



IOWA INITIATIVE

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Carletta Knox-Seymour
 AAUW Iowa President, 2020-2022

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President's Letter

Greetings,

I bid my fellow AAUW Iowa members a final farewell through my last president's letter. As usual, I begin with looking at our nation. This time I acknowledge where things were and are since my presidency. This is how I see it. "It was the best of times, it was the worst of times." The opening line of the Charles Dicken's novel, *A Tale of Two Cities*. Most of you are familiar with this book set against the background of the French Revolution.

In terms of the worst of times, I might say that our nation has been and seems to be going through its own form of a revolution, both politically and socially. From the former presidential administration dismantling the norms of government through any means necessary, to the current one trying to bring them back, along with problems of inflation at an all-time high. From the massive deaths of the pandemic to the global witness of the killing of George Floyd. And now through the lens of phone cameras, we see shootings after shootings of our fellow Americans whether they are students in school or a Black man jogging down a street. And so here we are at such a juncture in our history. How do we continue to make sense out of our world today? How do we as an elite organization continue to work to help preserve the norms of our sacred democracy, and the melting pot that America is known for? How do we help shape the lives of women and girls in Iowa? How can we change the tide of

authoritarianism that is making its way into our everyday lives? How do we, of AAUW, stand against these things? The only way we have been standing: strong. Standing strong as the great Redwood Trees of Big Sur and with the strength as deep as their roots.

The roots are deep in the Iowa branch, and it has come a long way from 1923 to where it is today. When the nominating committee nominated me as president-elect in February of 2019, that marked one of the biggest changes that the Iowa state organization has seen in all this time. As the first elected Black president for the state, a new branch was in the process of being written for the history books. You all took a strong, united stand. And because of it, I have enjoyed the office of the president at the pleasure of the membership. I also had the distinct pleasure as the first Black branch president for Cedar Rapids before taking on the position as state president.

I too have come a long way. In terms of the branches, I faced obstacles such as low membership statewide, with branches disbanded due to that fact, and a general sense of low enthusiasm. It looked like there might be a major challenge ahead of me. But I was ready to buckle down and get to work. So, one of the first things I thought I should do was to gather information as to what problems the branches had and figure out the solutions to these problems. All that led to what is now known as the monthly Zoom, branch presidents' meeting. It has been in

existence for almost two years, and I am enormously proud of the way it has worked out. The connections, discussions, speakers, and assistance from state board members who attended and who could answer any specific problems a branch might be having made this a very rich place for branch presidents and other branch officers to come and meet and be together. Being the president of this volunteer organization has given me challenges and opportunities to gain experience as an individual along with giving vision to this state branch. And you all came right along with me. Together we got our branches up to speed with diversity by way of the DE&I Toolkit. I pushed that diversity message at every state branch meeting. Please do not hold it against me (smile). Many of you attended webinars and had wonderful speakers. The George Floyd killing opened doors that none of us could see opening, at least not in the wholesale way that it did. It made all of us as a nation and as an organization move in the same direction of looking deeper into the tragedy of Black people and trying to understand their deep wounds in this country. As your Black president, I have been immensely proud of all of you who have simply stepped up to learn more and thereby do more towards making changes wherever those changes need to be.

As far as changes go and other accomplishments, I include the Leaders Boot Camp 101 monthly program. I cannot take credit for its name. Maxine Lampe, eNetwork branch president, assisted me in bringing this program to life and she gave it its name. The name was so befitting because we had various branch presidents, current or former, presenting on different topics to our members. And the last big push that I made was to get information from all the branches for the purpose of SWOT. With the careful work from this committee under the guidance of Membership Vice-President, Kim Folkers, this effort helps branches look at their strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats and how they can then go about putting strategic plans together to address those concerns and maximize those strengths. At the state level regarding SWOT, I pushed to increase our visibility in the state. We need marketing to do this, and we had no one to fill that position until now. With Kim at the helm of in this area, there is an opportunity to make AAUW Iowa a stronger force in the public's eye.

And speaking of strength, I am so glad that so many of us showed up at our recent state conference. It took quite a bit of strength from our Program Vice-President, Pat Newman, and her committee to pull this conference together amidst all the obstacles of which the pandemic was the center. Because we did not get to have our in-person conference the first year of my term due to the

pandemic, I was incredibly happy to have been a part of this one. It was so nice to see so many beautiful faces.

