW-Pennsylvania summer retreat is just around the corner. Plan to join us for this engaging and inspiring gathering!

**AAUW State College will pay the \$50 registration cost which also includes meals for any branch member who wants to attend the retreat.**

Conference-goers will be responsible for securing and covering the cost of their hotel rooms. A group rate is available for Friday night for a limited number of rooms so call early. (Information is provided in the link below.)

The retreat begins on Friday, July 28 with an optional Gettysburg tour and social event Friday evening. On Saturday, Keynote Speaker, Pennsylvania State Representative Donna Bullock, chair of the Pennsylvania Black Caucus, will speak on pay equity. There will be several break-out sessions, including two by AAUW State College members. **Michele Crowl** and **Candace Davison** will offer a session on STEM, and **Naana Nti** and **Sophie Penney Leach** will offer a session on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion.

Attendees may attend both Friday afternoon and Saturday or Saturday only. Complete conference and registration information is available at [AAUW Pennsylvania](#).

## AAUW State College Named Gift Honorees



The AAUW Pennsylvania Named Gift Honoree program recognizes individual and branch contributions made to AAUW National throughout the year. For each \$500 of total donations the branch is eligible to select one Named Gift Honoree. The AAUW State College contribution totaled **\$9,749**. The Board elected to name the following people as the AAUW State College named gift honorees: the Executive Board for providing leadership, and the Public Policy Co-Chairs for keeping us informed about

voting and legislative issues of interest to us as AAUW members. The following will be recognized at the AAUW PA Summer Retreat.

**Branch Executive Committee** - Susan Chyczewski; Nina Cowart, Sherry Crassweller; Linda Friend; Jordan Glover; Charlene Harrison; Sally Kalin; Connie Schroeder; Chriss Schultz; Donna Trapp; Vasundara Varadan; and Nancy Weinreb

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

*--Sally Kalin, AAUW-PA Branch Funds Chair*



## Vote in 2023-2025 AAUW PA officer election

### Nominees for State Board Positions

The AAUW Pennsylvania 2023-2025 Nominations and Elections Committee recommends the following slate to fill the open terms on the AAUW Pennsylvania Board: Membership Vice President: Karen Wellin, Valley Forge Branch; Finance Officer: Ann Echols, State College Branch; Secretary: To be announced

**ONLINE VOTING:** [AAUW-PA Voting Instructions](#)

Online voting is available now through 11:59 pm, Sunday, April 30, 2023.

## Membership discount for new members joining at Used Book Sale



Great news! Currently, there is a **50% discount off national dues** for prospective first-time members when they join AAUW at designated events. The AAUW State College May 13-16 Used Book Sale has

been identified as one such event. Members, please share this information with prospective members. There will be a branch information table in the front lobby at the book sale with membership applications. The following form may be shared with prospective members:

[Branch Membership form](#)

*--Charlene Harrison, Membership Co-Vice President*

# Welcome

New Members

**Laurel Zydney**

[laurel@email@gmail.com](mailto:laurel@email@gmail.com)



Hi! I have lived in State College since 2002 when I moved here from Delaware with my husband and three children. I am a member of St. Andrew's Episcopal Church and the University Women's Club, and since 2006, I have shared my life-long love of folk music by curating shows once or twice a month as a host of the WPSU Folk Show. I also host house concerts occasionally when musician friends are touring nearby.

My other major focus is K-12 public education. Growing up, I went to school in Ethiopia, Germany, and six places in the United States before graduating from the nation's first magnet school, Skyline High School in Dallas, Texas. I worked on school improvement initiatives in Delaware as a local, district, and state PTA leader. In 2011, I was elected to the SCASD school board, and my children all graduated from State High (2003, 2007, and 2020).

I earned a B.A. from Yale, writing my senior thesis on the Planned Parenthood League of Connecticut, a party to *Griswold v. Connecticut* (1965) which challenged restrictions on birth control and helped establish a "right to privacy." I look forward to learning about opportunities to advocate for women's education and agency as an AAUW member.

## Have You Heard?

Get well wishes to member **Jackie Esposito's** daughter **Bridget Esposito**. Jackie shares that Bridget is experiencing kidney and liver failure and is currently receiving medical treatment in Philadelphia. Prayers are appreciated.

Condolences to the family of **Lisa Herzog**, former member of AAUW State College. She passed away on March 20, 2023. She was a frequent attendee at branch programs.

Congratulations to AAUW State College member **Sue Werner**, who was recently named the recipient of the 2023 Mimi Barash Coppersmith Women in Leadership Award by Centre Foundation. The award recognizes women in the community who have made a significant impact through their leadership. In addition to AAUW State College, Sue is active with several other local organizations, including the Discovery Space, Schlow Centre Region Library, the League of Women Voters, Penn State Centre Stage, the Centre County United Way, and more. As part of the annual award, a \$2,500 grant is given to the non-profit of the recipient's choice, and Sue selected Discovery Space.



## Branch board meetings open to members

All branch members are welcome to attend monthly board meetings, held **the first Monday of the month at noon**, unless otherwise indicated. Meetings occur via Zoom and in-person at the College Twp. Building (Council Room upstairs), depending on the season.

There will be no board meeting in May due to extra hours spent on the book sale, so the next board meeting will be held on **June 5**. Link to attend: [AAUW State College Board Meeting](#)

Take a moment to learn what the board has been working on behind the scenes:

[March 22, 2023 AAUW State College Executive Committee Notes](#)

## Branch Bulletin deadline and publication date



Items for inclusion in the next issue should be sent to *Branch Bulletin* Editor [Connie Schroeder](#) by **Monday, April 24**. The Bulletin will be issued by **May 1**. Bulletins are also available at [AAUW State College](#).