



Reston-Herndon Area (VA) Branch

The AAUW Mission Statement: *AAUW advances equity for women and girls through advocacy, education, and research.*

President's Pen

Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex.

On Wednesday, January 15, 2020, four members of the Reston-Herndon Branch were present in the Virginia Statehouse when both legislative chambers voted to approve the Equal Rights Amendment. Virginia became the 38th state to ratify the amendment. Stephanie Abbott, Maureen Dwyer, Judy Helmich and I were in Richmond as part of Lobby Day with AAUW of Virginia informing legislators about AAUW's pay equity initiatives. We were so lucky to be with our sisters from all over the state on this historic day. The saga of the ERA is far from over and I know all of us will be watching closely as this fight proceeds through Congress and the courts.

The ERA is part of the AAUW "Gender Agenda" which was rolled out this week. The Agenda also includes:

- Economic Security issues like Pay Equity, Family Leave, Ending Sexual Harassment on the Job, Family Leave and Retirement Security;
- Education issues like defending Title IX, controlling Student Debt and expanding STEM opportunities;
- Foundational Rights issues which, in addition to passage of the ERA, include access to Health Care and protecting the Right to Vote.

Please take the time to review this important statement of AAUW's core initiatives at:

<https://www.aauw.org/article/aauws-2020-gender-policy-agenda/>

AAUW CEO Kim Churches also hosted a national webinar providing details about this agenda and AAUW's vision for the year. Despite a tight budget and a reduction in the national staff, AAUW continues to forward an ambitious agenda. You can watch a recording of the webinar on the AAUW website. The next webinar will be April 14.

Reston-Herndon should be particularly proud to be part of a recent shout-out from CEO Churches celebrating branches which have been awarded their first star in the FIVE STAR National Recognition Program. Our star was awarded for communications thanks to Dianne Mero for our stellar website and Ilene Banker for her amazing work on our Facebook page. Many thanks to you both.

Please read the details on our upcoming programs in this newsletter and save the date for our important diversity and inclusion program on Saturday, March 7. I'm also thrilled to announce that we have snagged a speaker from national for an important community wide update on AAUW pay equity research and initiatives which will be on Saturday, June 6. Watch the newsletter and website for details.

As always, my special thanks to all of you who contribute so much to the success of our branch. You are awesome!

Janine

MEMBERS

Membership News - Ilene Banker, Membership Vice President

Thank you Chico's for hosting our fashion and recruiting event on January 18, 2020. Several potential new members were greeted and encouraged to explore membership. Thank you to our models, Carol Flicker, Janine Greenwood, Fran Lovaas, Judi Ornoff and Joyce Sanders for volunteering at this event.

Our branch presently has 93 members. We have recruited 16 new members this year.

Members Supporting Members

We often have requests to keep members apprised of serious illnesses/deaths in the family within our branch community. Your help is needed with this issue. Please provide the names, contact information (especially important if the individual not at home) and any additional information she permits when you become aware of those who are in need of our support due to personal circumstances. Please provide all information to our secretary, Alyse Goldman, at alysegoldman818 @ gmail.com. The branch members will be notified as soon as possible. Please support those individuals who are in need with cards, meals, visits, etc.



We Earned Our First Star!!!

We received the following letter from Kendra L. Davis, Senior Vice President, Advancement and Partnerships of AAUW:

Thank you for your participation in the Five Star Recognition Program. After reviewing your submission, we are pleased to inform you that AAUW Reston-Herndon Area has received a star for Communications and External Relations!

We envision a bold future for AAUW that includes using technology to promote initiatives, share ideas, and build community with our members and allies. Your website exemplifies the value of technology in the fight for gender equity.

AAUW has made groundbreaking progress for gender equity through our training programs, impactful research, and bold advocacy efforts. This could not be achieved without the dedicated support of our members. With our continued partnership we will lay the groundwork for the next generation of women leaders. Congratulations and we look forward to your continued success in the Five Star Recognition Program. Nineteen other branches have earned their first star as well.



**From Our Book Group Facilitators
Alyse Goldman and Carla Heymsfeld**

Remember! We always have two meetings to discuss our books each month; the fourth Wednesday afternoon and the fourth Thursday evening. All members are invited to either or both. If you are planning on attending the Thursday evening meeting, please let Ellen Rugel know at ellenrugel @ aol.com

Our new books for the upcoming year are:

February: ***City of Girls*** by Elizabeth Gilbert

March: ***Code Girls*** by Liza Mundy

April: ***Where the Crawdads Sing*** by Della Owens

May: ***Becoming*** by Michelle Obama

June: ***Olive Again*** by Elizabeth Strout

July: ***A Woman of No Importance*** by Sonia Purnell

August: ***Northanger Abbey*** by Jane Austen

September: ***Moment of Lift*** by Melinda Gates

October: ***Free Food for Millionaires*** by Min Jin Lee

December: ***A Well-Behaved Woman*** by Therese Ann Fowler



Great Decisions - Judi Polizzotti, Co-Chair

In January we discussed the “State of Diplomacy.” Given the many challenges faced by the State Department, it was an interesting discussion. Our next meeting will be held on Wednesday February 19 at 11776 Stratford House Place, unit 501 at 7:00 pm. The topic will be “Climate Change and the Global Order.” It is the first topic for 2020 in the Foreign Policy Briefing Book which is available to order through fpa.org or for your Kindle or Nook on the Amazon or Barnes and Noble website. I hope to see you then.