I have had the opportunity to be part of meetings through regional AAUW leadership, and I have met so many wonderful people. And as a leader, I have made personal growth as well as increased in leadership skills. It is my hope I have chartered a new way of how AAUW Iowa looks at the world and each other as we move forward with new tasks. I will always be grateful for this opportunity. I hope that you all have learned something from me as well as I have learned from all of you. My hope is that AAUW Iowa continues to grow in strength and character, maintaining all the lessons that the pandemic and George Floyd have taught us, and that we grow as one in sisterhood and treat each other with the utmost respect as precious and courageous women that we are. It has been my pleasure to serve all of you, and I thank you all for your time, your service, your energy, and your steadfast commitment to this valuable organization who fights the good fight for women and girls every day.

Thank you and my sincere best to all of you,

Carletta Knox-Seymour

AAUW Iowa State President, 2020-2022



Carletta Knox-Seymour Reflects on Presidency at the Spring Conference



Carletta has probably had more challenges than most of our AAUW Iowa presidents, given that we have dealt with a pandemic during the entire term. She reflected on the milestone this has been for AAUW Iowa and for her. Thank you for your leadership, Carletta.

We Need to Push for the Equal Rights Amendment

One of the highlights of the spring conference was a presentation by Doris Kelley on the Equal Rights Amendment. Beginning with the fight to pass the 19th Amendment giving women the right to vote, Doris traced the history of the work toward the Equal Rights Amendment. The ERA was first proposed in 1923. A push for the feminist movement gave the ERA the needed 2/3 majority in the U.S. House of Representatives in 1971, and in 1972 it was approved by the Senate and sent to the states for ratification. It was ratified by 35 states, but a conservative backlash against feminism eroded support for the ERA, and it failed to achieve ratification by the needed 38 states.

In 2020, the U.S. House of Representatives approved the ERA once again and sent their bill to the Senate. Senate Joint Resolution 6, a bipartisan pro-ERA measure, sat on Mitch McConnell's desk until the Trump administration came to an end. It collected dust despite the fact 78% of Americans want the ERA to be part of the Constitution; 86% of Democrats and 70% of Republicans support the ERA.

At the beginning of the Biden administration, the U.S. House and Senate introduced bills to remove the earlier time limits placed upon the ERA's ratification by 38 states. House Joint Resolution 17 passed on March 17, 2021 with bi-partisan support and it was forwarded to the Senate. Senate Joint Resolution 1 has been read twice in the Senate and has been sitting for about 15 months in the Judiciary Committee waiting for action. Senator Grassley sits on the Senate Judiciary Committee.

Doris urged AAUW to work with other organizations, such as the League of Women Voters, to renew efforts to push for the ERA. One important tool will be a new video being developed by a major advertising agency. The video is research-based and will focus on the ERA. AAUW Iowa and other organizations will be able to post it on our websites and encourage members and the public to view it.

After the video is available, we urge branches to hold meetings with other social and civic organizations to show the video and develop plans to move forward.

An excellent resource to learn about the conservative backlash against feminism is *Divided We Stand* by Marjorie J. Spruill (Bloomsbury Publishing, 2017).

What is the problem with the ERA?

“Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or any State on account of sex.”



Doris Kelley discussing the ERA

What Can We Do?

Doris Kelly joined our Presidents' monthly meeting April 28th, and elaborated on the next steps for us. Her suggestions follow:

The focus needs to be on the Senate. We need to put pressure on Senators Grassley and Ernst.

- Reach out to Senators Grassley and Ernst. Make three attempts to contact, and document each method with date and means of communication. Remind Grassley that he voted in favor of the ERA in 1972. Remind Ernst that she said, “Because we have opened up every position to women in the military, I think it’s imperative that women say we want to be treated equally.”
- Ask both if they will support the ERA in the future.
- If they don’t respond, or if they will not support, write op-eds for newspapers.
- Work with other organizations, such as the League of Women Voters.
- Contact local organizations and clubs and offer to speak for 30 minutes.
- We will have access to the video in about a month. Use that for our talks.
- Attend campaign events and ask Senators Grassley and Ernst why they don’t support the ERA.

