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connection

From the President

The Central States Regional Conference was held in St. Louis, MO on October 19-21. 156 AAUW members attended from Arkansas, Georgia, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, North Carolina, Ohio, Oklahoma, Texas, Wisconsin, West Virginia, and Illinois. Missouri had the most members attending (of course); however, Illinois had the next largest attendance with 25. The Naperville, Wheaton – Glen Ellyn, Chicago, Aurora, Rock Island – Moline, Springfield, Crystal Lake, Decatur, Palos – Orland, Waukegan, Quincy, and Jane Addams branches were represented. A good showing by our state (see photo below).

A special thank you goes out to **Deanie Brown**, who presented on “Unconscious Assumptions and Implicit Bias” on the first afternoon which was very well received and reviewed. Also congratulations to the following Illinois members who shared their knowledge and expertise at Swap Shops during the conference, whose sessions were also very well received and reviewed:

- **Nikki Batsch** on “A Successful Strategy for Meaningful Mission-Based Programs”;
- **AJ Conroy**, on “Coloring Books for Equality”;
- **Carol Heisler** on “Sanitary Pads for African Girls”;
- **Kate Skegg**, on “Forming a New Online / Virtual Branch”.

Lisa Cherry, the Illinois Legacy Circle Champion spoke about the benefits of the Legacy Circle and shared her reasons for committing to Legacy Circle.

Gloria Blackwell, our CEO attended all three days and spoke very movingly about “Advancing Equity Together: Manifesting AAUW’s Mission for a Strong Future”. She also hosted a Town Hall to answer questions from the attendees. Meghan Kissell, AAUW Senior Policy Director, spoke in a plenary session on “ERA –Because Equality is Overdue” as well as in Swap Shop sessions. National Board members and Committee Chairs also were represented.

I want to give a huge shout out to **Carol Heisler** who was our state representative on the Planning Committee and gave a delightful closing to the conference. She spent a great many hours in meetings on behalf of all of us and I can’t thank her enough for all she did.

Many of you have asked for dates and locations for our State Convention. Peg Gallagher and Becky Glimco, our VPs of Programs, have provided that information below.

The Holidays are upon us. I wish everyone of you many reasons to be thankful and happy reunions with family and friends and every blessing in this season of thanks.

[Donna Jean Simon](#)



AAUW-IL State Convention: Celebrating 100 Years of Empowering Women

April 19-20, 2024, Elgin Community College, Elgin, IL

AAUW-IL is 100! Join your friends and colleagues in Elgin, IL as we celebrate 100 years of Advancing Equity for Women and Girls in Illinois! We'll have an engaging program focused on saluting our accomplishments and pursuing new ways to support women as we look forward to the next 100 years. Watch for details on registration, programming, and activities on the AAUW-IL website and via the monthly Connection.

Venue: **University and Business Center at Elgin Community College** - As AAUW has deep roots supporting academic opportunities for women, it seems fitting that we should gather for this significant anniversary at an educational institution. The conference center at Elgin Community College (ECC) in Elgin, IL is perfectly poised as the setting for us to come together. Elgin is situated between Chicago and Rockford on the scenic Fox River Valley and home to Elgin Area Branch, an active AAUW-IL branch.

Hotel: [The Holiday Inn & Suites Chicago Northwest](#) - Elgin, a contemporary hotel just off I90 is holding a block of rooms for us. This full service hotel is less than 5 miles from the ECC. We have a free shuttle to transport us to and from the Friday evening convention session. The address for the hotel is 495 Airport Road, Elgin, IL 60123. The cost for the double queen standard room is \$109 and the junior king suite is \$124 (plus tax).

For your convenience, a booking link and group code has been created. To receive the honored discounted rates per night, please click on the link below, customized to your group's name.

[Click here to Reserve Your Room in the AAUW-IL Block](#)

Group Code: AAU

You can also make reservations by calling 847.488.9000 but you have to say that you are part of "AAUW-IL Room Block" to receive the discounted rate.



Report from St. Louis Central States Conference

Reaching New Heights--Together

October 19 to 21, 2023

Carol Heisler, AAUW-IL Nominating Chair

AAUW-IL had 24 dedicated members attend the Central States Conference in St. Louis. The Missouri State AAUW lead the way with participation from other Central State members serving on the planning committee. Speakers included Lisa Maatz (pictured above with Carol Heisler), Public Policy and Organizational Consultant, Gloria Blackwell, AAUW CEO. Our National staff was represented by Megan Kissell, Senior Public Policy Director, National Board Members Malinda Gaul and Jeanie Latz and other members of AAUW's National Committees. Our own Lisa Cherry recognized Legacy Circle Members.

