



AAUW of Iowa ANNUAL REPORTS 2022-2023

Co-Presidents: Kathie Farris and Karen Agee

Board Meetings: We led five board meetings and several between-meeting email board votes. All but the conference meeting were conducted via Zoom, thanks to Lois Enger, to protect from COVID and save lodging and travel funds that instead were used to further our mission and goals. The board met on June 4, July 23, October 24, January 22, and April 21 and held additional votes to fund yard signs against Iowa's reckless gun amendment and to donate \$1000 to the upcoming October 2023 regional conference in St. Louis in support of dynamic speakers. We updated the board roster on the AAUW Community Hub before June 30.

Presidents' Virtual Town Halls: The year's meetings with branch presidents continue the Zoom communication initiated by former president Carletta Knox Seymour but now with one-hour meetings: October 4, November 29, January 23, February 27, and March 28. These monthly meetings were well attended, with at least 17 participants each evening. The Virtual Town Halls are for questions from and discussion among the presidents of AAUW Iowa's 16 current branches, with brief updates from AAUW IA board members and consultation with issues leaders such as Maggie Tinsman. We communicated with branch presidents between meetings via email and reminded them to update board rosters by June 30.

AAUW National Liaison: We met bimonthly with other presidents of upper Midwest states. Meetings are organized by liaisons to the national board; national committee chairs present on timely organizational topics. With concurrence of the AAUW IA Board, we objected to the AAUW board's unwillingness to bring the membership issue to members in the 2023 bylaws review and responded positively to other initiatives.

AAUW Regional Conference Liaison: We serve on the planning committee for the Central States Regional Conference in October and two of its subcommittees, with meetings every few weeks. The branch presidents have contributed their ideas on issues and questions and promoted two speakers from Iowa, Sheritta Stokes and Karen Kedrowski.

To further public policy advocacy, we authorized Maureen White and Kathie Farris to speak for AAUW of Iowa on January 17 to the subcommittee considering SSB 1037, which would remove gender equity requirements for appointed boards across the state. To serve members of AAUW IA, we participated in monthly conference planning meetings led by Pat Newman and Rebecca Swainey and also submitted an article for each issue of the *Iowa Initiative*.

Vice-President for Membership: Kim Folkers

The membership theme for this year has been “ongoing frustration.” The AAUW National Community Hub, designed to replace the previous MDS system, continues to be nothing less than frustrating for branches and state board officers to negotiate. This has been compounded by a continued lack of support for the transition by the national office. Branch financial and membership officers have been faced with trying to make the system work to carry out their responsibilities, as well as smoothing over pushback and frustration from their branch members trying to utilize the system themselves to renew their memberships.

In early April an email was sent to state and branch officers from National detailing the rolling renewal process for fiscal year 2024. While this change may have made it easier to have new members join at any time throughout the year, a number of branches are struggling to implement effective systems for managing this new process with their branch members. Feedback seems to indicate that some members have left AAUW due to their frustration with the renewal process. It will be important to find ways to communicate how this process works and branches will need to be proactive in supporting members – new and renewing – as they attempt to utilize the new system or choose to use more traditional methods.

Branch and state officers did receive a “February 1 Count for Fiscal Year 2023” from National in mid-March, however this report was much less detailed than in previous years, showing only the current year numbers for our branches. Accessing records from previous years shows that total Iowa branch membership is down by 43 members (-8.5%) from a year ago, with 471 members as of April 2023. Over a three-year period (2020-2023), the decrease in branch numbers is even more concerning – down 85 members (-18%).

Four Iowa branches had a one-year increase in membership and were recognized at this year’s State Conference: Cedar Rapids area (+9); Denison (+3); Loess Hills (+3); Waverly (+1). Six branches show an increase over 3 years, 2020-2023 (Cedar Rapids area; e-Network; Loess Hills; Palo Alto; Tama/Toledo/Waverly). A separate MAL (member-at-large) report shows that Iowa MAL numbers in late 2022 were 122, for an approximate Iowa AAUW total of 593 members.

Related to MAL’s and another source of frustration for state officers and branches is the new national policy that MAL lists are no longer available online but must be ordered through an online request system. We have been instructed to keep any communication with Iowa MAL members minimal, supposedly due to privacy requests from MAL’s nationwide.