Award Recipient Mallory Tollefson Presents Her Research Findings

Ann Henninger Trax

Presenting at the state conference was Mallory Tollefson, a recipient of an AAUW American Fellowship grant.

A protein's function is closely linked to its 3-D structure. Mallory uses the algorithm AlphaFold2 to predict the structure of several proteins linked to deafness. She then compares the predicted structure to that determined experimentally by x-ray crystallography. Sometimes the predicted model shows more structural details than shown experimentally; the new model may suggest a function for that protein.

Mutations in the genetic code (DNA) for a protein may alter the protein's structure, and thus its function. The term "variant", rather than mutation, is typically used in clinical practice. Mallory uses simulations to study protein variants to determine if they are benign, i.e. seen in many individuals in the general population but not associated with increased risk of disease, or pathogenic, i.e. increases an individual's susceptibility or predisposition to hearing loss.



Mallory presents her research findings.

The AAUW grant also helped Mallory's personal life. Mallory and her husband have a baby girl (less than 1 year old) so it helped her not worry about extra expenses and enjoy their daughter.



Thank You for Making This a Great Conference!

Pat Newman, Program Vice President and Chair of the Conference Committee

Thanks to everyone who helped make our AAUW Iowa Spring Conference 2022 a success! Thank you to the fifty-five members from twelve branches who registered for the April 8-9 conference. We had about sixty people attend including presenters and guests. What a great crowd!

A special word of appreciation goes to President Carletta Knox-Seymour and our Board of Directors for your steadfast support! Thanks to our Conference Committee who worked for eight months to plan the conference, starting with site selection and on through to the final details! Each committee member brought valuable experience, skills and commitment to the task. The members are Lois Enger, Kathie Farris, Kim Folkers, Ann Gale, Ann Henninger Trax, Pat Higby, Diane Kearns, Dev Kiedaisch, Carletta Knox-Seymour, Elaine Kresse, and Pat Wilson. Together we chose a theme—Striving, Thriving, Moving Forward—reflective of our members' ability to

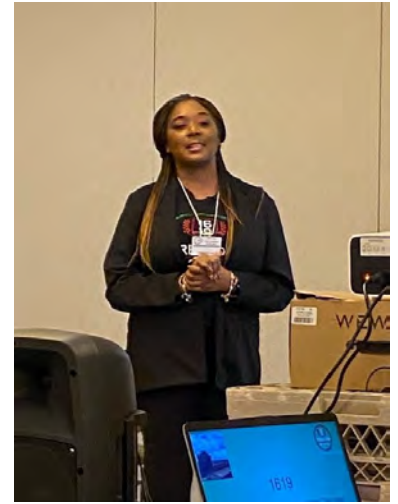
adapt during a pandemic, our resilience in persevering, and our commitment to moving forward as we work for diversity, equity, inclusion and other AAUW priorities.

Our conference opened with a Meet and Greet Friday evening following our board meeting. What a good time we had visiting with old friends and meeting new friends in person! By 8:00 o'clock the next morning the foyer became alive with registration volunteers welcoming attendees gathering from across the state, branches setting up displays, folks bringing in baskets for the Silent Auction and grabbing a cup of coffee. The group settled in for a day of listening to outstanding presenters, learning, asking questions, conducting business, discussing, interacting with other members in breakout sessions, and being inspired to

Move Forward!

1619 Freedom School

Sheritta Stokes, Director of the 1619 Freedom School in Waterloo, presented a session at the spring conference about the after-school literacy program. It operates without cost to the participants and is designed to offer opportunities for low-income students. Together with Sheritta Stokes, the program was co-founded by Nikole Hannah-Jones, Waterloo native and Pulitzer Prize-winning author of *The 1619 Project*. The program offers reading material that is focused on black history, and it is engaging for young minority readers. The students can see themselves in the material they are reading, and they have been enthusiastic about the books. The program is supported through donations, so support from the public is welcome. More information and opportunities to make donations are available at their website here: <https://www.1619freedomsschool.org/>



Public Policy Directors Attend the Conference

Diane Kearns and Dev Kiedaisch, AAUW Iowa Public Policy Co-Directors

Diane and Dev attended the AAUW Iowa spring conference in Des Moines, April 8 and 9 and presented information with regard to the legislative session. They also had a display which provided information about the new voting laws and had voter registration and absentee ballot request forms available. Diane presented information about current legislation and had a petition available for attendees to sign regarding two bills. SF2369, the so-called voucher bill, takes public funds away from public schools and transfers it to private schools. The other bill, HF2577, deals with required lists of textbooks, library books and protocols for removal of these from the school. The petition was requesting the legislators vote against these two pieces of legislation. Diane then delivered the petitions to the State Capitol House Leadership. Over 40 signatures were obtained.

