



# The Marylander

Volume 94 #1 Winter 2026

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*Mission: To advance gender equity for women and girls through research, education, and advocacy.*



## President's Message

*By Heather Reichardt, President, AAUW Maryland*

Greetings to all Maryland AAUW Members! We are deep into the holiday season. I hope everyone can enjoy fun, safe and warm holidays with family and friends.

### Fall mtg

I think everyone in attendance will agree that the Fall Meeting hosted by the Anne Arundel branch was incredibly educational. We explored a topic that is not often discussed as part of the diversity, inclusion and equity sphere. Once we overcame the technical challenges, our three speakers enlightened us about the history of native women in the Maryland area, how tribes have created their own systems to educate their population, as well as very serious issues faced by indigenous women across the country. We are hoping to have the video of the presentations available on the website at some point soon.

### U.S. Department of Education Updates

The current administration's attempted destruction of the DOE is a primary focus for AAUW National. This week, there is *somewhat* positive news: the DOE has recalled approximately 200 laid off staff members from the Office of Civil Rights to help with the increasing backlog of civil rights complaints from students and families. I know that Meghan Kissel, AAUW's Public Policy leader, has mentioned that not addressing the civil rights complaints is one of the most egregious acts of the administration.

Maryland Matters reported on December 8, "In order for OCR to pursue its mission with all available resources, *all* those individuals currently being compensated by the Department need to meet their employee performance expectations and contribute to the enforcement of existing civil rights complaints," the email to the staff noted.

On the other hand, the department spokesperson also said, "The Department will continue to appeal the persistent and unceasing litigation disputes concerning the Reductions in Force, but in the meantime, it will utilize all employees currently being compensated by American taxpayers," So, we should be aware of any new efforts that AAUW develops to combat the efforts to dismantle the Department of Education. The bottom line is that we must continue to keep an eye on what is happening at the Department of Education.

## **Public Policy**

Our state Public Policy (PP) committee got kicked off in November with introductions to new members, a survey to determine each person's state representatives, and discussion about the MLAW proposals for next year's General Assembly. We will have submitted our votes for the bills by the time this newsletter gets out, so thank you for your participation.

The PP committee includes the public policy representatives from each branch and branch presidents. However, other interested members are welcome to join and participate in our meetings, bill tracking and lobby day. Please contact me to be added to the PP committee email list.

Upcoming key dates for Public Policy are:

- January 14: Maryland General Assembly convenes - Annapolis
- January 31: Women's Legislative Briefing – Universities at Shady Grove, Rockville
- February: MLAW's Legislative Briefing (date TBD)
- February/March: MD AAUW Lobby Day (date TBD)

In addition to our state advocacy efforts, please continue to respond to the Action Alerts from National. One alert came in today for another Civil Rights problem, this time at the Department of Justice. And I will mention again that all members are strongly encouraged to join the Capitol Hill Lobby Corp.

