

AAUW Maryland Co-Presidents Report
April 2019
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June 4, 2019 is the 100th anniversary of Congress sending the 19th Amendment to the states; and the drive for ratification began... With the vote came great responsibility for women to use their voices at the ballot box and run for office. AAUW has been at the forefront encouraging women to use their intellect, talents, and voices to elevate the options for women and girls. It is with this goal in mind we continue to encourage all AAUW Maryland members to let their voices be heard—promote women’s equality, and educational opportunities for women and girls throughout the state.

Our term of office began after last year’s convention, hosted by the Baltimore branch. That convention included an opportunity to discuss proposed national Bylaws changes.

Our summer 2018 meeting was hosted by the Harford County Branch at Harford College and organized by Co-Program Chairs Tracy Lantz and Nora Putt. The meeting offered a welcome taste of the aloha spirit, ohana, and culture of Hawaii, while we explored interconnectedness and ways to enhance AAUW community and effectiveness. AAUW MD took up the challenge to raise \$20,000 to co-sponsor the Women of Distinction ceremony at AAUW’s National Conference for Collegiate Women Student Leaders.

The October 2018 meeting, hosted by the Kensington-Rockville Branch, helped us focus on our role as voters. We heard about opportunities to encourage all eligible members of the community to register and vote. We enjoyed hearing from several young college women who have started a new branch at Frostburg State University near Cumberland, MD, and offered our support. A senior from Notre Dame College of Maryland working to form a new branch also attended. We were impressed with their grit and determination to create a safe space for them to develop their activism for women students in leadership, women’s equality and encourage all students to vote in the upcoming November 2018 election.

Board members discussed State legislative priorities at our Fall and Winter meetings. Thanks to the Easton Branch, Erin Prangle, and Tracy Lantz for organizing the January 9 AAUW Maryland Tea for the Maryland Women’s Legislative Caucus in Annapolis. The event brought together women legislators and staff with AAUW leaders, welcomed incoming Caucus President, Delegate Sheree Sample Hughes who represents Dorchester and Wicomico Counties, and gave us a chance to thank key legislators for their support for Maryland women. Erin and her team give AAUW MD a strong presence in Annapolis.

As AAUW National completed the new strategic plan in late 2018, MD branches began to focus efforts on elements of that plan. Consistent with the national focus for the year, the program for Maryland’s 2019 convention focuses on women’s economic security. The program also includes elements directed at educational opportunities and public policy advocacy, and provides excellent opportunities for discussion. Thanks to Tracy Lantz, Pat Stocker, and the Garrett County Branch for putting together a great program and venue.

A key element of AAUW’s strategic plan is WorkSmart training via AAUW’s new on-line portal to training in salary negotiations. It’s an excellent tool to help working women ask for a fair salary. (Let’s close the wage gap!) Learn not to undersell your talents and what you can bring to the work. Many MD branches have begun to promote this free on-line

program, and we encourage all members to go on-line and take the training to better understand the process and to promote its use in the greater community.

Thanks to all who have agreed to serve during this year at the branch and state levels. A particular shout out to Heather Reichardt and Mary Anne Williams, the outgoing state co-secretaries. And many thanks to the incoming and returning officers. We look forward to working with you in the 2019-2020 year.

Let's celebrate the 100th Anniversary of the 19th Amendment in August 2020! Onward and upward together!