Equal Pay Day was March 15. Diane contacted Representative Bruce Hunter in the House and Senator Nate Boulton in the Senate and they gave a brief explanation at the opening

of the day's session regarding Equal Pay Day. On March 30, Ann Gale, Jan Mitchell, and Mary Ann Ahrens were in the Capitol Rotunda to provide more information. They also provided Payday candy bars to those stopping to visit their table.



Dev Kiedaisch and Diane Kearns

AAUW Iowa is also part of the Iowa Is Better Than This coalition. The group seeks to pass laws that support LGBTQ rights, increase voting access, pass sensible gun laws, support public education and the rights of teachers to teach facts. The other coalition to which we belong is Iowans For Responsible Gun Laws. Their goal is to defeat the constitutional amendment on November 8, 2022, that would prohibit responsible gun laws in Iowa. If this amendment is passed it will give easy access to guns to those with mental health concerns and make the work of law enforcement more dangerous. Dev presented information regarding the 1619 Project series of programs which were co-sponsored by AAUW Keokuk Branch and the Keokuk Association for Rights and Equality.

Branches Receive Membership Awards

Branches with increases from the previous membership year were presented with certificates at the spring conference. Those branches were: Waverly 3.85%, Algona 7.32%, Cedar Rapids Area 12.12%, and Loess Hills 16.67%.



Membership Vice President Kim Folkers presented membership awards to Pam Burtnett, Algona; Anne Kiche, Cedar Rapids Area; and Karen Lehmann, Waverly.

Table Displays Show Branch Activities

Several branches brought table displays to the spring conference to show us some of the things they have been doing. Below are members of the Ames branch with their display, featuring their programs and activities for the year, all centered on diversity and inclusion.



Phyllis Peters, Jean McMaken, Diane Patton, Pat Newman, Mary Ann Lundy, Jeanne Warning, Jane Edwards



Cedar Falls-Waterloo Branch at the Spring Conference



From the Cedar Falls-Waterloo AAUW branch – Linda Morgan, Stephanie Leon, Pat Higby, Bonnie Smith, Maureen White, Jane Close, Karen Agee, Pauline Harding. The CF-W display board listed branch activities for the 2021-22 year: community action programs and interest groups, scholarships, and fundraising activities.

Nine AAUW Iowa Past and Current Presidents Attend the Spring Conference



From left: Current President, Carletta Knox-Seymour, Anne Johnson (2018-20), Ann Gale (2016-18), Maureen White (2014-16), Maxine Lampe (2012-14), Diane Patton (2008-2010), Mary Ann Ahrens (1992-94), Kathleen Wood Laurila (1982-1994). Janet Heinicke (2006-08) also attended the conference but was not available at the time of the photo.

Dr. Amy Getty from Grand View University Is Given Distinguished Faculty Award

Elaine Kresse, College University Director

Each year, AAUW Iowa invites members to nominate someone at the college level for Distinguished Faculty Award for exemplary contributions toward creating a climate of gender equity in education in the state of Iowa. This year, members of the review committee were so impressed with the award recipient that they wanted to create a second award to recognize promotion of AAUW. The AAUW Iowa Distinguished Faculty Winner for 2022 is Dr. Amy Getty, an English professor at Grand View University in Des Moines. Amy is also the first recipient of the Distinguished AAUW Iowa Promoter Award. During her tenure at Grand View she has served as the Director of the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning, the Division Head of the Humanities at Grand View, Director of the Writing Center. She has served on committees, teams, and workshops to assure student success, diversity and inclusion. Among her several publications is her research on Agnes Newton Keith. Her dissertation was about women authors and lesbian literature.

Amy is a member of the Des Moines branch of AAUW, and she is the faculty advisor for the student affiliate at Grand View University.

