

AAUW TIMES

**Elgin Area Branch
1920-2020**



*Working for 100 years to promote equity for women and girls,
life-long education and positive social change*

September – October 2020

American Association of University Women

Vol. 26 No. 1

AAUW's Mission Statement

AAUW advances gender equity for women and girls through advocacy, education and research.

[Website – elginarea-il.aauw.net](http://elginarea-il.aauw.net)

[Email Address – aauw.il.elgin@gmail.com](mailto:aauw.il.elgin@gmail.com)

General Meetings

Calendar

Wednesday, September 9, 6 p.m. Zoom

September

Stepping Into The Future Creating Our Legacy

Welcome to a new year! We will look at our branch goals in this challenging time, including National AAUW's Stand Against Racism and its call to action. Please join us as we discuss our organization's policy on this and other topics. The conversation will be led by our Branch leaders and Diversity Chairs.

See message from National on this topic later in newsletter.

Sept. 2 **Current Movie Discussion Group** 4:30 pm Zoom
Wild Rose

Sept. 10 **Morning Book Group** 9:30 am Zoom
The Book Woman of Troublesome Creek.
Kim Michele Richardson

Sept. 23 **Evening Book Group** 7 pm Zoom
Women Talking, Miriam Toews

Sept 24 **Women & Culture** 1 pm Zoom
Native American MISS
Native American Mission Women

Thursday, October 1, 6 p.m. Zoom

October

Democracy in the Balance How to Vote Safely During A Pandemic

**Jack A. Cunningham, Kane County Clerk
Representative Anna Moeller
Senator Cristina Castro**

Learn about changes in voting procedures for the upcoming November election, and be a part of the discussion about the Graduated Income Tax Referendum. Please email Patty Golden (patriciapgolden96@gmail.com) with any questions you would like asked of any of our elected officials at least three days before the program.

Oct. 7 **Current Movie Discussion Group** 4:30 pm Zoom
13th

Oct. 8 **Morning Book Group** 9:30 am Zoom
Leadership in Turbulent Times
Doris Kearney Goodwin

Oct. 22 **Women & Culture** 1:00 pm Zoom
How Racism Effects/Affects US

Oct. 28 **Evening Book Group** 7:00 pm Zoom
The Other Einstein, Marie Benedict

Co-Presidents' Report

From Rosemary Dyson

Ida B. Wells: A Suffrage Activist for the History Books Fighting Racism and Sexism

“If this work can contribute in any way toward providing this, and at the same time arouse the conscience of the American people to a demand for justice to every citizen, and punishment by law for the lawless, I shall feel I have done my race a service.”



We have two 100th Anniversaries to celebrate. They are the 19th amendment to the U.S. Constitution and the American Association of University Women Elgin Area Branch tireless work to empower women and girls.

We justifiably honor fearless suffrage leaders such as Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton. But there are other fearless leaders who have been virtually forgotten. Ida B. Wells is one of those leaders. She fought tirelessly for the right of all women to vote, despite facing racism within the suffrage movement.

On August 18, 1920, Congress ratified the 19th amendment to the U.S. Constitution giving women the right to vote. But sadly, then as now, the law didn't apply equally to all. Due to the prevalence of Jim Crow laws, it took another 45 years — and the passage of the Voting Rights Act — for Black women to be able to cast their ballots.

While women's suffrage has often been associated with white women like Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton, it's beyond time for us to recognize that pioneering Black activists like Ida B. Wells were fighting a bigger battle — against sexism and racism — and faced obstacles within their own movement.

Wells, who was born a slave in Holly Springs, Mississippi, in 1862, was a prolific investigative journalist and suffragist who campaigned tirelessly for anti-lynching legislation. Her activism began in 1884, when she refused to give up her train car seat, leading to a successful lawsuit against the train company.

She took part in the first suffragist parade in Washington, D.C., in 1913, which was organized by the National American Woman Suffrage Association, as the sole Black woman in the Illinois delegation. Wells marched with this group despite being asked at the last moment to move to the back of the procession with the segregated contingent.

Motivated in part by racism within the women's suffrage movement, she went on to found and co-found a variety of civil rights organizations, including the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, the National Association of Colored Women and the Alpha Suffrage Club.

Wells fought for equality for women and Black people until her death in 1931. But her legacy lives on, including through the writing of her great-granddaughter Michelle Duster, author of *Ida in Her Own Words: The Timeless Writings of Ida B. Wells from 1893*.

