



Carletta Knox-Seymour, AAUW Iowa President 2020-2022

IN THIS ISSUE:	
President's Letter.....	1
Barriers and Bias.....	2
Cedar Rapids STEM Conferences	3
Real/Fake News	4
Book Study in Cedar Rapids	4
Diversity in CF-W Branch	5
Davenport-Bettendorf Programs	5
Waverly Holiday Project	6
Help for Branch Treasurers	6
Palo Alto Zoom Sing-a-long	6



Holiday Greetings,

Here we are at the end of the year, and what a year the world and our nation have had, and in many respects, are still having. With a worldwide pandemic, the highest cases in the United States and an uncharted number of deaths, our nation has been under siege and terrorized by a virus. And politically, the stakes could not be higher for the potential massive destruction of our democracy right before our very eyes. How do we stand up against this type of destruction? We continue to take a stand and never give up, never quit.

As we close 2020, we find that women still have to fight for their legal rights in terms of wages, personal health choices, child care, and professional leadership positions. Why do we have to fight so hard? Why do we have to take a back seat to men when we are just as smart or smarter? Why do we women sometimes have biases against other women and end up keeping each other down? These are loaded questions.

With so much going on, I wasn't quite sure what to write about this month. So, I went out to our national website to perhaps get some ideas. The section I looked at was on leadership. What I found was factual, truthful, and painful. As I started reading "Barriers and Bias: The Status of

Women in Leadership," I realized that just as the article stated, women have not come far enough after decades and decades of hard work to advance equity for women and girls. Though we've come a long way, there's still so much work yet to be done. Much of that article is included on the following page, because I wanted us to read for ourselves what still stands in our way. Where and how do we keep missing the entrance exam, if you will? And ask ourselves if we at any time are helping the system stay the same by not looking at our own biases. But most importantly, we must continue to take a stand and never give up, never quit. This is a new day dawning, and we must rise to the occasion and take our stands and fight for ourselves and for one another whether Black or White, Hispanic, Asian, or Native American. Let's fight the good fight of solidarity among women. What follows on the next page is the copied article. I would ask you to even engage in conversation with other women you know, and of course men as well. Get some reaction, some feedback, and find out if people are aware of what's going on in their workplaces, and what, if anything, they are doing about it. **Let us keep asking, what are we doing about all of this, and are we doing our best?**

Stay well. Stay safe. Stay focused. Stay laughing. HAPPY HOLIDAYS AND GOOD CHEER!

From Barriers and Bias: The Status of Women in Leadership, AAUW

There is no shortage of qualified women to fill leadership roles: Women make up almost half of the U.S. labor force. They outnumber men in earning bachelor's and master's degrees and are nearly on par in getting medical and legal degrees. Yet from the corporate boardroom to Congress, from healthcare companies to the courts, from non-profit organizations to universities, men are far more likely than women to rise to the highest paying and most prestigious leadership roles.

Women in Corporate Leadership: 6.6% (34) of Fortune 500 CEOs; 25.5% of Fortune 500 board seats; 11.0% of top jobs in S&P 1500; around 25% of C-suite jobs in the top 1000 companies – Source: Fortune Magazine, Pew Research, Korn Ferry

Women in Political Leadership: 33% of U.S. Supreme Court; 26% of U.S. Senate; 23% of U.S. House of Representatives; 18% of State Governors; and 29% of State Legislators – Source: Rutgers Center for Women in Politics, 2019

Women in Academic Leadership: 32% of full professors; 30% of college presidents; 5% of presidents are women of color; 16% of medical school deans – Source: American Council on Education

Women in Nonprofit Leadership: 22% of chief executives on nonprofits with annual budgets of at least \$50 million; 56% of chief executives of nonprofits with annual budgets less than \$1 million – Source: GuideStar

Women in Leadership in Hollywood: 18% of top jobs on the top 250 domestic movies of 2017; 27% of behind the scenes roles in broadcast TV and streaming programs; 32.9% of lead roles for films (2016); 12.6% of directors for films (2016); 12.6% of writers for films (2016) – Source: Center for the Study of Women in Television and Film, San Diego State University, CA

Barriers to Women's Leadership. The “qualities” of a leader—as well as the path to achieve leadership roles—are still largely based on an outdated model that shuts women out.