Here are just a few comments from the nomination papers.

#1. Dr. Getty is known to be very accepting... She's always willing to teach students more about topics that may make them uncomfortable or encourage them to dig deeper inside themselves for the greater good. Her dedication to education and activism doesn't stop at leading students on campus. She makes conscious decisions to serve the great Des Moines community every day.

#2 I have the pleasure of getting to know Dr. Getty as a mentor, colleague and friend over the past decade, when I worked as the Program Coordinator for the Office on the Status of Women at the Iowa Department of Human Rights. Throughout my nearly seven years in that position, Dr. Getty was a trusted confidante and mentor when it came to all aspects of gender equity.

#3 Amy's work for equity and representation is evident in all she does. In her classes she always includes underrepresented voices and perspectives. Whether that is learning about the Indian boarding schools in American literature or teaching about intersectionality in gender and women's studies, Amy's

work in the classroom reflects her dedication to issues of equality as well as creating space for marginalized and underrepresented voices to be heard.

...she also increased the number of women and people of color in the required texts for the program (which had previously been texts written by predominantly white men). ...She forms close relationships with these students built on trust and respect, and even years later, many of Amy's students and advisees stay in contact with her.



Amy Getty and Elaine Kresse

She has been nominated by peers multiple times to serve on the Promotion and Tenure committee. This is one of the most important committees on campus and being nominated and elected to serve on it shows that people across campus trust and respect Amy....Amy is the faculty representative on the Coordinated Community Response Team (formerly the Sexual Assault Response Team). She is a trained mentor in Violence Prevention...

We are very proud to give Dr. Amy Getty the Distinguished Faculty Award for 2022.

What is an AAUW Iowa Promoter?

It is a branch member or college representative member who promotes AAUW in the community and in the college community. Amy is a professor at Grandview College. At Grandview she helped organize a student branch and paved the way for 4 women to attend NCCWSL. Those women came back and presented a panel on NCCWSL at an AAUW site conference.

As a member of the Des Moines Branch and the Grandview Representative she represented AAUW at the Way Up Conference and staffed AAUW tables at several projects including gender equity, equal pay day and serving on the board of Friends of the Iowa Commission on the Status of Women. She became a certified facilitator for the AAUW project Start Smart. Each of these out reaches actively informed students and public of the mission and vision of AAUW. At a time when her Des Moines branch was facing rapid decline, she stepped into leadership roles in the branch that helped turn around the trend.

No matter how important or meaningful our membership seems to us as members, we cannot hide our light in the dark. A promoter leads, staffs tables, talks to potential members and students and wears swag on her shirt or lips. Amy exemplifies this public approach to promoting AAUW.

The Algona and Keokuk Branches Discuss Their Studies of the 1619 Project

Dev Kiedaisch, Keokuk Branch

Pam Burtnett and Dev Kiedaisch opened the session with a description of the 1619 Project programs their branches carried out. Nicole Hannah-Jones (a Waterloo native) is the Pulitzer Prize-winning author of the New York Times Magazine's ongoing initiative that began in August 2019, the 400th anniversary of the first shipload of enslaved people from Africa to arrive in the British colony of Virginia. Through readings, poetry, and podcasts, the 1619 Project offers a profoundly revealing vision of the American past and present, contextualizing the systems of race and caste. Hannah-Jones has also published a book, [A New Origin Story: The 1619 Project](#), with essays, literature, and poetry written by a brilliant assortment of authors.

In 2021, the AAUW Algona Branch obtained the 1619 Project program the Plymouth Congregational Church of Des Moines had presented to their members. This outline gives weekly reading and podcasts for 6 weeks with weekly discussions. Pam, Karen Dannewitz, and Christine Louscher organized the program for Algona AAUW members.

Members of the AAUW Keokuk Branch had read about the 1619 Project, and when Dev attended the summer board meeting of AAUW Iowa and asked about it, she was connected to the Algona Branch. A good reason to be on the AAUW Iowa Board—you make great connections! With their help, AAUW Keokuk Branch and the Keokuk Association for Rights and Equality co-sponsored the Community Study Group of the 1619 Project in 2022. Keokuk did a hybrid of in-person and Zoom discussion groups. Forty-four people signed up to participate in the 1619 Project.