Today, women of color are still unfairly disadvantaged at the polls, as certain jurisdictions work to suppress voting under the guise of preventing “voter fraud.” In the past 10 years alone, 25 states have put in place new voting restrictions that largely affect marginalized communities.

As we reflect on the contributions of crusaders like Wells, we can honor them by continuing their important — and unfinished — work on this milestone anniversary. For example, tell Congress it's time to pass the John R. Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act, which would restore voting protections that were stripped away from the Voting Rights Act in 2013.

Because it is only when we can ensure that every voice is heard that we can achieve the full promise of the 19th Amendment — and turn this commemoration into a celebration.

Letter From our National Board Chair and Vice Chair on Racism

Editor Note: *Since there are many mentions of Racism in this newsletter, the Branch Board felt it desirous to repeat this message from National that was in the August newsletter.*

A recent article in the Washington Post's The Lily, an online publication on gender equity, raised some important questions about racism in women's organizations, including AAUW. As an organization that is almost 140 years old, AAUW has a lot of work to do to address the structural racism that pervades our society.

On behalf of the AAUW board, we are committed to continuing our own growth, while leading AAUW to become more equitable and inclusive.

At the same time, we want to remind you of the progress we've made together in the following areas:

- Among our 2019-20 AAUW Fellows and grantees, 66% are women of color. Our largest and oldest
- program has funded more than 13,000 women to pursue graduate school education, many of whom are

luminaries in studies of gender, race and intersectionality.

- Our Work Smart and Start Smart salary negotiation programs also serve diverse audiences. We have a wide range of partners and programs, including a robust career initiative with Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) students, faculty and alumni, thanks to our Coca-Cola Foundation support.
- Fifty-two percent of our staff and 30% of our leadership are people of color. Our member-elected national board has three women of color currently. AAUW places great value in having diverse perspectives in prioritizing our projects.

Yet there is more we must do. That's why I'm challenging you to reflect on what you can do as AAUW members — individually and collectively — to make a difference. **For example, you have the power to reimagine what it means to be an AAUW member, beginning with our educational degree requirement.** As we strive to be inclusive of all women's lives and experiences, the time has more than come to let go of this unnecessary prerequisite while continuing to embrace education as a central and lasting part of our mission.

It's not enough for AAUW to denounce racism; we must take real, sustained and measurable actions to be the change we want to see in the world. And I know we all want a world where every voice is heard and every person is valued.

Sincerely,

Julia T. Brown, Esq.
Board Chair

Malinda Gaul
Board Vice Chair

Movie Groups

From Marlene Daubert

Reel Women for Real Women is on hold for the year. Therefore, there has been a request for the Current Movie Discussion Group to publicize the movies they will be watching, as many of you may be interested in watching them too. The movie group meets the first Monday of the month at 4:30 on Zoom. If you are interested in joining the conversation, contact Marlene Daubert. Here are the upcoming movies:

September 2 – *“Wild Rose”*.

Wild Rose tells the complicated story of Rose-Lynn, a woman on a quest to become a country music star, while also grappling with the responsibilities of being recently released from prison and a young mother of two children.

October 7 – *13th*.

Directed by Ava DuVernay, this award-winning documentary takes an in-depth look at the prison system in the United States and how it reveals the nation's history of racial inequality.

Zoom

From Marlene Daubert

In order to help us stay connected during this pandemic, your board has voted to purchase a Zoom account for this year. We will start by using it for board meetings and general meetings. If you lead an AAUW group and need access for a meeting, contact me.

Women & Culture

From Sue Schulz

September 24 1 pm Zoom
Organizer: Jennifer Ford

Miss Native American

Native American Mission Women

Often, as a result of jurisdictional legal disputes, there is a disproportionate occurrence among Native American women of sex trafficking, sexual assault, and women who go missing and are murdered.

October 22 1 pm Zoom

We will take a look at what is systemic racism by viewing Dr. Camara Jones's TED talk, *Allegories on Race & Racism* and then assessing how we react to it. This will be a safe space to talk about how racism effects/affects us.

Climate Change

From Sandy Kaptain

Here is a note about climate work in your own yard! SIYY: Start in Your Yard.

Wild Ones and Elgin Green Groups350.org are helping promote having native trees, bushes and plants in your yard. Fall is a great time to start a lot of these - but it has to be before the frost so they have a chance to get started.

