



# ILLINOIS LINK

American Association of University Women – Illinois, Inc.  
Fall, 2021 – Number 312

## ***Message from the President***

***Lisa Cherry***



When I joined AAUW in 2013, I felt that I had finally found a place that I could put all of my “post retirement” energy. I learned that the AAUW mission and values were closely aligned with my own. I met members who possessed that magic combination of a big brain coupled with a big heart. I saw all of this very early on, but what I did not foresee was how it would help keep me anchored in the complex, troubled and uncertain times ahead.

We could not have known that we would face a pandemic, an assault on democracy, and that women’s hard-won and “settled” gains would be challenged. Perhaps, like me, you have felt a bit adrift at times. What I have learned is that I am surrounded by great navigators in my AAUW tribe. My colleagues read the terrain, remain flexible, and pivot to stay on task. We remain laser focused on advancing gender equity and economic security for women and girls!

We would have preferred that our Fall Leadership Conference be an “in-person” event. Alas, we did pivot to going virtual based on current health cautions. I am, however, very excited about the conference plans (details to follow in this newsletter edition) and hope you will be with us on October 30. You can anticipate engaging speakers and an information exchange.

Looking ahead to late spring, we are planning a return to an “in-person” State Convention. We will continue to monitor health events, but hope that you will “SAVE THE DATE” of May 6-7. The convention will be held at a hotel in the Lisle/Naperville area, feature wonderful speakers, and afford us the opportunity to enjoy the camaraderie we have all missed!

Please enjoy the informative articles written by my Board colleagues and let us know if we can be of any assistance. Stay well and Zoom in on October 30!

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## **2021 AAUW-IL Virtual Fall Leadership Conference**

AAUW members, from branch leaders to experienced members to new members, are invited to attend the 2021 Fall Leadership Conference on **Saturday, October 30 from 10:00 am to 1:00 pm.** This is a state-wide conference with an opportunity for all to learn and share. Calling on the expertise of members of the online Jane Addams Branch, we will use the Zoom format (advance registration link below) instead of the two or more in-person district meetings that were held in past years.

The welcome by AAUW-IL President Lisa Cherry will be followed by two speakers:

Deanie Brown, Diversity Officer for the Illinois Court System, will speak on Embracing Diversity and Inclusion by Uncovering and Overcoming Unconscious Assumptions

Kristin Olson, Grant Writing Specialist and Workshop Facilitator, will speak on Fundraising for Scholarships

Attendees will then move into breakout groups to share and discuss best practices, ideas, and changes within AAUW. State Board members will lead the breakout groups on topics related to branch leadership positions. Members planning to attend should complete and submit their pre-registration -- no registration fee. Breakout groups are numbered and listed below to enable you to make a selection at the conference for the group you wish to attend.

1. Branch Presidents: Focus on Leadership  
Leader – Lisa Cherry
2. Membership Vice-Presidents: Making Branch Policies/Procedures Guest Friendly  
Leader – Nann Blaine Hilyard
3. Program Vice-Presidents: Best Programs and the “Five Star” Criteria  
Leaders – Becky Glimco and Sharon Lee
4. Finance: Deciphering the Member Services Database and Much More  
Leader – Carolyn Schjelderup
5. Public Policy: Advocacy for Upcoming Legislation  
Leaders – Paula Purdue and Tracy Sherman-Falcon
6. DEI: Discussing Diversity, Equity and Inclusion  
Leader – Jo-An Takamoto Sabonjian
7. Open Forum: Why AAUW? – Sharing Our Branch Experiences  
Leader – Andi Danis

Each breakout leader will report to the entire group on one Key Best Practice from her breakout at the conclusion of the sessions.