Both groups felt that this was a very important project that altered people's understanding of the history of the

United States. Some comments of attendees:

"I love the honesty, openness, and willingness to learn that this study presents."

"Hearing the perspectives of the group is one of the best parts."

"The most important consequence of the 1619 Project is awareness. I give thought to racism in ways I have never previously. I am more thoughtful in the words I use and speak up if someone I am close to is using inappropriate examples or words. I am reading more articles, books, social media items pertaining to US history and the current state of affairs in regard to Black History. I talk about the class to family and friends and make a point to share with friends of different races."

"The most important consequence of my participation in the Project was that I have a far more succinct knowledge of what the 1619 Project covers. I have information to share that goes beyond the years of slavery and encompasses the ongoing suppression of people of color, originating from slavery to "Jim Crow" laws, right to own land, get financing from banks, equal medical treatment, access to post-secondary education to the overincarceration currently."

One of the most common comments during the discussion time was, "I did not know that." At the last discussion group one of the members said: "Your superpowers can only be found outside your comfort zone."

For the program both branches used, a timeline, promotional article, and the PowerPoint program Catherine Worden put together for the presentation at the Conference, please send your email address to Dev Kiedaisch at devkiedaisch@mac.com.

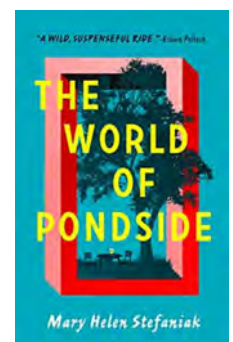
Women in the World of Long-Term Care

Mary Helen Stefaniak gave members a first look at her new novel, *The World of Pondsides*, at the spring conference. Attendees also had an opportunity to buy an autographed copy of the book. In *The World of Pondsides*, residents and employees at a nursing home live in both the real and virtual worlds through a video game created by one of the residents. When the creator of the video game dies under mysterious circumstances and the game goes dark, Pondsides residents and

staff work together to solve the mystery and get back in the game.

Mary Helen said that she was inspired partly by her mother's experiences in living in a nursing home toward the end of her life.

The World of Pondsides is available from online booksellers and your favorite bookstore. The books provided at the conference were provided by Prairie Lights in Iowa City.



Plan Wisely - for Today's Needs and for Tomorrow

Maxine Lampe, Legacy Circle Liaison

How do you take care of the people and things that matter most to you – now and for the future?

Through careful planning, you can benefit your loved ones and your charitable interests while investing in equity for women and girls. Some reasons to create a plan include:

- Taking care of loved ones
- Memorializing someone you care about
- Advancing equity for women and girls through AAUW
- Increasing current income for you and/or others
- Passing more on to heirs with reduced taxes
- Reducing income tax
- Avoiding capital gains tax

As you consider what is important to you and how to reflect that in your legacy, we invite you to reach out to us. Our knowledgeable gift planning staff is available to assist with any questions you may have. You may also request a Legacy Circle brochure by calling or emailing AAUW's National Office. You can make a difference in the lives of women and girls by joining the AAUW Legacy Circle. You may also email Maxine Lampe at lampe.maxine@gmail.com.

If you are considering including AAUW National in your estate plans, please accept our thanks. So often, wonderful and committed AAUW members make these gifts, but we are unable to thank them because we don't learn of their decision during their lifetime. We ask that you let us know so we may honor and celebrate you in the Legacy Circle. These gifts make a huge difference, and we are deeply grateful for your generosity.



Nine Legacy Circle members gathered for a photo at the spring conference: Maxine Lampe, Maureen White, Diane Patton, Mary Ann Ahrens, Ann Gale, Ann Henninger Trax, Pat Higby, Ann Stansbury Johnson, and Nancy Magnall. Member Janet Heinicke also attended the conference but was not available at the time of the photo.

Here is some suggested wording for your attorney: "After fulfilling all other specific provisions, I give, devise, and bequeath ___% of the residue [or \$_____ if a specific amount] to AAUW National, a District of Columbia charitable corporation [Tax ID #52-6037388] currently having offices located at 1310 L Street NW, Suite 1000, Washington, DC 20005."