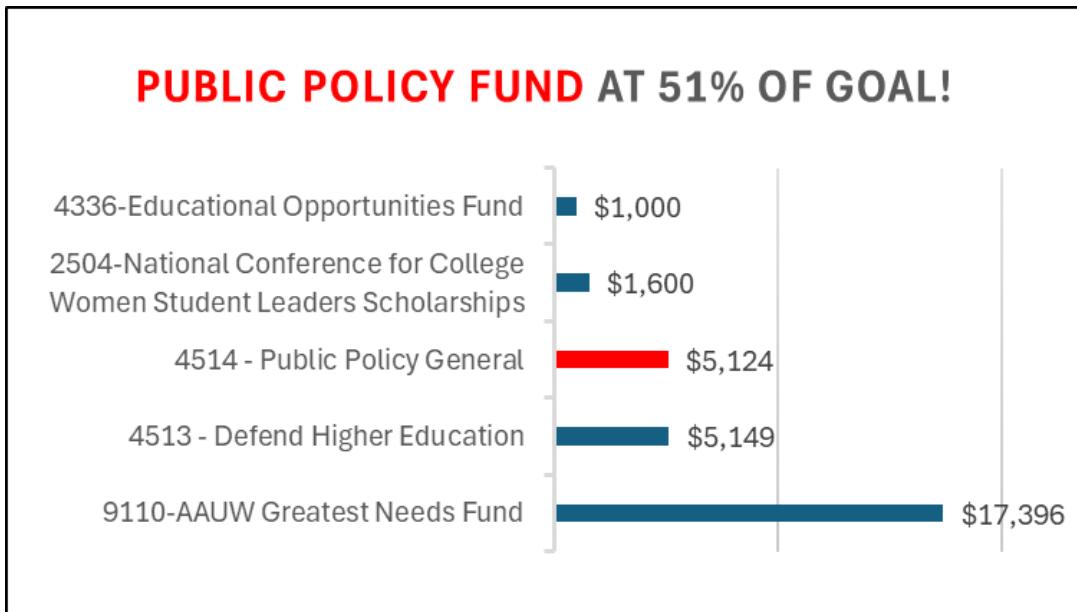


AAUW Maryland members at the Fall MLAW conference on November 1.

## Funds

I wanted to share a recap of the donations made to National through November 2025. Our members have made significant contributions so far this year. The total donated to the available, unrestricted funds is **\$30,268!** Here are some key facts about our donations so far this year:

- 129 donations have been made
- Folks in every branch have made donations
- Kensington-Rockville has the highest number of donations
- Our goal of \$10,000 for the Public Policy General fund is more than 50% achieved!



## Winter Board Meeting - Zoom

I'm looking forward to the Winter Board meeting. The date and time were announced at the Fall meeting: **Sunday, January 25<sup>th</sup> at 1pm**. Agenda and zoom link to follow. The state board members and branch presidents are expected to attend this meeting. Other members can attend, as well. [Click here to RSVP](#).

Thank you to everyone for your continued support of the State organization as well as keeping your branches active. Please stay informed and feel free to contact me with your comments and ideas.

Happy holidays and have a great New Year!

*Heather*

## Heads Up! – Membership Update

By Jeanne Blades, Vice President for Membership

As of April 1, 2026, there will be a \$2.00 increase in AAUW national dues moving from \$74 to \$76 for the upcoming fiscal year. The good news though is that the Shape the Future Campaign still gives a 50% discount for new members or for those who rejoin after a two-year absence from AAUW. In addition, all \$76 remains tax deductible, just as in the previous year. Remember as a member, you can take advantage of a variety of discounts from long-term care to car rentals and travel discounts to UPS shipping rates, and more! Just go to [AAUW.org/membership](https://AAUW.org/membership) and click on *Discounts and Perks* to check it out. Also, as a member you can easily choose the information that you'd like to receive from AAUW and how AAUW communicates that to you. Just go to [aauw.us/emailoptions](https://aauw.us/emailoptions) or log into your *Personal Snapshot* and scroll down to and click on *My Preferences* to always be informed and involved in our mission to advocate for gender equity to make a difference in the futures of girls and women.

AAUW Maryland dues will also increase, from \$10 to \$14 on April 1, 2026.

## Make Plans now to attend the 2026 AAUW Atlantic States Regional Conference!

By Tracy Lantz, AAUW Maryland



As you've likely heard, the 2026 AAUW Regional Conference Unfinished Revolution: Together We Stand, is being planned for **September 25-27 in Lancaster, Pennsylvania**. Please plan to join your friends and AAUW colleagues from 13 states at the [Lancaster County Convention Center & Marriott Hotel in Lancaster, PA](https://Lancaster County Convention Center & Marriott Hotel in Lancaster, PA).

I've just received the details regarding the conference registration fee! Early bird registration is \$249 until July 19, 2026, and \$295 thereafter. Here's the conference link: <https://www.aauwatlanticregionalconference.net/>

Be sure to make your room reservation as soon as possible! The special discounted rate is available before Tuesday, August 25, 2026; Friday, September 25, 2026 to Sunday 27, 2026 at \$225 per night plus taxes with a 2-night minimum. Be sure to indicate that there will be two adults in your room if you plan to have a roommate. This will assure that you are assigned a room with two beds. But trust me, the room block will be full before August! Of the block there are only about 50 rooms remaining. These will fill up fast! If you are planning to attend, please make your reservation as soon as possible. You don't want to miss out on the fun! Parking is an additional fee of \$15 per day. Your room reservation may be cancelled up until the week of the event.