Register in advance for this meeting and you will receive a confirmation email with a link to join the meeting on October 30th:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZUkdeisqjkjGNBLFIKuVGDTrtorPnSoutkf>

## Conference Speakers



**Deanie Brown** is an attorney living in Springfield, Illinois, where she serves as the Chief Diversity and Inclusion Officer for the Illinois Supreme Court and the entire Judicial Branch. She has been associate chancellor, chief of staff, and director of human resources and internal relations at universities in Chicago, Champaign, California, and New Orleans, and serves on several boards supporting equity, education, the community, and the arts.

Deanie's areas of expertise include nondiscrimination law, Title IX and sexual misconduct prevention and response, disabilities accommodations, and culturally competent conflict resolution. She earned a bachelor's degree with honors in the history of architecture and art from the University of Illinois at Chicago and her law degree from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, where she taught Rhetoric and Writing and was also coordinator of the Writer's Workshop at the African American Cultural Center. In addition to her law-related work in higher education, Deanie was a law clerk at a small firm in Chicago and at the Department of Labor in Washington, D.C.

Deanie is currently director of diversity, equity, and inclusion for the AAUW Springfield Branch, and has also served as college and university relations director for the Branch and AAUW Illinois, and as 2018-2020 co-president of the Branch.



**Kristin Olson** began writing grants when she was a graduate student at the University of Illinois Springfield. After earning her master's degree in nonprofit organization management, she worked in the nonprofit sector for seven years. Kristin provides comprehensive grant writing services through her consulting firm, GrantsGalore, which she established in 2006. She has submitted nearly 600 grant proposals and, with a success rate of 55%, has secured \$174 million in grant funding and government contracts for U. S. nonprofit organizations and units of local government.

Kristin is a former member of the Springfield Branch of AAUW, serving as Expanding Your Horizons Registrar from 2014-2017.

## ***2021 AGENT OF CHANGE JOY BOWLING***



**Joy accepting her award at our  
virtual state convention, May 2021**

Joy Bowling of the Aurora Area Branch was honored as the AAUW-IL 2021 Agent of Change recipient at our 2021 (virtual version) 96th State Convention for her 40+ years as a voter registrar, but most specifically for registering 67 voters in 2020 during a pandemic.

Before the Covid-19 pandemic, Joy could be found registering voters at candidate forums, several area churches and even at the MLK Jr Tribute at the Chicago Sinfonietta.

After the pandemic hit, she continued her work. Joy passed out QR code cards so people could register on their smart phones while they were waiting in lines at the food pantry. She registered 4 physical therapy assistants while at her doctor's appointment, as well as 5 dental assistants while at the dentist. Her proudest moment was registering 7 women at the Lifespring Center, where they offer safe shelter for women and children that have lost their housing due to addiction, abuse or financial crisis.

Joy also partnered with the Quad County Urban League and conducted two voter registrar classes that resulted in 10 African American new voter registrars.

She also participated in GOTV initiatives that included postcard writing campaigns and made 500 phone calls to GOTV.

Per the AAUW website "increasing voter turnout was a priority for the 2020 election. The more people who vote, the better our representative democracy will function." Joy's work of inspiring voters and connecting with activists helped get our country's first woman of color elected as Vice President along with changing the administration that was going in the direction that did not support equity for all.

***Congratulations Joy!***

## ***2022 AGENT OF CHANGE AWARD***

Is there someone in your branch who is an example of all that AAUW stands for and who has been a force for positive societal change in your community? Is there someone who has over the years made contributions to gender equity, inclusion, and the advancement of women? Do you want to recognize an AAUW member who has been dedicated to actively promoting the mission and values of AAUW and advocacy for women's issues? If so, then look for the Agent of Change materials coming to all branch Presidents in January. The Agent of Change Award has been given to Illinois AAUW members since 1984. This prestigious award is presented annually to an outstanding Illinois member who embodies the mission and values of AAUW and who has actively promoted change within AAUW or in the local/national community. Nomination forms and criteria will be provided in January to all branches statewide. Nominations will be due March 1, 2022. The award will be presented at the State Convention in May. For more information or for history about the recipients of the award, see [aauw-il.aauw.net](http://aauw-il.aauw.net).



