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From the President

AAUW developed the 5-Star Program to work with Branches to develop programing that supports the AAUW mission. Yes, they have been busy redefining it and are behind. BUT they are catching up!!

Congratulations to our Branches who earned stars for Fiscal Year 2023 (7/2022-6/2023)!

4 stars - Naperville Area; Rockford Area;
3 stars - Aurora; Elmhurst Area Branch NFP; Springfield;
2 stars - Chicago Inc.; Elgin Area; Rock Island-Moline; Palos-Orland Area
1 star - Crystal Lake Area; Decatur; Batavia-Geneva-St. Charles

Criteria for FY 2024 and FY 2025 are now on the AAUW website. Branch Presidents have recently received a survey to report Branch activities for FY 2024 (July 2023 to June 2024). Please take time to complete the survey. The survey is used to determine how many Stars your Branch has earned AND you get 1 point for completing it! How easy it that??

The best news is that the 5 Star Criteria for this current fiscal year has already been posted. Branch Boards are able to review these criteria and make programing decisions accordingly. Wouldn't it be great if every Branch in Illinois earns one star this year! Review the criteria and see how easy that would be.

Laura Desmarais
aauwilpres@gmail.com

From the State Board

👤 Help Wanted - Convention Planning Committee

Planning for the 2025 Convention is underway and we're seeking a few people to be on the planning committee. You do not have to be an expert, simply willing to share your ideas and opinions on other ideas that arise. The 2025 Convention is expected to be in late April 2025 in Springfield, Illinois.

Members from any Illinois branch, who are willing to serve, please email aauwilprograms@gmail.com before October 1st to be added to the committee. The planning committee will meet via Zoom and may have some discussions via email. 2024 was the 100 anniversary of AAUW-IL and 2025 is the 100th anniversary of our convention, let's make it memorable together!

Regards,
Kathy Battee-Freeman (Springfield)
Jo-An Takamoto-Sabonjian (Waukegan) | Co-Vice Presidents Programs

Public Policy

I am honored to have been asked to serve as co-Director Public Policy for AAUW IL. Karen introduced me last month. Including my wife's active involvement with AAUW that led to my participation. I would like to share a bit more. We do have two daughters, three granddaughters and two grandsons. One daughter is a special education coordinator in Minnesota, her husband is a special education teacher, and our other daughter taught in Slovakia and coordinated a volunteer program in Cambodia.

From this you might expect that the AAUW action priorities are important to me. As a reminder they do include:

- Supporting a strong system of public education that promotes gender fairness, equity, diversity, inclusivity, and addresses the barriers and implicit biases that hinder the advancement of women and girls;
- To achieve economic security for all women;
- To guarantee equality, individual rights, and social justice for a diverse and inclusive society.

AAUW is political, but not partisan. This means we are all encouraged to be part of the political process

(40%), we can certainly do better than that. **NATIONAL VOTER REGISTRATION DAY IS SEPTEMBER 17**, lets help get it done.

There are three critical steps in making a difference with your vote: 1) Be sure you are registered to vote; 2) Be informed on the issues and the candidates; 3) VOTE! I would also add, encourage others to vote. AAUW provides a variety of resources to help our efforts:

Voter Registration Resources

- [AAUW Voter Registration Portal](#)
- [It's My Vote sign](#) to use at tabling events
- [It's My Vote 2024 Voter Issue Guide](#) (available in English and Spanish)
- Please remember to stay nonpartisan in all your voter registration activities. Check out [AAUW's Guidelines for Election Activities](#)

In Illinois we are fortunate that the state makes voting as easy as possible for all citizens. The Illinois State Board of Elections website (<https://elections.il.gov>) includes a wealth of information and access points for your use. You can check your registration status and register if needed. You can request a vote by mail ballot, check early voting sites or your location for in-person voting.

As the campaigns progress it is important to be able to distinguish Fact from Fiction. [UC Berkley has a website](#) that provides information on this and links to reliable sites. One that I have used frequently is Snopes (<https://www.snopes.com>). It is reliable and easy to use.

All elections are important, but this seems more important than many for Equality, Women's rights, Voting rights and more. Karen and I look forward to working with you to be a part of the process and advance AAUW priorities.

[Ken Olson](#)

Plan Ahead for Donations to AAUW Funds

As you think about donations you will make to AAUW Funds by the end of 2024, there are several possibilities. AAUW has many funds critical to the mission of AAUW. The names of the Grants and Fellowships can be found on the National website aauw.org. There are three broad fund categories as follows: Education and Training which focuses on STEM, Title IX and Pathways to Jobs, Economic Security which focuses on Pay Equity, Title VII and Retirement Security, and Leadership which focuses on Career, Workplace and Training (NCCWSL for example).