We've secured an amazing group of speakers on current topics of interest to women in the Atlantic region as well as individuals who will address the [AAUW Policies for 2025-2027](#): Education, Economic Security, and Social Justice and Civil Rights. Our own Kate Campell-Stevenson of the Kensington Rockville Branch will perform her one woman show on Friday evening, September 25<sup>th</sup>. We are also excited to confirm that Dr. Susie Mosser of the Garrett Branch will be one of our presenters! Stay tuned for more details on the program.

The location of our conference, Lancaster, Pennsylvania is a wonderful city and one of America's oldest inland cities to date. It served as Pennsylvania's capital from 1799 to 1812. It is full of history and the location of the conference is in the middle of the city, with walking distance to many restaurants, coffee shops, the Central Market, wineries, breweries, and shops. Additionally, Lancaster has several fall festivals during this time of year, which may offer additional opportunities for exploration outside of the Regional Conference.

Looking forward to seeing you there! Please contact me, [tklantz@verizon.net](mailto:tklantz@verizon.net), or Heather Reichardt with any questions.

## **Branch Activities**

### **Howard County Branch News**

*Condensed from the Branch Newsletter, Diane Roca, editor*

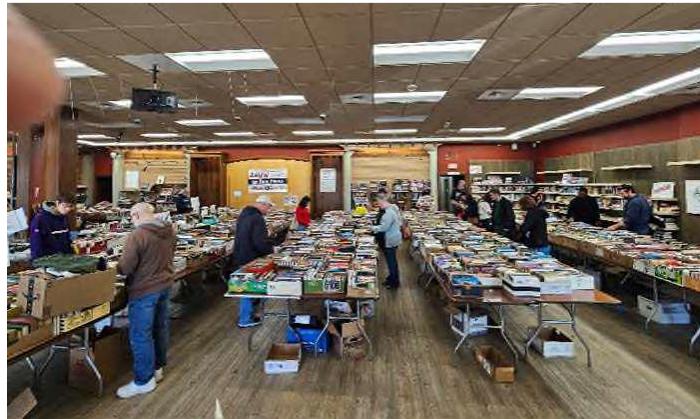
Howard's Holiday Luncheon on December 7<sup>th</sup> featured a silent auction to raise funds for scholarships at Howard Community College.

Presidents Beth Hayden and Suzanne Soules, Diane Roca, and Cindy Graham represented our branch at the Howard Community College Educational Foundation Donor Appreciation Lunch on November 17. Several years ago, our branch established an AAUW – Howard County Branch Scholarship Fund within the Foundation. This year we funded scholarships for six students in the Parent Scholars Program. Branch fundraisers throughout the year provide the money for our scholarships.