On a positive note, Maureen White (Cedar Falls/Waterloo branch) and I represented AAUW Iowa at the Way Up Conference in Cedar Falls in November. We had a successful day sharing the AAUW story with prospective members in higher education and colleges and university representatives in booths alongside ours. After the conference we followed up with people we had met and passed along names of potential members to respective branches around the state. Several of these prospects joined AAUW as a result.

Treasurer: Pat Higby

Year to date June 30, 2023

Account	Veridian Checking	Veridian Saving	Veridian CD 6/4/2024	Veridian CD 02/27/2024	Total
Amount	\$9,703.99	\$10.00	\$10,000	\$25,000	\$44,713.99

Note: Uncashed checks #1075 (\$50) and 1096 (\$24).

2022-2023 Budget information:

	Projected income	Income to date
Branch Dues-2022-23	\$4,000	\$4,230
Branch Dues-2023-24		\$1,530
Interest from CD's	\$140	\$240.88
Annual Conference Registration	\$3,500	\$ 4,168.03
Donations & Silent Auction	\$1,000	\$875
Carry over from previous year	\$10,120	\$10,750.34
Transfer for special projects	\$10,000	\$ 0.00
Total	\$28,760	\$21,794.25

	Projected Expense	Expense to date
Leadership	\$3,000	\$1,305.68
Communication	\$1,500	\$449.05
Public Policy	\$500	\$382.20
Membership	\$500	\$75
Programing	\$150	\$0
Annual Conference	\$3,500	\$4,986.33
Liability Insurance	\$375	\$375
AAUW Greatest Needs Fund	\$1,000	\$815
Other miscellaneous	\$1,000	\$1,000
Unallocated funds	\$7,235	\$0
Sub Total	\$18,760	\$9,388.26
Special Projects		
Women's Rights	\$3,000	\$1,500
Gun Violence	\$3,000	\$1,266.00
Public Education	\$3,000	\$0
Emerging Projects	\$1,000	\$0
Sub Total	\$10,000	\$2,766.00
Total	\$28,760	\$12,154.26

Notes:

Annual conference expenses include the \$580 deposit to Cedar Rapids Hilton for the 2024 conference.

Annual conference nearly broke even! Just \$238.30 more expenses than income. Women's Rights special project was \$1,500 for printing of human trafficking brochures. Other miscellaneous was \$1,000 for contribution to the Regional conference.

AAUW Fund: Pat Wilson

AAUW of Iowa is committed to contributing generously to AAUW's Greatest Needs Fund to accomplish the goals of the organization. In recent years, a silent auction held at the annual state meeting has been an enjoyable way to gather donations. Baskets of books and other items are donated by the state branch organizations. At the 2023 annual conference in April, the highest bidders on these items donated a total of \$815 to the Greatest Needs Fund.

In addition, Iowa branches in 2022-2023 contributed \$8,886.50 to AAUW's Greatest Needs Fund:

Algona \$3255	Decorah \$150
Ames. \$1467	Denison \$100
Cedar Falls/Waterloo \$1438	Des Moines \$233
Cedar Rapids \$95	Indianola \$160
Charles City \$10	Iowa E network \$675
Clarion \$60	Loess Hills \$60
Clinton \$210	Tama/Toledo \$130
Davenport/Bettendorf \$565	Waverly \$211

College & University Relations Director: Elaine Kresse

This has been a challenging year for the Iowa AAUW Board college and university director trying to rebuild after the Covid shutdowns and budget cutbacks at the colleges. There have been a few bright spots.

One was the number of students sent to the National Council of Student Women Leaders. They represented Wartburg, Grand View, and the University of Iowa. Many branches give scholarships and many of those students are attending Iowa Colleges.

St Luke's College in Sioux City has joined AAUW. This is a brand-new member for us. We are happy to have them on board.

The most excited thing this year was choosing the Distinguished Faculty Award winner from the many deserving and truly exceptional faculty in Iowa. The committee chose Dr. Sarah Diesburg, a graduate of University of Northern Iowa in 2004. She began as a research assistant in computer science and returned to UNI in 2013 as an Assistant Professor in Computer Science after receiving her PHD from Florida State in 2012.

She is now the senior personnel on External Grants and a prolific publisher and speaker. She was honored in 2021 and 2019 for her positive impact on students during the pandemic. In 2016 she was honored as the IOWA WOMEN OF INNOVATION OVERALL WINNER in Academic Innovation and Leadership category, by the Technology Association of Iowa. She worked with students to found Women in Computing (WiC), a student organization dedicated to promoting gender equity in computing. WiC provides professional development opportunities and social outlet for all students. Dr. Diesburg continues to serve as faculty advisor to WiC and to mentor for all students in the group.