If we help Nature with native plants, then we can have sustainable yards. Bugs + birds + plants + trees provide food for all of life that can feed all of Nature, not just us. Avoid hybrids that are insect-proof, deer-proof, so that life can continue. Let's all Go Greener!

You can join us on the 3rd Mondays at 6:30 on Zoom to share green ideas!

Local Scholarship

From Carol Wieg

Our 2020-2021 recipient for the Betty Medearis AAUW Scholarship is Griselda Alonso, who is attending ECC's Nursing Program. She is interested in becoming a Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetist. Following is a message from Griselda.

“My name is Griselda Alonso and I want to thank everyone who was involved in the decision making of blessing me with this scholarship. This gesture is a blessing to my family and myself; I have been working on my dream for many years and I am thankful for having all this support. At times I get discouraged, but then I think about all the people who have been there for me during this journey and I cannot let anyone down.

Being a single mom for many years has made me a strong woman; I am now re-married. The women in my family are not those to go out in the world and achieve their dreams. I am proud to say I am, and not many are happy to see this in me. But I am working hard for what I want in life for all those women who were told at some point of their lives they couldn't go to school and achieve their dreams because they had a family to take care of. I, too, have a family; but with a great plan, anything is possible. Thank you for believing in me!

I must show my gratitude by doing well in school and not giving up on myself. Once I am done with school, it will be my time to pay it forward and help others achieve their dreams like I am being blessed to meet my goals.

Thank you for this great opportunity; I will continue to do my best because thanks to this scholarship I am able to focus in school and worry less about figuring out how I will be paying my tuition and other expenses. May God bless you all now and always.”

Public Policy Report

From Shirley May Byrnes

Paycheck Fairness Act (S. 270): This bill would prohibit wage discrimination on the basis of gender. It would increase penalties for employers who offer different wages to women and men for equal work and make it more difficult for employers who engage in discriminatory practices to avoid liability. The bill would protect those who make claims against their employers, instituting new safeguards to prevent any retaliation. It has been assigned to the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions.

EVALUATE Act: Rep. Raja Krishnamoorthi has introduced the Expedient Vaccine Advice with Legitimate, Unbiased, Apolitical, and Technical Expertise Act, or the “EVALUATE Act” to require the FDA to consider advice from the independent Vaccines and Related Biological Products Advisory Committee (VRBPAC) relating to the safety and

efficacy of a COVID-19 vaccine before approving it for public use. The purpose of the EVALUATE Act is to ensure a transparent process in developing a COVID-19 vaccine that prioritizes safety and ensures public confidence. This act would provide another layer of scientific evaluation and review to the vaccine process.

National Emergency Student Vote Act: This bill was introduced by Rep. Krishnamoorthi along with Senators Bennet, Klobuchar, Durbin, and Booker. This legislation will help college students vote in the 2020 election despite the COVID-19 pandemic, which has led to many students not physically being on campus this fall. The National Emergency Student Vote Act will update the Higher Education Act to require colleges to provide students, regardless of whether or not they're residing on campus, with voting information, including instructions on their eligibility, reminders of election-related deadlines, clarification of voting options, and absentee ballot applications if their university is conducting classes entirely remote or online this fall.

The Heroes Act (H.R. 6800): In May 2020, the U.S. House of Representatives passed H.R. 6800, The Heroes Act. This comprehensive relief package would provide an additional \$3 trillion in financial assistance to small businesses, individuals and healthcare facilities. It would also improve relief programs by allocating \$10 billion in grants for small businesses, while extending the PPP covered loan period from 8 weeks to 24 weeks. In regard to direct assistance, The Heroes Act would provide an additional stimulus payment of up to \$1,200 per adult and per dependent. It also includes \$10 billion for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program and \$175 billion to support COVID-19 testing, contact tracing and healthcare response operations. The Heroes Act includes Senator Duckworth's bipartisan bill, S. 3724, No Copays for Veterans Act, which would prohibit any Veteran who receives care through the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs from being charged for preventative services related to COVID-19 testing and treatments. The bill has been in negotiations with the White House and has not passed the Senate.

IL Legislature: Rep. Anna Moeller provided a Summer Capital Update on August 12. In it she reported on Rent and Mortgage Relief Available to Illinois Residents, Unemployment Benefits and Fraud Alert, and Food and Nutrition Resources Available.