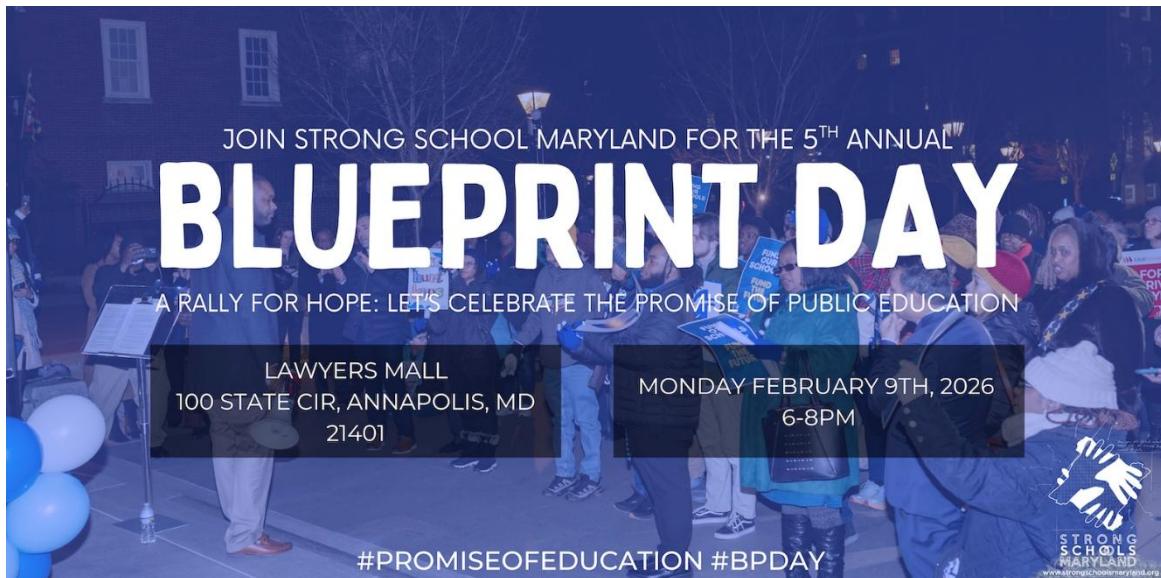
### **Anne Arundel County Branch News**

*Condensed from the Branch Newsletter, Nan Jarashow, editor*

Anne Arundel's Holiday Brunch on December 6<sup>th</sup> included collecting needed items and funds for Chrysalis House, an addiction treatment center in Anne Arundel County. Our book sale activities are finally over for 2025. Net earnings of just under \$15,000 will be used to fund our scholarship programs and branch operations.



## You're Invited: Join Us for Blueprint Day 2026! AAUW Maryland will be there!



We are excited to invite you to join us, student advocates, and community partners for [Strong Schools Maryland's 5th Annual Blueprint Day](#), a statewide rally celebrating the promise of education.

Together, we will gather in Annapolis to lift up the future of Maryland schools and call for continued progress on and full funding of the Blueprint for Maryland's Future. This event will feature student and advocacy organization tables, special guests, resources, and community activities. We hope to see you there!

**This year's rally takes place...**

on Monday, February 9th, 2026, from 6 to 8 p.m. at Lawyer's Mall, [100 State Cir, Annapolis](https://www.strongschoolsmaryland.org)

As we prepare for Blueprint Day, here's how you can act now.



## BRANCH ALIGNMENT AND OPPORTUNITIES

- AAUW 2025 Strategic Plan: <https://www.aauw.org/about/strategic-plan-2025/>
- Branch Right-Sizing Toolkit:** <https://www.aauw.org/app/uploads/2025/11/AAUW-Right-Sizing-Toolkit-10.1.2025.pdf>
- Branch and State Affiliate Community Action Grants:** <https://www.aauw.org/resources/programs/aauw-branch-and-state-affiliate-community-action-grants/> 
- Branch Five-Star Program:** Criteria, FAQ, Resources, Tips, and Successful Branches: <https://www.aauw.org/resources/member/5-star-program/>
- Bylaws Toolkit:** National bylaws and model bylaws: <https://www.aauw.org/resources/member/leader-resources-tools/bylaws-toolkit/>
- Community Hub Tutorials:** <https://www.aauw.org/membership/new-systems-update/>
- Fundraising Policies:** Policies and FAQ: <https://www.aauw.org/resources/member/leader-resources-tools/state-branch/fundraising-policies-what-members-need-to-know/>
- Fundraising Reference Guide:** Found on the Five-Star page under Advancement Star resources: <https://www.aauw.org/resources/member/5-star-program/>
- Right-sizing Toolkit for Leadership Roles, Events, and More:** Until it is posted on the AAUW website, contact your state or branch president for the file.
- Volunteer Leader Position Descriptions:** President, Finance, Fund, C/U, STEM: <https://www.aauw.org/resources/member/leader-resources-tools/state-branch/volunteer-leader-position-descriptions/>

## ADVOCACY, ISSUES, AND PROGRAMMING

- Take Action:** Advocacy Toolkit, Election Resources, Policy Updates, Public Policy Priorities, Two-Minute Activist, all here: <https://www.aauw.org/resources/policy/advocacy-toolkit/>