March Meeting

Join us on Saturday, March 7, 10:00 am at Hunters Woods at Trails Edge Apartments (2222 Colts Neck Road across from Hunters Woods Center) to hear Lottie M. Spurlock, Director of Equity for Loudoun County Public Schools as we continue the conversation of diversity and inclusion. This should be an eye opening meeting as we talk about diversity and inclusion in our schools and nation. After the discussion, Trails Edge will provide a brunch for us, and those who would like can tour the facility. NCNW has been invited to join us at this very important meeting. Please invite your friends as well.



Earlier this month, both chambers of Virginia's General Assembly passed the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA), an incredible landmark in the decades-long battle to guarantee equal legal rights regardless of sex under the U.S. Constitution. Congratulations to our AAUW members from throughout Virginia who worked tirelessly over many years to make this happen. To become law, the ERA needed to be ratified by at least three-fourths of U.S. state legislatures — or 38 out of 50 — and Virginia became the 38th state to reach that milestone. However, because the ERA's deadline for ratification expired in the 1980s, the legal future of the amendment is uncertain. Regardless, the victory is real, as it shows an important momentum shift towards equality!



The census is a critical function of the US government required to be conducted every 10 years by Article I, Section 2 of the U.S. Constitution. (The first census was in 1790.) Why is this an issue of concern to AAUW? The collected data helps to determine things like representation in U.S. and state legislatures, and how to distribute approximately \$675 billion annually in federal funds to local communities. That money is spent on schools, hospitals, roads, public works and other vital programs. This means that the an accurate census count is vital to ensure equality among residents in the US. Census Bureau staff take a lifetime oath to protect your personal information. You can learn more about what will be asked and Census 2020 confidentiality on the Fairfax County census webpage. <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/topics/census>. Some of these topics have been controversial in the run up to this census.

Public Policy and Lobby Corps - Mary Zane and Judi Polizzotti Co-Chairs



Public Policy - We hope most of you saw the exciting news that one of the bills, the Building Blocks of STEM Act, AAUW lobbied for back in April was signed into law. Thanks to our tenacious advocacy, grants will be provided to actively recruit and encourage young women to participate in STEM education programs. This is a major step forward toward our collective goal of breaking down barriers for women and girls in STEM.

Lobby Corps - Reston-Herndon is proud to have ten branch members regularly participating in AAUW's Lobby Corps. We are grateful to AAUW for continuing this valuable and empowering program that keeps members actively engaged in moving our strategic goals forward on the national level. Our team meets at the Reston metro and travels together while we discuss the week's briefing paper. CEO Kim Churches has demonstrated her support for Lobby Corps by participating in the last several events. She is shown in this picture with Reston-Herndon Public Policy Co-Chairs Judi Polizzotti and Mary Zane. Lobby Corps will be meeting on February 27. We would love to have more members join us.

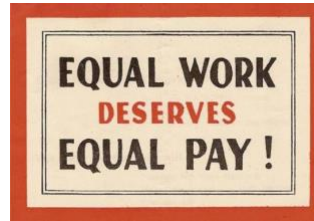


On Thursday January 30, seven branch members participated in Lobby Corps at the US Senate. We urged the Senators to co-sponsor the "Paycheck Fairness Act" in support of moving the bill out of the HELP committee. This is the most comprehensive solution to combating the gender pay gap..



On the state level, the branch sent letters welcoming local area Virginia elected officials.

March 31, 2020, is National Equal Pay Day



March 31 is the day when the earnings of white women catch up with the 2019 earnings of white, Non-Hispanic men. Below is an Equal Pay Day Proclamation prepared for Gov. Northam and presented to him during our January 15th Lobby Day meeting with the request that he issue it to the state of Virginia on March 31.