- **Old Stereotypes.** Traditionally, power structures value traits thought of as masculine and do not view them as favorably when they are exhibited by women.
- **Fewer Connections.** Men still surpass women in having the networks to learn about opportunities and find mentors and sponsors to champion their advancement.
- **Bias and Discrimination.** Sexual harassment, hostile work environments and subtle biases are still obstacles. Outright discrimination persists, data from the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission show.
- **Lack of Flexibility.** Balancing work and family can be a challenge that keeps women from attaining leadership roles. Workplaces are still designed around a decades-old

notion of gendered domestic roles.

Women of color face even further obstacles to their advancement and, as a result, are even less likely to move into leadership roles.

Stereotypes and Double Standards in the Workplace

A man is	A woman is
Assertive	Aggressive
Direct	Shrill
Commanding	Pushy
Strong, powerful	Domineering

The Benefits of Gender-Inclusive Leadership

- Just as the status quo is holding women back from leadership positions, it is holding men back from embracing caretaking and support roles. All genders benefit when individuals are free to make their own choices.
- Families are more secure when women move into higher-paying leadership roles, particularly families where the woman is the sole or primary breadwinner.
- With more women in top jobs, businesses benefit from the creativity of a wider range of talented leaders. It enables them to recruit and retain a more talented workforce

Closing the Leadership Gap

Individuals: Examine your own biases – and be an ally, mentor and sponsor for women. If you're a woman, seek out skill building opportunities and leadership training. Learn to negotiate for salary and benefits at <https://www.aauw.org/resources/programs/salary/>

Employers: Prioritize an equitable workplace. Widen recruitment networks and candidate pools. Do blind resume screening. Support internal growth opportunities, continued professional development and skill training, and equitable retention and promotion policies. Promote workplace flexibility policies that will enable all employees to find an appropriate work/life balance.

Policymakers: Support state pay equity laws and the federal Paycheck Fairness Act. Ban salary-history questions for job applicants and prohibit punishment for workers who share salary information. Pass state and local initiatives that promote parental leave and flex-time policies. Support the federal Family and Medical Insurance Leave (FAMILY) Act. Support continued EEOC salary collection and reporting requirements to root out pay disparity.

Find more information about barriers and bias at <https://www.aauw.org/resources/research/barrier-bias/>

Cedar Rapids STEM Conferences Change Girls' Lives

Sue Jorgenson, Cedar Rapids Area Branch

Over 10,000 middle school girls have attended the "Open Minds, Open Doors" STEM conference at Coe College in Cedar Rapids in the past 24 years. The Cedar Rapids AAUW Branch first conceived of this event in 1996. Dr. Maria Dean was the inspiration that set our branch on a journey with a committed cadre of members who planned and executed the conference. At that time none of us imagined it would become an annual event for many years.

In 2006 STEM funding for education became available and Susie Green, Student Programs Specialist at AEA 10, became involved with "Open Minds, Open Doors." Susie and Maria Dean have increased the yearly attendance from 370 girls to 525. There are over 100 volunteers, presenters and facilitators. Thirty small-group sessions give girls up close and personal hands-on experiences.

This year, because of COVID-19, "Open Minds, Open Doors" was held virtually. There were 25 virtual

presenters, and participants included 128 girls from 21 schools. There were virtual workshop tour sessions, a STEM activity challenge, and a medical case study conducted by students from the Carver College of Medicine.

Our branch members have often wished we could do a follow-up study to determine how many girls went on to pursue non-traditional careers. But, there was no way to do that.