Ten years ago, the Greatest Needs Fund was established. This fund allows AAUW flexibility to respond rapidly to new and emerging challenges facing women and girls and to use the funds where they are needed most.

Sylvia Martin
AAUW Funds

Branch News

The **Jane Addams Branch** invites you to "Truth, Trust, and Turnout: Navigating Elections, Civic Engagement, and Disinformation."

Dr. Suzanne Chod, Professor of Political Science at North Central College in Naperville, will explore the relationship between political trust, polarization, and disinformation and its effects on elections and democracy. Specifically, she will offer details on the calculated use of disinformation to divide us further and erode democratic norms. Dr. Chod will also discuss how to spot and combat disinformation in the current election cycle and beyond.

All AAUW members and guests are invited to this Jane Addams branch Zoom program on Tuesday, Sept. 17, at 7 pm. Please register in advance.

[Register](#)

Our Upcoming Book Group meetings are held on Tuesdays at 4 p.m., jointly with the Northwest Suburban and Jane Addams branches. Guests are welcome.

September 24: **Maisie Dobbs** by Jacqueline Winspear (fiction)

Register for one or more book discussion meetings below.

[Register](#)

Rockford Area Branch will be celebrating their 95th anniversary with a luncheon and program on Saturday, Nov. 9. We hope that many AAUW Illinois members will join us. For more information, contact Faye Marcus, faye.marcus.fm@gmail.com.

Fair Pay and Economic Equity for Women in Illinois Susana A. Mendoza, Illinois Comptroller

Wednesday, October 2nd at 7pm
Elmhurst Public Library

Pay and Economic Equity for women in the state of Illinois. This program will be live and virtual with full details coming by the end of September.

Starting as the youngest member of the 92nd Illinois General Assembly, Susana was routinely recognized for her leadership in the areas of social services, education, job creation, law enforcement, and animal welfare. <https://susanamendoza.com>

Space is limited. Advance registration with the Elmhurst Public Library is required for in-person and online attendance: <https://elmhurstpubliclibrary.libcal.com/event/12528056>

Questions should be directed to: Susan Boyd, Co-Chair, Elmhurst AAUW
Programs: boyd.susan.mj@gmail.com

The Dignity Index Training

Elgin AAUW along with The Batavia, St. Charles, Geneva and Naperville sister branches met on September 5 to learn how best to introduce The Dignity Index concept to our members.

The Dignity Index scores distinct phrases along an eight-point scale from contempt to dignity. Lower scores (1-4) reflect divisive language while higher scores (5-8) reflect language grounded in dignity. By focusing on the speech and not the speaker, the Dignity Index is designed to draw our attention away from the biases of partisan politics and toward the power we each have to heal our country and each other.

Our Elgin members were unanimously impressed with the training we received from the panel of experts. Co-Presidents Jennifer Ford and Judi Tepe are excited to be partnering with this dynamic branch and are committed to planning more events in the near future.

Judi Tepe

If you could help ease the divisions in America --
would you do it?

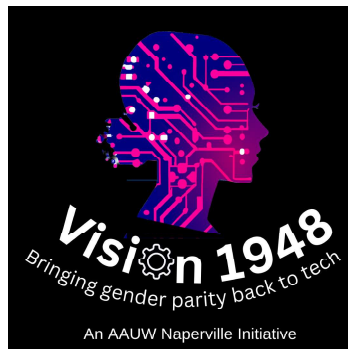
What's Your Dignity Index?

October 8, 2024
6:30 PM Social; 7 PM Program

Naper Blvd Library
2035 Naper Blvd
Naperville, IL

AAUW
Naperville Area (IL) Branch

Join AAUW Naperville Area for *What's Your Dignity Index?*, an interactive program to learn how to use the Dignity Index. This free community event begins at 7 PM on Tuesday, October 8, 2024, at Naper Blvd Library, 2035 Naper Blvd, Naperville. Informal networking begins at 6:30 PM.



Vision 1948, Neuqua Valley High School Girls in STEM Club (GIS), and Naperville North High School Girls in Engineering, Math, and Science Club (GEMS) are pleased to announce **Our STEM Era**, Powered by Girls, a first-ever event to inspire students to pursue education and careers in STEM. It will be held on October 19th, 12:00 - 4:00 PM at Naperville North High School. The event is open to all, and students in Gr. 5-12 and their parents and families are especially encouraged to attend. Vision 1948 operates as a subgroup of AAUW Naperville Area's I-ACT team.

[Download a flyer!](#)

If your branch has a program or recognition of 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



Our mailing address is:

AAUWLLConnection@gmail.com

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