As a member of the AAUW Legacy Circle, you receive a beautiful pin designed by Swarovski and former AAUW Educational Foundation President Alice Ann Leidel to honor your generosity and commitment to the future of women and girls. This lovely pin is a gold wreath adorned with pavé crystals and trimmed with a gold ribbon that proudly proclaims, "A Legacy of Equity." At the base of the wreath is an open book with a suspended pearl.

The AAUW board of directors wishes to acknowledge and thank these current visionary Iowa Legacy Circle Members:

Mary Ann Ahrens (our newest member)
Virginia Berg
Eva Ann Elmer
Ann Gale
Janet Heinicke
Ann Henninger Trax
Patricia Higby
Anne Stansbury Johnson
Rosanne Krubsack
Maxine Lampe
Nancy Magnall
Janice Mitchell
Diane Patton
Ruth Carol Sovern
Florine Swanson
Nancy Thayer
Maureen White



Maxine Lampe presented the Legacy Circle pin to new member Mary Ann Ahrens at the spring conference.

AAUW Members React to the Leaked Supreme Court Decision to Overturn Roe v. Wade

On May 2, Politico released a leaked draft of a Supreme Court opinion in *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization*. The draft opinion, written by Justice Samuel Alito, overturns *Roe v. Wade*. That 1973 court case was a landmark decision in which the court ruled that abortion is a protected federal constitutional right. If the draft decision is issued as the official decision, it would take away a fundamental right for millions of women.

Members of the Waverly Branch of AAUW gathered at the Bremer County Courthouse on May 3rd to show their support for a woman's right to choose. AAUW trusts that everyone can make their own informed choices about their reproductive lives within the dictates of their own moral and religious beliefs. AAUW has made the protection of reproductive rights a policy principle since 1977, and it is part of the 2021-23 Public Policy Priorities. The national AAUW website has a wealth of resources to help with contacting officials, writing letters to the editor, and hosting events. [Find resources here.](#)

The AAUW website updated information after the recent leak that

the Supreme Court is poised to overturn *Roe v. Wade*. AAUW recommends the following:

- Pass the Women's Health Protection Act. [Tell your senators](#) to support abortion access.
- Learn about the [AAUW position](#) on this issue.

- Get involved in [other ways](#). Go to rallies, contact elected officials, write a letter to the editor, and enlist help from friends and family.

Please keep Ann Gale informed about plans for future events at ann.gale9@gmail.com.



Lisa Kukral, Karen Lehmann, Susan Vallem, Kim Folkers and Sarah Quin of Waverly show support for a woman's right to make health care choices.



eNetwork Branch Features a Write Night

Maxine Lampe, eNetwork Branch President

For International Women's Day one of our new eNetwork members, Emily Creery, led us in a virtual Write Night as part of the "Letter Project." We wrote and sent letters to girls and women in need of some extra love and support. More information about "The Letter Project" is available here: <https://theletterproject.org>

Women's History Month in Indianola

The Indianola Branch of AAUW held its March meeting at Simpson College celebrating Women's History Month. Three women who own local businesses in Indianola told their stories of becoming business owners. They all had been educated in Indianola but did not start out as business owners here. One recurring theme was the need to have a well thought out business plan before beginning. They also stressed that it was something that needed to be full time. Brenda Easter helped lead the discussion with students, townspeople, and AAUW members.



Brenda Easter, Indianola Chamber of Commerce; Jennifer Pfeifer-Malaney, McCoy's True-Value; Erin Freeberg, Adorn and Feed and Foster; and Kathy Magruder, Pageturners

Waverly Branch Hosts CF-W for a Brunch

Cedar Falls-Waterloo members joined Waverly members for a brunch at Wartburg College March 19. Dr. Vicki Edelnant presented a program on experiences with Road Scholar (formerly Elderhostel).



Algona STEM Event for 8th Grade Girls

Janie Montang, Algona Branch

After two years without a live event, the annual STEM event sponsored by the Algona Branch of AAUW was able to "go live" on Monday April 11. The event annually honors eighth grade girls from Algona and Bishop Garrigan Schools. These girls, recommended by their school's math and science teachers, receive certificates for their outstanding work in science, technology, engineering, and/or math.