***AAUW-IL Public Policy Update***  
**Tracey Sherman-Falcon and Paula Purdue**  
**Public Policy Co-Directors**



**Tracey**  
***shermanfalcon@hotmail.com***

**Paula**  
***paulapatchwork@gmail.com***

**AAUW Public Policy During a Pandemic (still...)**  
**September 2021**

2020-2021 was a strange year for the Illinois legislature. The Illinois legislators met for committees using zoom most of the time. At the end of the legislative session in May, our lobbyist could go into the Capitol IF she took a test 2 days before she wanted to go into the Capitol. The test had to come back negative and then the third day she could enter the Capitol IF a legislator asked her in. Not being able to be in the Capitol and the legislative offices really cramps a lobbyist's ability to contact legislators. Hopefully next year will be more normal but at this time we don't know.

On August 16th, Emily Deakin-Harmony from the Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability (CGFA) at the Illinois General Assembly facilitated a training on how to navigate the ILGA.gov website. There were 25 attendees that included public policy chairs and AAUW members, along with a few members from coalitions we work with on public policy. Emily was thorough, kind and an excellent teacher. We all learned more about the web site that shares all that happens in the Illinois legislature. Jo-An Takamoto Sabonjian made the connections with Emily and all attendees learned and enjoyed. We may need to do this every couple of years to bring new folks up-to-date and to help some of us seasoned members remember what we have learned. In June we wrapped up a busy and productive legislative session. Here is an update:

Ensuring Success in Schools Law HB 3223 passed. This requires appropriate, trauma-informed responses to the needs of every student.

Keeping Youth Safe and Healthy Act SB 818 passed. This updates the curriculum in schools (that choose to teach Health and Safety education) to be age appropriate, medically accurate, all inclusive, culturally appropriate, and trauma informed.

HB 155 passed. This allows SNAP, WIC, and TANF recipients to use their benefits to purchase menstrual hygiene products and diapers.

HB 641 passed. This requires that public universities and community colleges make feminine hygiene products available at no cost in bathrooms.

HB 156 passed. This provides that menstrual hygiene products shall be made available in bathrooms of every school building that are open for student use in grades 4 through 12 during the regular school day.

HB 310 passed. Provides that feminine hygiene products be available free of charge at all homeless shelters that provide temporary housing assistance to women or youth.

Equal Pay Day Resolution HR 220 passed.

Repeal of Parental Notice of Abortion HB 1797 did not come up for vote in this session.

HB 012 passed. Provides that an employee of a school district, public university, or community college district who has been employed for at least 12 months and who has worked at least 1,000 hours in the previous 12-month period shall be eligible for family and medical leave under the same terms and conditions as leave provided to eligible employees under the federal Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993.

HB 816 passed. Amends the Employment of Teachers article of the School Code - provides that, in addition to birth, adoption, or placement for adoption, sick leave shall also be interpreted to mean the acceptance of a child in need of foster care.

The Family and Medical Leave Insurance Act (SB 835) creates a state-run insurance program that allows Illinois workers to use 26 weeks of job-protected leave a year to welcome a new child into the home, to maintain a healthy pregnancy, for their own family member's illness, for reasons related to domestic or sexual violence, and for reasons related to military. This bill was developed last year with several of AAUW Naperville's members on the committee to get this bill ready to draft. AAUW Illinois will be working to pass this bill next year. WE NEED AAUW MEMBERS TO CALL THEIR SENATOR AND ENCOURAGE THEM TO CO-SPONSOR SB 835. Please share the information as well with your representatives, but the bill will need to pass the Senate first. Unfortunately, this is not a paid leave but that will be step 2. One of the reasons that women are not paid equally is that women end up doing all of these jobs listed above but can't regain their jobs afterwards. This bill is for women and men. We are excited to be a part of such an important issue for our members today and in the future. If you are a member of other organizations, ask them if they would like to support it as well.