Because of a personal friendship, we have a connection to one woman who was hugely impacted by the conference when she was in 8th grade. Letia Blanco recalls attending the conference when a woman presented about her career as a commercial pilot. Tia says that was a moment that changed her life!

Tia went on to excel in math and science and earned a degree in Mechanical Engineering from the University of Texas at Arlington. She has earned awards for outstanding work with Raytheon Space and Airborne Systems. In 2012 she founded a conference in the Dallas/ Fort Worth area called "Design Your

World." It was attended by 250 girls and facilitated by 100 volunteers. That conference continues annually.

Three years ago Letia moved back to Cedar Rapids to be near her family and took a position with Collins Aerospace. Soon afterward there was a merger of Collins and Raytheon. Letia is now the sustaining program manager for Bombardier Challenger with an annual budget of \$46 million.

Locally, she has presented a "Design Your World" workshop for girls ages 5-18, where the girls learn the secret language of robots and then program them to complete puzzles and mazes.

We are gratified to know the way one student did reach for the stars! We can only imagine how many others have broken the glass ceiling!



Clockwise from right: Maria Dean and Susie Green; Design Your World participants learn how robots follow a track; a DYW participant shows her binary name bracelet, Open Minds, Open Doors Participants; Firefighters at an Open Minds, Open Doors session



How Can You Tell “Real” News From “Fake” News?

Roberta Hersom, Palo Alto Branch

The Palo Alto Branch of AAUW sponsored Dr. Andrea Frantz presenting “Information Overload: Finding Credible Voices In All That Media Noise” on October 29. The Zoom session was attended by AAUW members from across the state. Dr. Frantz told how news is presented today and ended with ideas on how to tell if the news you read on social media and newspapers and what you hear on television is “real” or “fake.” Dr. Frantz also showed the Media Bias Chart. Various news sources are rated

for bias and reliability using a rigorous methodology and a politically balanced team of analysts. This helps you to easily identify different perspectives so you can get the full picture and think for yourself.



Andrea Frantz

Dr. Frantz allowed the session to be recorded for public and school use.

The link to the recorded session is

[https://1drv.ms/v/s!](https://1drv.ms/v/s!AkVZFfv2gdNvg6YPi4Q4RWpE8MU4Bw?e=SQPL2K)

[AkVZFfv2gdNvg6YPi4Q4RWpE8MU4Bw?e=SQPL2K](https://1drv.ms/v/s!AkVZFfv2gdNvg6YPi4Q4RWpE8MU4Bw?e=SQPL2K). AAUW

recorded sessions on a variety of topics can be found at

<https://aauw-ia.aauw.net/>.



Capitol Corps Needs You

Ann Gale and Maureen White

Because of COVID-19, we expect to make contacts with legislators about issues affecting women and girls through email, phone, and US Mail. Face-to-face contact is likely to be rare, and really up to the individual. We are asking for

member volunteers from all corners of the state as well as central Iowa to be involved in Capitol Corps this year. Please get in touch with Maureen White (319-404-5301, mwhite@cfu.net) or Ann Gale (515-320-4404, ann.gale9@gmail.com) to let us know that you are interested. We plan to meet with corps members using Zoom before the legislature opens in January.



Cedar Rapids Branch Invites You to a Book Discussion

Sue Jorgenson, Cedar Rapids Area Branch

The Cedar Rapids Branch has a new book group. The first discussion will be January 11, 2021 at 7:00 p.m. Circe Stumbo will facilitate the discussions. The registration link is at the end of the message.

The book was recommended in the *NEA Journal: Waking Up White and Finding Myself in the Story of Race*, by Debbie Irving.

The first time we meet we will discuss the introduction and chapters 1 and 2. The questions at the end of those chapters are about stereotypes you learned growing up and how your family values shaped your beliefs. It will make for an interesting discussion.

Talking about race is a growing experience. The discussions begin as an affinity space with white people only. This gives us the ability to explore our perceptions without offending a person of color. At some time others (people of color) will become part of the discussion. We want their voices.