Working with the colleges on special projects such as Start Smart or Social Justice areas of common concern is always a bright spot. Working with a partner schools is always a great source of hope for the future.

Co-Directors of Public Policy: Diane Kearns and Dev Kiedaisch

Collaborations of AAUW:

AAUW Iowa joined Iowans for Responsible Gun Laws and the non-partisan group Coalition of Iowans for a More Just Iowa. The Iowans for Responsible Gun Laws held numerous meetings by ZOOM. On the November 8, 2022, ballot was the Iowa Constitutional Amendment which added “the right of people to keep and bear arms shall not be infringed. The sovereign state of Iowa affirms and recognizes this right to be a fundamental right. Any and all restrictions to this right shall be subject to strict scrutiny.” Information shared with the membership stated that this was not the Second Amendment. It went beyond that. Strict scrutiny is the highest level of scrutiny a court uses to decide whether a law is unconstitutional. By inserting the words, “strict scrutiny” it tips the balance of power, elevating access to guns above public health and safety. Unfortunately this amendment was passed during the November election. (AAUW Public Policy Ref: Freedom from violence and fear of violence, including gun violence and hate crimes, in homes, schools, the workplace, and communities, and services to address the needs of victims of violence.)

January 2023:

Preparations were begun for Lobby Day which was to be held in February. The 90th Iowa General Assembly gavelled in on January 9, 2023. There were several new legislators resulting from the November 2022 election. One committee which was created was the Education Reform Committee formed by Speaker Grassley. The objective of this committee was to pass the School Voucher Bill, HF 68 which passed both Houses along party lines and was signed by the Governor on January 24, 2023.

February 2023:

Lobby Day was held on February 8 from 9:00 a.m. until 1:00 p.m. Sixteen AAUW members attended as well as four representatives. Invitations were sent to the Chairs, Co-Chairs and Ranking members of the Education Committee, Education Reform Committee, Health and Human Services, Workforce/Labor, and Judiciary in the House and the Senate. Maggie Tinsman spoke to the legislators present with regard to Human Trafficking and had a guest who was a

victim of human trafficking. (AAUW Public Policy Ref: Rigorous enforcement of laws against human trafficking and support for programs to aid trafficking victims.) Several bills of importance to AAUW were discussed with the legislators present.

March 2023:

March 20 AAUW held Equal Pay Day in the Capitol. Legislators were encouraged to stop by and receive information regarding AAUW priorities. The First Funnel of the legislative session was March 3 and the Second Funnel was March 31. Bills which did not make it through the funnels were considered dead for the session but could be resurrected. Issues which related to LGBTQ and books in schools. (AAUW Public Policy Ref: Enforcement of Title IX and other civil rights laws that pertain to education; making schools safe for all students, regardless of gender, race, religious affiliation, disability, sexual orientation, and gender identity or expression. Opposition to use public funding for elementary and secondary non-public, charter or home schools that do not meet civil rights and accountability standards required of public schools and educators.) did pass through the legislature which is unfortunate. Legislators were contacted by phone calls and emails and I wish to thank everyone that responded to the notices I sent out.

APRIL 2023:

We had an excellent Spring Meeting in Des Moines with very good speakers and sharing of information. Public Policy had a poster for members to sign with our legislative priorities listed and this was sent to the Leadership in the Legislature. Thank you to the Committee that put the meeting together.

MAY 2023:

The Governor's Heartbeat Bill (2018 originally): The Iowa Supreme Court on a 3-3 decision blocked passage of the bill which attempted to ban abortions after six weeks of pregnancy. This was felt to be a small victory at the time. The Governor then called a Special Session of the legislature on July 11 and the bill (HF732) was brought forward again which was almost identical to the 2018 bill. Several groups rallied at the Capitol against the bill but it was signed by the Governor on July 14. However, a Polk County Judge has temporarily blocked the "fetal heartbeat" law as a court challenge plays out, meaning abortion is again legal in Iowa up to 20 weeks of pregnancy. The exceptions are narrowly defined for rape, incest and the life of the mother. Fetal heartbeat is misleading and medically inaccurate, according to a pediatric and fetal cardiologist; while the heart does begin to develop at six weeks, the heart as we know it does not yet exist. It is not until around 17-20 weeks when the four chambers of the heart have developed and can be detected on ultrasound. At six weeks there isn't a beating heart but an electrical impulse that is coming from the ultrasound machine according to the American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology. More to come on this issue, so everyone needs to stay informed. (AAUW Public Policy Ref: Self-determination of one's reproductive health decisions and opposition to targeted regulation of abortion providers.)