We were not able to pass every bill that was on our important bill list but we made great progress forward in a very difficult legislative year. We appreciate everyone's support of our public policy and thank all of you who have participated to move our issues forward.

**Stay connected, engaged and active!**  
**Our AAUW mission does not happen without public policy!**



# Membership Matters

Nann Hilyard  
Co-Membership VP

## ***Reach for the Stars!***

Nann Hilyard

Amy Green  
Co-Membership VP

The bulletin board in my home office has few actual bulletins (those are on my phone calendar) but it's studded with mementoes. Many of them are souvenirs from AAUW events. This hand-painted wooden star pin is from a visit to the Jamestown, ND, branch back in 1996. I smile when I see it because I'm reminded of the friendship and fellowship I've enjoyed in AAUW over the years and the miles.



AAUW is still reaching for the stars! This coming year your branch can catch five of them. The AAUW Five-Star Recognition Program is back again! Each star represents an area of branch focus. As you read the criteria, you are likely to see that they address activities your branch is already doing. Document those activities, report them, and enjoy the starlight!

All the details and the reporting portal are on the national website (<https://www.aauw.org/resources/member/initiatives/5-star-program/>). A quick summary:

- Advancement – fundraising for the Greatest Needs Fund and membership growth and retention
- Public Policy – meet with elected officials to advocate for AAUW issues; stay informed with AAUW Action network
- Governance – have a branch operations plan that aligns with AAUW national priorities; create a succession plan for branch leadership; add a Diversity and Inclusion chair on your board
- Programs – hold at least four mission-based programs, including Diversity/Equity/Inclusion; and collaborate with another branch
- Communications – keep your branch website and social media up-to-date (cross-post content from your branch newsletter)

Last year four branches were recognized for three, four, and five stars. AAUW-Illinois is reaching for ten branches to achieve that status. We can do it! The stars are within our grasp.

*Questions about Five Star or AAUW Membership?*

Contact Nann [nbhilyard@att.net](mailto:nbhilyard@att.net) or Amy Green [ag2904@juno.com](mailto:ag2904@juno.com)

## **Laura Desmarais AAUW Funds Director**



### **Contributing to National AAUW**

#### **State Certificates of Excellence for Branches**

Each year AAUW-IL offers Branches the opportunity to recognize Branch members who demonstrated their commitment to the Branch. The Branch can award a Certificate of Excellence to a Branch member for each \$500 it contributes to AAUW during the fiscal year.

Criteria are determined by the Branch – going above and beyond, stepping up to the plate, demonstrating commitment to AAUW mission, any number of things. This past spring, 45 Certificates were awarded by 18 Branches. This is a fantastic way to recognize a Branch member.

#### **Guidelines for Contributing to AAUW**

There haven't been any significant changes over the last year that would affect how we donate to AAUW. Donations to the Greatest Needs Fund allow AAUW to direct contributions where they are most needed. This is usually to support a current initiative.

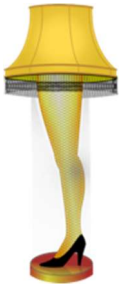
Contributions can also support specific areas to support the AAUW mission of Gender Equity:

- Economic Security for Women
- Leadership Initiatives for Women
- Education and Training for Women
- Governance and Sustainability
- Fellowships and Grants – Go to [aauw.org](http://aauw.org) for an extensive description of various scholarships and donation requirements

Feel free to contact me with questions regarding Branch fundraising or contributions: [lkdesmarais@gmail.com](mailto:lkdesmarais@gmail.com)



AAUW is a top-rated 501(c)(3) charity



## GRANTS AWARDED by AAUW-IL, Inc.



The following Local Engagement Grants (LEG)  
were awarded in 2020-2021 (FY2021)

**AAUW Lombard Branch** for the purchase of a Zoom License (\$150)

**AAUW Rock Island-Moline Branch** for the purchase of a Zoom License (\$120)

**AAUW Chicago Branch** for the purchase of a Zoom License (\$150)

**AAUW Jane Addams Branch** for the purchase of a Webinar Zoom License (\$400)

**AAUW Naperville Area Branch** for a Zoom program showing the film 'Paid Leave in Illinois-The Time is Now'. Grant amount: \$205.99.