This is an AAUW group, however, you may invite others (women or men) who are not members to be a part of this "story." Since we are doing it on Zoom, distance is not a

barrier.

The book is available in print form and as an audio book. If you haven't purchased the book you may still join the discussion. I encourage you to purchase the book or audiobook through Prairie Lights: <https://www.prairielightsbooks.com/book/9780991331307>

Please register for the discussions by clicking here: <https://forms.gle/n8bC6CDFGfTk4PYp9>

Find a book review here:

<https://www.wbur.org/hereandnow/2015/08/10/waking-up-white>

Waking Up White Discussion Topics for the first session:

Chapter 1. What Wasn't Said (Lessons my mother didn't teach me)

- What stereotypes about people of another race do you remember hearing and believing as a child?
- Were you ever encouraged to question stereotypes?

Chapter 2. Family Values (The making of a belief system)

- What values and admonitions did you learn in your family?
- Think about education, work, lifestyle, money, expression of emotions.
- Try making a list of ten principles, values and unspoken beliefs.
- Consider what conclusions you drew about people who did not appear to follow your family's belief system.

AAUW Cedar Falls-Waterloo Branch Focuses on Diversity

Karen Agee, Cedar Falls-Waterloo Branch

The diversity topic of the AAUW Cedar Falls-Waterloo Branch meeting on Saturday, January 23, 2021, will focus on refugee communities in Iowa. EMBARC is the Ethnic Minorities of Burma Advocacy and Resource Center. Three panelists will present the program:

- **Moriah Morgan**, REACH Program Manager/Interim Waterloo Office Manager
- **Arlene Prather-O'Kane**, RN Needs Assessment Coordinator and Caseworker
- **Taw Meh**, Program Assistant and Interpreter

Arlene reports, "Our presentation will inform members about who we are in Iowa, when our organization started, and whom we serve. We want to convey a

better understanding about the vision of a united refugee organization that understands the strengths and challenges of the community and leads in creating solutions."

EMBARC provides support "from and for refugees" through advocacy, education, and community development. See more information about EMBARC at <https://www.embarciowa.org/about/#our-story>. EMBARC has two main offices, in Des Moines and in Waterloo.

The Cedar Falls-Waterloo Branch hopes you can join our Zoom program on January 23, at 10:00 a.m. The meeting will be hosted by Iowa AAUW at <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/2017201809?pwd=WXcyREhjcllOZlNQMUtmZjJlCU0RQQT09>



Moriah Morgan



Arlene Prather-O'Kane



Taw Meh



Davenport-Bettendorf Branch Invites You to Join Their Programs Using Zoom

Elaine Kresse, Davenport-Bettendorf Program Chair

The Quad Cities Iowa Davenport-Bettendorf branch of AAUW is happy to invite other branches to our Zoom meeting for the winter quarter. As you can see, they are all very relevant to our AAUW mission and vision. Please join us. Lois will send the invitation out each month if you want to join us.

Public Policy & the Equity Network

January 19, 6:00 p.m. **Maureen White, the AAUW Iowa State Public Policy Director**, will inform us about the issues pending in the legislature. Members will be encouraged to bring a guest from another group that works for or celebrates the issues AAUW is working toward as an introduction to the Equity Network. This will lead into the forums and lobby day.

What Is Our Legacy?

February 16, 6:00 p.m. The program will address these important questions: "Why would you want to join the Legacy Circle? What does it involve and what are the benefits for you and your branch?" The program will be presented by Maxine Lampe, the AAUW Legacy Circle Liaison for 5 states. She is a past Iowa state president and,

also, the Board Chair for the Foster Care Review Board in Storm Lake.

This will be a business meeting with emphasis on strategic planning for next year asking for your input and leadership on programming, study groups and doing projects. Two of the stars in our crown will be earned by joining Legacy and planning for the future by meeting the needs of new members.

