

# AAUW of Virginia Reston Herndon Branch

March/April 2024



## President's Pen

This spring is such an important time for AAUW. Just as the world around us is awakening and taking stock of what the new season brings, so does AAUW. As a part of that assessment, I encourage each of you to consider these three things:

### Vote

As an AAUW branch and national organization, we consistently and adamantly encourage voting in all elections. We have a critically important vote for AAUW coming up in April and I sincerely hope that each one of you will vote! The issue is eliminating the college requirement for membership in our organization. My vote will be to eliminate the requirement and open AAUW to all. We as an organization say that we value inclusion, yet as a result of this requirement, our organization is not inclusive. However you feel about this important issue, the most important thing to do in April is to VOTE! Here are the particulars on our opportunity to vote:

- Voting will take place online starting April 3.
- Most members will receive emails from [vote@simplyvoting.com](mailto:vote@simplyvoting.com) with their unique Elector ID and Password to vote.
- All members without an email address on file or who have unsubscribed from AAUW national emails will receive a paper ballot by mail. No additional paper ballots will be sent during the voting period.

Voting will close on Wednesday, May 15 at 12:00 pm ET.

The website address is : <https://www.aauw.org/resources/member/open-membership-toolkit/?emci=ff1122b4-9cd1-ee11-85f9-002248223794&emdi=502d9029-a9d1-ee11-85f9-002248223794&ceid=946865>

### Attend Our State Conference

Support our state organization by attending our state conference in Lynchburg, Virginia on April 13. It is going to be a great one-day conference. Because of the location, it will probably require that you go down to Lynchburg on Friday and return on Saturday evening or later. The keynote speaker, Dr. Alison Morrison-Shetlar is the first woman President of Lynchburg University. I met her last year when she participated in calls with

# AAUW of Virginia Reston Herndon Branch

March/April 2024

AAUW National to have Lynchburg University join AAUW as a college and university (CU) partner. I think the conference will be worthwhile just to hear her speak! And yet, there are many other great sessions that are planned.

Should you wish to go to Lynchburg for the conference, yet don't want to drive, just email me and I will see if a ride can be secured for you. Hope to see you there!

## **Consider Your Leadership Role**

In April, we will actively be looking for leaders of our branch for the 2024-25 AAUW year which begins on July 1. Please think about what leadership role you are interested in. One role that is a great introduction to the branch board is that of Secretary. The duties of this person are to take the minutes at the board meetings. These are generally zoom meetings and happen only 4 or 5 times annually. Through this role you will become aware of all the things that are going on in the branch. It is a vital position so that we have minutes from each meeting to look back on. There are, of course, other positions that need to be filled as well.

Please read the rest of this newsletter to learn about all the activities that are planned for this spring.

Cyndi Shanahan  
Administrator, Reston-Herndon Area Branch

## **Membership**

### **MEMBERSHIP NEWS- Judi Polizzotti, VP Membership**

Currently, we have 60 members per the AAUW Reston Herndon Roster. We had one more member whose membership has expired. We encourage all members to bring a friend or family member to our programs and cultural events. We hope to have an in-person event in the spring.

Since voting on AAUW National bylaws changes will begin in April, this is a good time for you to be sure you are receiving emails from national. If you have unsubscribed in the past, please consider re-subscribing so you will receive an electronic ballot.

# AAUW of Virginia Reston Herndon Branch

## March/April 2024 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 is not at home) and any additional information she permits when you become aware of those who need our support due to personal circumstances. Please provide all information to our President Cyndi Shanahan. The branch members will be notified as soon as possible. Please support those individuals who are in need with cards, meals, visits, etc.



### **PUBLIC POLICY- Shyamali Hauth, Chair**

Public Policy hopes you received the emails on the Salary History Ban and Paid Family Medical leave AAUW-VA is supporting and that you took action. National generously let us use their Two-Minute Activist platform for these messages. This platform allowed AAUW-VA to send the message to more than 1200 members and supporters across the Commonwealth and we will get feedback on how many reached out to their legislators. This technology is beyond the budget of state AAUW affiliates, and we are grateful to be able to use it.