Fair Tax: The League of Women Voters of Illinois (LWVIL) provided the following information on their position. This fall, Illinoisans are being asked to vote to make it possible for the state to tax income at a graduated (Fair) rate. When you VOTE YES for the constitutional amendment on your ballot, you are voting to eliminate the requirement that Illinois taxes income at a single rate. This will allow for Fair Tax reform that will increase state income taxes only for those with more than \$250,000 in taxable income. That means that 97% of individuals and small business owners will see either no increase in taxes or will see a decrease. The state is

expected to raise more than \$3 billion a year through Fair Tax reform, raising money needed for Education, Healthcare, Human Services, and Safety. Visit the LWVIL website for more information.

Diversity **Centro de Information Gala** **From Patty Harkin**

Amanda Garcia has once again invited the Elgin Area Branch to partner with Centro de Information for its annual Gala. In the past, as part of the Diversity committee's efforts to support this valuable and trusted service to the Hispanic community, our Branch members have donated items for Centro's auction, contributed to a money tree, and gone together to sponsor a table.

Because of COVID, this year's benefit, whose theme is "United in Hope!," will be virtual and broadcast live on Tuesday, October 20, at 6 p.m. via Zoom and Facebook Live.

At the virtual gala, Centro will recognize award-winners and share real stories of Centro's impact in the community. The Gala will be free to watch, but tickets will be sold for an augmented experience with extra incentives and surprises. This year, for the first time, there will also be short performances by talented guests.

Centro will also raffle off prizes and present a scaled-back, online silent auction. Centro will not be assembling baskets this year because of social distancing requirements. Amanda asks us to help instead by donating items to be auctioned online. A list of ideas for donations may be found at MyRegistry.com/giftlist/Centro2020. Supporters are asked to purchase one or more of these items and donate them to Centro. Homemade, high value items (knitting, needlepoint, quilts, artworks, pottery) are also welcome.

Other ideas:

- **Gift cards** – of all kinds, but especially to local restaurants
- **Subscriptions** - HBO, Disney+, Netflix, Spotify, Amazon Prime, Audible, to alleviate lockdown boredom.
- **Things that don't cost a dime.** Travel miles, hotel points, timeshares. Invitations to stay at a summer cottage or urban condo.
- **Time and Talents.** Would you donate your skills as a consultant, dance instructor, gardening professional, chef either via Zoom or in person? Can you host a dinner party, offer a walking or bike tour, landscaping, dog-walking/training, or take family/professional portraits?

Promoting the Gala

- Like the event on **Facebook** and invite your friends.
- Hang a **poster** at your place of worship or business.
- Share printed **invitations** with friends.
- **Sponsor** this year's gala. Sponsorships are available for as little as \$500. The Diversity Committee hopes that *individual branch members could go together on a \$500 sponsorship.*

Talent

- **Centro seeks performers** (preferably with an established audience or fan base) who are able to fill 3-5 minute slots with a variety of entertainment. Can you or someone you know offer a tequila tasting tutorial? How about a song, a set of (clean) jokes, or a poetry reading? Contact Amanda directly amanda@colorworldcreative.com if you are interested. Final selections will be made by October 6.

If any of these ideas seems possible for you, please notify Sue Schulz sue.schulz@att.net, or Patty Harkin pharkin@gmail.com.

New Newsletter Schedule

Following is the new schedule for the 2020-21 newsletters.

September-October
November-December-January
February-March
April-May
June-July-August

Newsletter Editors

Newsletter deadline for the November-December-January issue is **October 20**. Please submit all items as a **Word** document to both editors.

Jeanne Hebeisen - jeanne@mc.net
Ina Whitehead - iwhitehead55@hotmail.com

Website

Website items may be sent any time to:

Marcia Cameron - mec515@sbcglobal.net
Nancy Lamia - nancylamia@gmail.com

In principle and practice, AAUW values and seeks a diverse membership. There shall be no barriers to full participation in this organization on the basis of gender, race, creed, age, sexual orientation, national origin, disability or class.

AAUW is open to all graduates who hold an Associate or equivalent degree from a qualified educational institution.

AAUW's Value Promise

By joining AAUW, we belong to a community that breaks through educational and economic barriers so that all women have a fair chance.

AAUW's Educational Foundation

AAUW provides funds to advance education, research and self-development for women and to foster equity and positive social change.

AAUW's Legal Advocacy Fund

AAUW invests in activities that prevent and combat sex discrimination and promote gender equity through support of litigation and educational programs.

About the Elgin Area Branch and AAUW Times

The Elgin Area Branch was organized in 1920 with 40 charter members.