Deanie Brown of the Springfield Branch spoke on Unconscious Bias. Carol Heisler, (Sanitary Pads Project) of Crystal Lake Area Branch, Kate Skegg (Forming a Virtual Branch) of the Jane Addams Branch and AJ Convoy (Coloring Books for Equality) of the Chicago Branch lead "Swap Shops" on topics of interest to members. There were multiple opportunities to learn from other branches since there were 40 swap shops held in the 3 days.

Topics of presentations included the future of AAUW, Gender Pay Gap, Gen Z, Gender, Title IX and Student Debt among others. Interspersed with these serious topics were inclusion exercises, moving and grooving, and a dramatic visit with women in history including Barbie. Thursday night included a taste of St. Louis with pretzels, frozen custard, and toasted ravioli.

Based on the success of this event, Virginia is planning its own Mid-Atlantic Conference in June!

From the State Board

Call for nominations/suggestions for AAUW-IL Board positions for 2024– 2026.

Open positions will be—President, 2 Vice Presidents of Programs, Funds Director, Bylaws and Policy Chair and Nominating Chair. These are two-year terms.

AAUW has been fortunate to have so many wonderful and dedicated leaders but we need your help going forward. If you or another member has an interest in one of these positions, please contact Carol Heisler

The slate is presented to the membership prior to the convention and voting occurs at the convention business meeting.

ABCD Book Group

The new AAUW-IL state-wide ABCD book group will meet online on Tuesday December 5 at 7 pm to discuss *The Sum of Us*. This book comes in two editions - an extended adult version and a "teen" version. Read either one, and you will have the basic ideas.

Further books on the overall theme of families fighting poverty in the US will be -

- January: ***Three Girls from Bronzeville*** by Dawn Turner-Trice
- February: ***Nomadland*** by Jessica Bruder
- March: ***Forgotten Girls*** by Monica Potts

As we move forward, we would appreciate your help as moderators if needed. Thanks to Kate Skegg and Elaine Fisher from the Jane Addams Branch who will coordinate the Zoom meetings.

All AAUW members and guests are welcome to meetings. Questions? Contact Carolheisler@gmail.com

Register in Advance

How to Support AAUW's Mission

Our individual tax deductible donations support AAUW's ability to promote equality for women and girls. This is the critical work of AAUW.

Individual donations can be made through the new AAUW.org website. After logging in, click the red **DONATE** button on the top right of the home page. You will see the following funds listed with descriptions. At the end of each fund, there is a **Count Me In** button. After selecting your fund, you will be directed to a form to enter personal and electronic payment information. Once completed, you will receive an email receipt for your tax records. If you want to donate to more than one fund, you will have to repeat this process.

If you are using a personal check for your donation, make the check out to AAUW. Indicate the Fund name on the memo line of the check. Mail the check to: AAUW Inc., P.O. Box 98045, Washington D.C., 20090-8045. AAUW will acknowledge your donation in writing.

If you have questions about how to donate to AAUW, contact me: Laura Desmarais, Funds Chair at lkdsmarasi@gmail.com

[Keep reading for information about all the funds.](#)

Branch News



and her handling of the 1973 Yom Kippur War. The biopic, written by Nicholas Martin and starring Helen Mirren as Golda, tells an adapted version of the real-life event.

The "Golda" movie is no longer on local release, but it is available to buy (\$14.99) or rent (\$5.99) for streaming through Apple TV, Google Play, Prime Video, or Vudu - see details at the film website: <https://bleeckerstreetmedia.com/golda>

Advance registration is required. If you have any questions, contact Kate Skegg by email at aauwjaneaddams@gmail.com

Register in Advance



WAUKEGAN AREA BRANCH
Quilt raffle

Holiday WREATHS

60" x 72"

Made by Nann Blaine Hilyard

Tickets \$5 each or 3 for \$10.00

Drawing Saturday, December 2, 2023

Check payable to Waukegan AAUW, mailed to Nann, 511 College Ave., Winthrop Harbor, IL 60096 OR Paypal, email nbhilyard@att.net

Proceeds benefit
AAUW Greatest Needs Fund

If your branch has a program or recognition or an idea you'd like to share, please [email Jennifer Urish](#) by the 14th of each month.

Our Mission: Gender Equity & Economic Security

Our Values: Intersectionality Inclusive Intergenerational Empowering

Our Focus: Economic Security Education Advocacy



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