**AAUW Downers Grove Area Branch** for the purchase of a Zoom License (\$150)

Total Amount awarded in Local Engagement Grants in FY 2021:

**\$1175.99!**

## HOW CAN YOUR BRANCH APPLY?

Your branch can be next on this list. The simple application forms can be downloaded from the website at <http://aauw-il.aauw.net/grants-for-branches/>. LEG (Local Engagement Grants) are intended to help branches fund programs that promote and reflect the mission of AAUW. LEG, Start Smart and Work Smart Grant applications can be submitted any time during the year and will be acted on within 30 days.

Questions? Contact Carolyn Schjelderup at [cs\\_schj@yahoo.com](mailto:cs_schj@yahoo.com).



## Call for Nominations for State Officers

Jennifer Urish, Nominating Committee Chair

It is time again to think about the officers that will lead AAUW-IL into the future by serving on the AAUW-IL State Board.

Nominations are now being accepted for:

- » **Program Vice President(s)** (position can be shared, state board experience required for one VP)
- » **AAUW Funds Director**
- » **Bylaws & Policy Director**
- » **Nominating Committee Chair** (state board experience required)
- » **Finance Director-Elect**

### Nominating Committee for 2021-2022

Chair Jennifer Urish  
Linda Knogl  
Lori Switzer

[jenniferurish@gmail.com](mailto:jenniferurish@gmail.com)  
[l.knoglaltonwood2018@gmail.com](mailto:l.knoglaltonwood2018@gmail.com)  
[switzer99@att.net](mailto:switzer99@att.net)

Please contact any of the above members if you know of someone who you think would be a great fit for one of the open positions, including yourself. **Nominations are due to the committee by November 30, 2021.**

## College/University Relations

Ruth Holst, C/U Director



As of September, eight of the fifteen 2021 Illinois C/U Partner institutions have renewed their memberships for the 2021-2022 fiscal year. Of the C/U members that are current and have representatives listed in the Membership Services Database (MSD), only three representatives are members of an Illinois Branch of AAUW. Due to the impact of the COVID pandemic on institutions of higher learning, there has not been much activity to report from the previous year.

If any Branch members are interested in contacting the representative for an AAUW college or university member in their area, please contact me at [holstruth@gmail.com](mailto:holstruth@gmail.com) and I will be happy to give you the contact information. If you would like to promote AAUW membership to an institution that is not currently a member, I would be happy to assist you with that process.

## **2021-2022 AAUW-IL State Board**

### President

Lisa Cherry

[lisacherryhome@aol.com](mailto:lisacherryhome@aol.com)

### Bylaws and Policy Director

Andi Danis

[danishouse@sbcglobal.net](mailto:danishouse@sbcglobal.net)

### Program Co-Vice President

Sharon Lee

[sforanlee@comcast.net](mailto:sforanlee@comcast.net)

### Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

Jo-An Sabonjian

[takamoto@gmail.com](mailto:takamoto@gmail.com)

### Program Co-Vice President

Becky Glimco

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### Nominating Committee Chair

Jennifer Urish

[jenniferurish@gmail.com](mailto:jenniferurish@gmail.com)

### Membership Co-Vice President

Amy Green

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### Districts 1-3 Director

Marcia Wherry

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### Membership Co-Vice President

Nann Blaine Hilyard

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### Districts 4-5 Director & President Elect

Donna Jean Simon

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### Director of Finance

Carolyn Schjelderup

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### Public Policy Co-Director

Tracey Sherman-Falcon

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### Secretary

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### Public Policy Co-Director

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### AAUW Funds Director

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### College/University Director

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**AAUW-IL Link**

Published twice annually by  
the American Association of  
University Women-Illinois, Inc.