A half-hour program featuring four area women, all working in STEM careers, is the keynote. This year's panel included: Peggy Jennings, Clinic Nurse Manager with KRHC; Jessica Brown, Cargill Protein Microbiology Lab Supervisor in Mason City; Rauchelle Meschke and Alyse Kern, acupuncturists at KRHC; and Alison VanOtterloo, former auditor and CPA, now a Vice-President with Pharmacists Mutual Insurance. Panel members talked about the specific classes and degrees needed for their careers. They also told both positives and negatives connected to their jobs and why or how they came to be in their selected fields.

Again this year, the program was videoed by Bryan Nelson's Broadcasting class at Algona High School and will be shown on the local Algona Municipal Utility and Mediacom channels.



Panelists Alison VanOtterloo, Alyse Kern, Rauchelle Meschke, Peggy Jennings, and Jessica Brown spoke about their STEM careers to high-achieving girls.



The New AAUW Community Hub

Ann Gale, AAUW Iowa Newsletter

The AAUW Member Services Database has been replaced by the new AAUW Community Hub. This transition has not been free of issues, and some of us have experienced problems with it. AAUW techs continue to work on the member hub, so if you experience difficulty with it, my best advice is to try it a week later, or email AAUW at connect@aauw.org. You can also find some helpful videos about using the [new community hub here](#). It is also possible to go to a Thursday afternoon online help session at 2:30 central time.

[Click here to register](#).

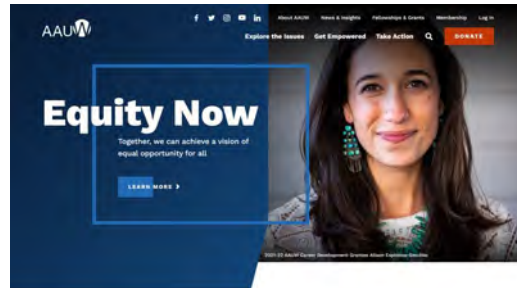
The first time you use the new system, you will need to reset your password by clicking on the “forgot password” link. After you create a new password and log in, you may then update your personal information by clicking

on “edit profile” on the menu on the left side of the screen. It is important that AAUW has your correct information. Without it, they will be unable to contact you. That information is also the way I can send the newsletter to members in Iowa.

After changing my password, I was able to log in, update my personal information, pay 2022-23 national dues, AAUW Iowa dues, AAUW Des Moines dues, eNetwork dues, and make a contribution to the greatest needs fund.

I immediately received a receipt for my taxes. So please don't become discouraged.

Members who have not received AAUW emails by are encouraged to visit <https://aauw.us/emailoptions> to update your preferences and get back on the AAUW email list.



New Board Member Profile—Dr. Anne Kiche, Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

From the Cedar Rapids Area Branch Newsletter

Dr. Anne Kiche is the new AAUW Iowa Director of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. At the University of Iowa Dr. Kiche teaches three courses: Health Experiences of Immigrants, Migrants and Refugees in the US; Pandemic and Mental Health; and Mental Health in Diverse Societies.

Dr. Anne Kiche is uniquely qualified for her role with the state board!

Anne joined AAUW after learning about the Association from two women. One was a graduate student at the University of Iowa who had been sponsored by AAUW. Anne said that inspired her “to find out more about this AAUW.” The second woman who inspired her was Mamonate Nyane, our friend and AAUW member. They were friends when they were graduate students at the U of I living in married student housing during a stressful time in their lives. In those circumstances women supported each other and bonded.

Anne’s journey from being a child in Kenya until today is fascinating. Her Father had ten wives and she has 40

brothers and sisters. When Anne graduated from high school her father expected her to marry, but Anne wanted to go to college. An Uncle encouraged her, so she left home and went to live with the Uncle who supported her to desire to attend college. She then earned a BA and taught school.

Later she married and her husband immigrated to the U.S.

as a student at the University of Iowa. Anne joined her husband and became a stay-at-home Mom with two children and a part time job. She missed teaching and yearned to take classes also. A woman who lived in married student housing offered daycare at a reasonable rate, so she enrolled. Sometimes friends took care of her children while she went to class. At other times she took her children to class with her, and they played with toys and colored. Later they had another child, and then they adopted a little boy when he was six months old. He is now 12 years old. When Anne finished a master’s degree her husband asked if she was done with courses. But she wasn’t...she persisted until she earned a PhD!