AAUW-VA had a very successful Richmond Lobby Day in January with thirty-five members reaching the offices of nearly 80 legislators. This was followed by the first Virtual Lobby Day on February 28. Over 30 statewide members contacted Virginia State Senators, Delegates and the Governor by phone or email to support important legislation on education, workplace rights and reproductive rights.

Progress on AAUW-VA Public Policy Priorities is looking good as we approach the end of the legislative session on March 9. Several bills protecting reproductive rights have passed both houses along with a bill protecting same-sex marriage. Other important bills are expected to be passed. The next stop is the Governor's desk where he can sign, veto or ask for changes.

AAUW-VA Public Policy is looking forward to continued participation in Reclaim Our Vote postcard writing campaign to ensure voter turnout in the critical upcoming November election. If you are willing to help coordinate this activity for our branch or just participate in writing cards, contact Shyamali or Janine.

# AAUW of Virginia Reston Herndon Branch

March/April 2024



**WEBSITE RESTON-HERNDON BRANCH - Dianne Mero**

## **Looking for something in particular about our branch?**

Our branch website can be found at <https://restonherndon-va.aauw.net> (or by searching *(Reston-Herndon AAUW)* in your web browser). This site is a great “back-up” to this newsletter (edited by Roberta Sherman) and the weekly branch highlights (thanks to Janine Greenwood) which are both sent to all branch members. You can make sure your email address is up to date in the National database by reviewing your AAUW Hub “Snapshot” page information or check with Membership VP, Judi Polizzotti, and you will also receive all AAUW of Virginia member notices. In addition to timely posting of branch activities, events, and mission-related information, on the website you can learn about local, state and national AAUW priorities and how to become involved at each level. Additionally, there are various articles and photos posted and a current calendar of events and programs in case you have misplaced or wish to double-check information about branch events. The website also has a restricted “*Members Only*” section, requiring an entry code [VA3035], with member contact information including individual email addresses of members and officers and other branch information. Give it a look and while you're there, verify your contact information and let Judi know if there are any errors. Thanks, Dianne

## **GREAT DECISIONS - Judi Polizzotti, Judy Skirbunt, Co-Chair**



Since our February meeting was cancelled, we will discuss the "Middle East" on Wednesday March 20th. It will be a hybrid meeting on Zoom and in person. Evite will be sent to all members.

The briefing is available in the Foreign Policy Association Briefing Book on [fpa.org](http://fpa.org). The Reston Library also has copies available and a presentation on March 29th topic is “Science Across Borders”. They are a month ahead of us in the schedule.

See you then.

# AAUW of Virginia Reston Herndon Branch

March/April 2024



## **BOOK GROUP Alyse Goldman and Carla Heymsfeld**

Book group meets the fourth Wednesday of every month except November. Check the weekly announcements online to see either the zoom link or where the group will meet.

March: Enough, by Cassidy Hutchinson

April: The Death of the Public Schools, by Cara Fitzpatrick

May: Lessons in Chemistry, by Bonnie Garmus

June: The Premonition, by Michael Lewis

July: In the Form of a Question, by Amy Schneider

August: Siracusa, by Delia Ephron

September: Heaven and Earth Grocery Store, by James McBride

October: History of Home Economics, by Danielle Dreilinger

December: The Lost Manuscript, by Cathy Bonidan

We had nine members join us for the discussion of The Thursday Murder Club at the Reston Used Bookstore in Lake Anne. Before that six members met at Montemartre for lunch and simply enjoyed our ability to get together.



# AAUW of Virginia Reston Herndon Branch

March/April 2024

## Diversity Equity Inclusion Patty Hagan, Chair

March is National Women's History Month. This year's theme is "Women Who Advocate for Equity, Diversity and Inclusion. The theme recognizes women throughout the country who understand that, for a positive future, we need to eliminate bias and discrimination entirely from our lives and institutions."

(<https://nationalwomenshistoryalliance.org/2024-whm-theme>). This is a perfect theme for AAUW since that's what we do!