Pay Equity

March 16, 6:00 p.m. Pay equity with law partners Dorothy O'Brian and Kelsey Marquard. They had to be cancelled last spring and will do the presentation using Zoom. Members are encouraged to invite friends involved in working on this issue in other groups. This is another very good meeting to invite your friends concerned about this issue. It's a good chance to plan for Equal Pay Day working with others.

Elaine Kresse
AAUW Iowa College/University Director
Davenport-Bettendorf AAUW program chair
cell 563-320-3325

Holiday Project in Waverly

Kimberly Folkers, Waverly Branch

In an attempt to help our socially distancing members get better acquainted, especially since we are meeting via Zoom for the present without any opportunity to gather in person, the Waverly Branch launched The 2020 Holiday Project.

Branch members, veterans, and our newest members were invited to fill out a questionnaire about themselves. Starting on December 1, each day one or two completed surveys are emailed to our membership. Questions range from professional and educational credentials to the opportunity to share personal information of choice.

Response to the surveys has been very positive. For many years our branch published a printed membership directory with similar information, and The Holiday Project is reminiscent of those pre-online days. People enjoy learning more about each other. Hopefully, this new camaraderie will carry forward to when we can meet again in person.

A Note for Branch Treasurers

Pat Higby, AAUW Iowa Treasurer

As the Iowa AAUW Treasurer, as well as the Cedar Falls-Waterloo Branch Treasurer, I offer my help to any branch with problems related to finances or registration of members. Because of reduced staffing at the national AAUW office I strongly suggest all branches register members

electronically. This can be done in at least two different ways.

1) Existing members may go online and renew using their own credit cards. 2) Branch treasurers may use a debit or credit card for their branch bank accounts at the national website to register new members or members who

have given them cash or checks. If you have any questions about this process please leave a message at 319-266-4934 or email me at patricia.a.higby@gmail.com. I am happy to help you with this process.



Waverly Branch AAUW: The Holiday Project

THANKS FOR HELPING OUR WAVERLY MEMBERS BECOME BETTER ACQUAINTED!

- Name:
- Job Title/Profession, Where You Work(ed):
- Original Hometown & High School You Attended:
- College Attended, Major(s) & Graduation Year:
- Additional Schooling or Professional Development of Note: (graduate programs [where and what], specialty certificates, etc.):
- Year you joined Waverly's AAUW Branch (or estimate how long you have been a member, including other places):
- What are you reading that you would like to recommend to others?
- Have you participated in the Waverly Branch Book Club?
- Do you have a suggestion for a future book for Book Club consideration?
- Have you ever presented a program to our branch? If so, on what topic (s)?
- Would you consider presenting a future program? If yes, on what topic (s)?
- Have you ever attended a state or national AAUW event, or served on an AAUW Board or as an officer at the local, state or national level? Tell us more....
- Have you ever served on any local, state, or national boards, committees, or commissions (not for AAUW)? Explain further?
- Your special interests, areas of research, hobbies, unique characteristics, etc.:
- Personal information you would like to share (family, special friendships, pets, etc.):

Correction

Ann Gale

In the October 2020 edition of this newsletter, Meriel Demuth was credited with an article about the 19th Amendment Anniversary display at the Council Bluffs Library. The writer of that article was Mary Anne Kuhr, president of the Loess Hills Branch. We regret the error.

Palo Alto Branch Does a Zoom Sing-Along

Anne Johnson, Palo Alto Branch Co-President

Like so many planned activities this year, Palo Alto branch had to cancel even their socially distanced and masked Christmas party. Instead they held a Zoom caroling party.

Step one in the planning was for Lois Enger and Rosemary Matthews to figure out how all those online choirs are posting all their voices instead of one at a time. Then a fancy (digital) invitation lyrics was sent out. Finally, Sunday, December 13 at 7 p.m. voices joined in merriment to celebrate our friendship and the joy of the season.

