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### **President's Message**

Well, it played in Peoria and it was GREAT! Our 2023 Convention –“Everyone Is a Leader for Equity” hosted many wonderful examples of women in leadership. We were thrilled that Gloria Blackwell was able to spend two days with us and delivered the Saturday Key Note. Our Friday Keynote Speaker, Sharmili Majmudar, Exec VP at Women Employed gave us many ways to reduce the gender gap, even considering how we pay allowances to young boys and girls which can contribute to pay inequity.

On Saturday, Dr. Sharon Desmoulin-Kherat, superintendent of Peoria Public Schools, shared how she was closing the education gap so that young people could experience success. Dr. Sheila Quirk-Bailey is focused on aligning work force needs with programs at Illinois Central College by meeting students where they are and helping them get to where they need to be. Dr. Elsa Vasquez-Melendez, Assistant Dean at U of I College of Medicine spoke about how Unconscious Bias training is helping to improve healthcare outcomes and reducing Inequities in Medicine. We ended our session on a very encouraging note by hearing from three up and coming young women who spoke about their passions, their challenges, and their successes – Nabeela Syad is the recently elected State Representative for the 51st District; Emily Glimco, a former marketing and public relations specialist for the Illinois Library Association, who is engaging with her community in support of libraries; and Crystal Owney, MBA, an AAUW fellowship recipient and financial analyst, who works with high school girls through the AAUW STEMEd program among other activities.

Each of these speakers was inspiring and dedicated to the success of women. Many thanks to Becky Glimco and Peg Gallagher, for all their efforts in arranging comfortable accommodations, delicious meals, and wonderful speakers.

Congratulations to Marlene Daubert, our Agent of Change recipient (see more below). Also, kudos to the Waukegan and Springfield branches for their marketing awards in print and digital, respectively. New officers were elected unanimously through online and paper ballots and were installed at the business meeting. Congratulations and thanks to Danielle Byron and Lori Switzer, our incoming VPs of Membership, and to Caroline Jones, our incoming Secretary. Also, thanks to Nann Blaine Hilyard and Carolyn Schjelderup, for their many years of service to AAUW. The new officers will take on their roles in July when we commence our fiscal year.

Donna Jean Simon, [aauwilpres@gmail.com](mailto:aauwilpres@gmail.com)

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## Convention Recap

For two days, enthusiastic AAUW-IL members from across Illinois came together in Peoria for our 98th AAUW-IL Annual State Convention Everyone is a Leader for Equity. Once again, we saw and felt the value of meeting face to face. Once again, we were reminded that all of our actions and our words tell our story and set the path for success as we live the AAUW mission to advance gender equity for women and girls. Speakers were mission focused, providing us with action steps to support and challenge: the wage gap; educational leadership; legislative updates in Illinois; implicit biases in healthcare; and those younger leaders who are so critical to our future.

Certainly a highlight was having our AAUW CEO Gloria Blackwell with us Friday evening and Saturday morning. Gloria helped us celebrate our AAUW successes, such as the 6.3 million in fellowships and grants that AAUW has awarded for 2023-24, her work with the United Nations, and AAUW programs for young women like NCCWSL (leadership training for college women, May 31-June 3). New board members were installed, and our AAUW-IL President Donna Jean Simon provided clear leadership for our convention and beyond. The AAUW-IL Convention booklet is posted in the members only section of the [website](#); here you will see speaker details and branch highlights.

We want to thank the more than 65 members who participated on Friday and the more than 75 members who participated on Saturday. Pre-planning help came from members of the Pekin and the Morton branches. Our hosts, the Morton Branch, provided on-site attention to member needs and shared their exciting branch program, GEMS, with our membership. As expected, the opportunity to dialog with like-minded women and men, was valued by all. If you attended, [please complete the survey you were sent](#). Your comments are important as we plan future AAUW-IL events. The East Peoria Embassy Suites was a good host, with delicious food and kind attention to our needs.

We closed the convention with a send off to the Regional Convention in St. Louis, MO, October 19-21. Mark your calendar so we can send a strong contingent of AAUW-IL members to this multi-state event.

Becky Glimco and Peg Gallagher, Co VP's Program AAUW-IL



### 2023 AAUW-IL Agent of Change Award

AAUW-IL is pleased to recognize **Marlene Daubert** as the recipient of the 2023 Agent of Change Award for leading AAUW Elgin Area to produce innovative, effective activities which brought growth and movement to the Branch, and social and educational empowerment to women and girls in the community.

[Read more on the website.](#)

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### Survey Responses Needed - New Orientation Session for **Branch Presidents**

We are planning a Zoom orientation for Branch Presidents in June. Please complete this very brief survey to provide contact info for your presidents for 2023-2024 and preferred meeting dates.

[Orientation Survey Link](#)

Sue Topp, AAUW IL Northern District Director  
Jennifer Urish, AAUW IL Southern District Director  
[aauwildist@gmail.com](mailto:aauwildist@gmail.com)

## Branch News & Notes

The **Crystal Lake Branch** got some great publicity in April for The Girls Project (developed by Bookfriends) that provides hygiene kits for the teenaged female students in various African countries. [Read it here.](#)

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You are invited to the **Jane Addams** Branch program: *The Power of Storytelling*, on May 25th, at 7:30pm.

You show other people who you are and what you represent every time you communicate with them. When who you are and what you represent appeals to others, you can influence them and even change their lives.

Our program presenter, Suzie Garfield, addresses how to use stories and the storyteller's toolkit to revisit, review, and, if you care to, revamp how you show other people who you are and what you represent.

Dr. Susan A. Garfield has decades of experience in the worlds of business, technology, education, and performance. As a computer programmer, teacher, trainer, storyteller, coach, and mentor, she faces any question or challenge with an exploratory, agile, "yes and" approach. Suzie currently speaks, consults, and otherwise applies story to promote personal and professional effectiveness.

Suzie holds Bachelor's and Master's degrees in Mathematics and in Literature, a Ph.D. in Humanities/Comparative Literature, an MBA, and certification as a PMP (Project Management Professional). In both her personal and professional life, she has seen again and again how intention, expression, and interpretation converge to support and to subvert relationships, outcomes, and results.

Zoom registration in advance; upon registration you will receive an email with the Zoom meeting link. Any questions, contact Kate Skegg by email [aauwjaneaddams@gmail.com](mailto:aauwjaneaddams@gmail.com)

**Register in Advance**

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*month.*

Our Mission: Gender Equity & Economic Security

Our Values: Intersectionality Inclusive Intergenerational Empowering

Our Focus: Economic Security Education Advocacy



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