The Reston-Herndon Branch will celebrate Women's History on Saturday, March 16, at 10 am at the North County Government Center, 12000 Bowman Towne Dr, Reston. Our speaker is Lindsay Lowry from GMU's Center for Women and Gender Studies. Lindsay is a senior and team lead at the Center. They run the Centers' intersectionality workshops and is very experienced in transgender issues. Their workshop will include some history on transgender issues, including Native Americans beliefs about Two-Spirited People, use of pronouns, and safety concerns. Time will be allowed for questions and answers. Please join us for an interesting and informative morning.

April is a month that celebrates many different groups including:

- African American Women's Fitness Month
- Black Women's History Month
- Celebrate Diversity Month
- National Arab American Heritage Month
- National Deaf History Month (March 13 to April 15)
- National Minority Health Month

(<https://www.liveabout.com/april-is-national-month-calendar-3514983>)

And April 24 is National Administrative Professional's Day, formerly Secretary's Day. I include this day in the article since most Admin Professionals are women, some of whom have college degrees or technical certificates. If, like me, you were blessed to have a wonderful administrative professional, you know how important that person is to the smooth functioning of an office. Without these skilled, organized people, many CEO and managers would be lost.

# AAUW of Virginia Reston Herndon Branch

March/April 2024



**Saturday, March 9, 2024, 10:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m.** Northern District Meeting. Details are being finalized. Check email for place.

**Saturday, March 16 10:00am** North County Government Center for a talk from GMU student Lindsay Lowry of the Center for Women and Gender Studies (see details in the DEI article)

**Saturday, April 13 9:30-4:30 AAUW of Virginia 2024 Conference  
Hilton Garden Inn, Lynchburg, VA hosted by the Southwest District**

Everything you need to know will be in the AAUW-VA 2024 Conference Brochure. Included in the sessions will be the keynote address, an AAUW public policy overview, a "meet and greet" with the State Board, and ideas to be gleaned from our "Ten-Minute Toolkits." There will be plenty of time to socialize and network with your AAUW friends from around Virginia, do a little shopping with our vendors, and take advantage of pre-conference Friday (April 12) afternoon tours. See the conference brochure for more details.

Information on hotel arrangements at the Hilton Garden Inn also may be found in the brochure. Reservations can be made online by clicking on the link in the hotel description in the brochure or by calling the hotel directly (434-239-3006). Looking for something? All the conference details can be found on the [AAUW-VA Website](#) in the Conference section.

# AAUW of Virginia Reston Herndon Branch

March/April 2024



## Education Committee Report Roberta Sherman Chair

At our January meeting we discussed the following items:

College – We have targeted \$685 for registration and board for one student to attend NCCWL May 30- June 1. Discussion included having two non-boarding students attend and splitting the \$685, but it was brought to the committee’s attention that part of the experience is to have the ability to network with other participants, so we concluded to do one scholarship.

HS, Middle and Elementary – We would like to offer to buy books, perhaps a set of books, to be given to school libraries regarding women and girls. After discussing this issue with librarians at targeted schools, we decided to buy a set of books regarding women to title one elementary schools in Reston and Herndon and give \$100 to Herndon Middle School and South Lakes High School to purchase books of their choosing keeping in mind our mission.

We encourage the membership to contact their delegates and senators in the VA legislative body to support bills concerning education, especially banning of books.

We decided to discontinue our essay contest for HS students. With AI, we cannot be sure the students are writing their own essays which was a problem.

# AAUW of Virginia Reston Herndon Branch

March/April 2024

2023-2024 Leadership

Administrator	Cyndi Shanahan
VP Finance	Ruth Ruttenberg
VP Membership	Judi Polizzotti
VP Program	Judy Helmich
Secretary	Vacant
AAUW Funds	Stephanie Abbott
Adopt-a-Spot	Fran Lovaas
Cultural Arts	Carol Flicker, Joyce Senger, Roberta Sherman
Book Group	Alyse Goldman & Carla Heymsfeld
Diversity, Equity, Inclusion	Patty Hagan
Great Decisions	Judi Polizzotti & Judy Skirbunt
Newsletter	Roberta Sherman
NOVA Liaison	Jean Ann Linney
Public Policy	Shyamali Hauth
Website	Dianne Mero
Zoom and Updates	Janine Greenwood

**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](http://www.AAUW.org)

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