**THE COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA
2020 EQUAL PAY DAY PROCLAMATION**

WHEREAS, 57 years after the passage of the Equal Pay Act, women, especially minority women, continue to suffer the consequences of unequal pay; and
WHEREAS, according to the U.S. Census Bureau, women working full time, year-round in 2019 typically earned 82% of what men earned, indicating little change or progress in pay equity; and
WHEREAS, according to *The Simple Truth* (updated Fall, 2019) a research report by the American Association of University Women (AAUW), the gender pay gap is evident one year after college graduation, even after controlling for factors known to affect earnings, such as occupation, hours worked, and college major; and
WHEREAS, according to one estimate, college-educated women working full time earn more than half million dollars less than their male peers do over the course of a lifetime; and
WHEREAS, nearly four in 10 mothers are primary breadwinners in their households, and nearly two-thirds are primary or significant earners, making pay equity critical to families' economic security; and
WHEREAS, a lifetime of lower pay means a woman has less income to save for retirement and less income counted in a Social Security or pension benefit formula; and
WHEREAS, according to the American Association of University Women's *State Road Map*, Virginia ranks #30 out of the 50 states and the District of Columbia, with only 3 provisions to close its 21% pay gap; and
WHEREAS, fair pay equity policies can be implemented simply and without undue costs or hardship in both the public and the private sectors; and
WHEREAS, fair pay strengthens the security of families today and eases future retirement costs while enhancing the American economy; and
WHEREAS, Tuesday, March 31, symbolizes the time in 2020 when the wages paid to American women catch up to the wages paid to men from the previous year,
NOW, THEREFORE, I, Governor Ralph Northam, do hereby proclaim Tuesday, March 31, 2020, as **EQUAL PAY DAY** in the Commonwealth of Virginia, and I call this observance to the attention of all our citizens.
IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I hereunto set my hand and cause the official seal of Virginia to be affixed.



Cultural Arts Carol Flicker and Roberta Sherman Co-Chairs

We could not have ordered a more perfect day as twenty one of us took metro to the Library of Congress to view the Suffragettes exhibit - Shall Not Be Denied: Women Fight for the Vote. We learned about the struggle and how they finally convinced the populace to vote for this cause. It was fun to use their interactive map to see when each state ratified this amendment. After, we walked to the Longworth building for lunch in their cafeteria. What a wonderful outing. (Ask one of the participants about our trip home - took more than two hours!!!) Look for information about our upcoming trip to Hillwood Estate Museum and Gardens on April 22.





Branch Meetings/Events

- March 7** Diversity Inclusion Program presented by Lottie M. Spurlock, Director of Equity, Loudoun County Public Schools Please Note: Change of venue and time 10:00 am at Trails Edge across from Wells Fargo Bank in Hunters Woods 222 Colts Neck Road, Reston VA
- April 22** Cultural Arts Outing Hillwood-tours of the mansion, garden plus lunch
- May** Business Meeting Annual Elections, Refreshments TBA
- June 6** Save Date for AAUW National Speaker



Other Meetings/Events Of Interest

- April 14** AAUW Webinar
- April 17-19** The 2020 AAUW VA Conference celebrating the 100th anniversary of women's suffrage will be held in Alexandria at the Holiday Inn Hotel & Suites. For more information, click on this link: <https://aauw-va.aauw.net/conference-2/> Please let Janine know if you are planning on attending.



Regularly Scheduled Groups

- Book Groups** – 4th Wed (2:15 pm) at Herndon Senior Center, 873 Grace St, Herndon 20170 and 4th Thurs (7 pm) at Scrawl Book Store, 11911, Freedom Dr, Reston
- Great Decisions** – 3rd Wed (7 – 8:45 pm) An Evite will be sent each month.
- Lobby Corps** – Schedule will be forthcoming

Board of Directors 2018-19

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VP Program	Carol Flicker	carolflicker@verizon.net
	Roberta Sherman	shermanrs1@aol.com
Secretary	Alyse Goldman	alysegoldman818@gmail.com
Adopt-a-Spot	Fran Lovaas	franlovaas@comcast.net
Cultural Arts	Roberta Sherman	shermanrs1@aol.com
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Book Group	Carla Heymsfeld	heycarla@comcast.net
	Alyse Goldman	alysegoldman@icloud.com
Great Decisions	Judi Polizzotti	judipoli86@gmail.com
	Judy Skirbunt	judy.skirbunt@gmail.com
Newsletter	Roberta Sherman	shermanrs1@aol.com
NVCC Liaison	Janine Greenwood	janinegrnwd@hotmail.com
Public Policy	Judi Polizzotti	judipoli86@gmail.com
	Mary Zane	mpz_06@verizon.net
Ashby Ponds	Marilyn Silvey	marilynsilvey@comcast.com
Website	Dianne Mero	dmeroaaauw@yahoo.com

District Co-Representatives: Kate MacLeod and Sara Anderson

State Board Liaison to Reston-Herndon Branch: Susan Burk Burksu@aol.com

AAUW Diversity Statement: *In principle and in practice, AAUW values and seeks an inclusive membership, workforce, leadership team, and board of directors. There shall be no barriers to full participation in this organization on the basis of age, disability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, geographical location, national origin, race, religious beliefs, sexual orientation, and socioeconomic status.*

Vision: *Equity for all.*

Values: *Nonpartisan, Fact-based, Integrity, Inclusion and Intersectionality*

Branch Website: <http://restonherndon-va.aauw.net> VA3035

AAUW VA Website: <http://aauw-va.aauw.net>

AAUW Website: www.AAUW.org

Branch Facebook Page: *Reston-Herndon Branch of AAUW*