Communications Director: Ann Gale

Posting the newsletter on the AAUW Iowa website and then emailing a link to members has worked well, and I plan to continue with this method. Attachments have sometimes been troublesome, and this has been a good alternative. I have sent out newsletters whenever there seems to be enough information to send - about every other month. Thanks go to Mary Helen Stefaniak and Jan Mitchell for assistance with editing. I get email addresses from the AAUW Community Hub, and sometimes they are out of date. I appreciate any help members can give to help me correct email addresses.

Bylaws Director: Leslie Moore

While AAUW has not required any mandated changes to branch bylaws since the mandated revisions made in 2016, changes are anticipated for the coming year and will likely follow a similar process requiring branch bylaw revision. Articles I-VII at the beginning of branch bylaws are mandated by AAUW and cannot be changed except through national action. Communication about the process for these changes will occur with branch presidents. Stay tuned for more information!

In 2016, all branches were required to file a copy of their bylaws and a branch affiliate agreement with AAUW to comply with the requirements of the District of Columbia [where AAUW is located] and the IRS. At present, all AAUW Iowa branches have complied with these mandates.

An electronic copy of each Iowa branch's bylaws is available from the AAUW Iowa Bylaws Director. Any branch wishing to make changes to their branch bylaws must contact the state bylaws person with the proposed changes before presenting the changes for a branch vote. This requirement is stated in each branch bylaws' article on Amendments.

State bylaws: AAUW Iowa bylaws were revised in 2016 to meet AAUW mandated changes and amended most recently in 2021. State bylaws must include the same mandated wording in Article I-VII as the local branches. A copy of AAUW Iowa Bylaws and Policies are available on the AAUW IA website.

Web Director: Lois Enger

ZOOM:

There has been a drop in the use of ZOOM since the ending of covid restrictions. While some branches and groups are continuing to use ZOOM for their meetings, others have chosen to resume face-to-face sessions. Others have chosen hybrid sessions allowing participants to have a choice between joining via ZOOM or in the physical location.

When requested, presentations and speakers in ZOOM online sessions have been recorded and the videos posted on the Web Site.

Branches wishing to use ZOOM and/or have presentations and/meetings recorded must contact Lois Enger to schedule the date and time. It is strongly recommended that this be done early so that the date and time can be reserved and avoid conflicts.

Web Page:

Information to be posted to the web site should be submitted to the Web Manager. If an area of the web site needs updating and changes, submit it to the Web Manager via email. Pictures of events should be submitted with a description of what the picture contains or refers to. Accessible regulations recommend that recommended that all web sites with pictures and graphics use a tag describing the image that can be read by screen readers.

If branches record presentations during face-to-face sessions and would like them posted on the website, they can contact the Web Manger via email for the best way to submit the videos.

The Web manager cannot update Branch Web Pages located on the State Website. The listing on the State site is a link to the branch and not the actual page. Many of these were created through National and the page may be located on their site. An attempt to contact National to recover lost login information for those sites is in progress. This is only being done for the sites that have contacted the web manager. With the National changes, this has not been an easy process.

If a branch has a site running that was created in other programs and has lost the login information may want to create a new website.

The login information for the branch web pages and/or Facebook pages needs to be shared with the president of the branch or other designated branch member, so this information does not get lost.

Nominations Director: Janie Montang

The Nominations Committee is composed of:

- Anne Stansbury-Johnson, Palo Alto Branch
- Mary Ann Ahrens, e-Network Branch
- Mary Helen Stefaniak, e-Network Branch
- Sue Jorgensen, Cedar Rapids Branch
- Janie Montang, Algona Branch, Committee Chair

The following nominees were presented to the Board for election at the Spring Conference:

- Pat Higby, Cedar Falls-Waterloo Branch, President-Elect
- Dev Kiedaisch, Keokuk & e-Network Branches, Treasurer
- Penny Foy, Cedar Rapids & e-Network Branches, Co-Vice-President for Programs