## MEMBERSHIP RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION

- AAUW Webinars:** <https://www.aauw.org/resources/programs/webinars/>
- AAUW YouTube Channel:** [https://www.youtube.com/results?search\\_query=aauw](https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=aauw)
- College/University Member Toolkit:** [https://aauw1.sharepoint.com/sites/AAUW\\_Box/Documents/Forms/AllItems.aspx?id=/sites/AAUW\\_Box/Documents/ExternalShare/CU-Member-Toolkit&p=true&ga=1](https://aauw1.sharepoint.com/sites/AAUW_Box/Documents/Forms/AllItems.aspx?id=/sites/AAUW_Box/Documents/ExternalShare/CU-Member-Toolkit&p=true&ga=1)
- Degree Equivalency Membership Policy (see Appendix A therein):** <https://www.aauw.org/app/uploads/2025/07/5.14.25-Board-Minutes-FINAL.pdf>
- Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DEI) Plug and Play Programming:** <https://www.aauw.org/resources/member/leader-resources-tools/dei-toolkit/plug-play-dei-programming/>
- DEI Toolkits** [Did you know there are **16** of these? Explore!]: <https://www.aauw.org/resources/member/leader-resources-tools/dei-toolkit/dimensions-of-diversity/>
- Membership Matters Newsletter:** The latest issue is linked from <https://www.aauw.org/resources/member/leader-resources-tools/> Click on “Membership Matters,” the second listing.
- Shape the Future:** <https://www.aauw.org/resources/member/leader-resources-tools/state-branch/shape-the-future-campaign/>
- State and Branch Tools:** <https://www.aauw.org/resources/member/leader-resources-tools/state-branch/>

## Thanks to AAUW Maryland leaders!

### AAUW MD Elected Officers (Executive Board)

**Heather Reichardt**, President (2024-2026)

**Edie Allison**, Vice Pres. for Programs (2025-2026)

**Jeri Rhodes**, Vice President for AAUW Funds (2024-2026)

**Lydia Alcock and Susana Hernández Martín** (2022-2026) and **Roxann King** (2025-2026), Co-Vice Presidents for Communications

**Barb Carter and Deb Daniel**, Co-Vice Presidents for Public Policy (2025-2027)

**Christine Schmitz**, Treasurer (2023-2027)

(**Vacant**), Secretary (2023-2025) (volunteers welcome & thanks to those who have helped this year)

**Jeanne Blades** Vice President for Membership (2023-2027)

### AAUW MD Committee Chairs (Current Appointed Members of the Board)

**Carolyn Fisher**, Chair of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee

**Terry Sayler**, Archivist

**Eileen Menton**, Member of the Bylaws Committee

**Judy Carbone**, ERA Taskforce Chair

**Regional Event Planning Committee: Tracy Lantz**, Carol Mueller, and Heather Reichardt

**2026 Nominating Committee**: Jacqueline Gray (Baltimore), Kate Campbell Stevenson (Kensington-Rockville), Pat Stocker (Bethesda-Chevy Chase), with Anita Rosen (past chair, ex officio)(Kensington-Rockville).

### Thanks also to each Branch President, who is also a member of the Board of Directors!

Please don't hesitate to volunteer for the **vacant position of AAUW MD Secretary**. Contact Heather Reichardt or any member of the board if you have any questions or to volunteer.

### AAUW Maryland encourages members to consider serving on the State Board.

Get the most out of your AAUW experience! Serving as a Branch or State board member is an excellent opportunity to learn new leadership skills that can help in other areas of life. Service on a Branch or State board also builds connections and close friendships with fellow AAUW members.

**Please contact any member of the 2026 Nominating Committee (listed above) or other officer if you would be interested in any of the following positions to be elected at the 2026 Convention:**

President, Program VP, Funds VP, Communications Co-VP, Secretary

~ Happy Holidays! Don't Forget to Register Early for the 2026 Regional Conference! ~



The Marylander  
AAUW Maryland  
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Annapolis, Maryland 21401-6868

**Our Mission: To advance gender equity for women and girls through research, education, and advocacy.**  
**Our Vision: Equity for all.**

**In principle and in practice, AAUW values and seeks an inclusive membership, workforce, leadership team, and board of directors. There shall be no barriers to full participation in this organization on the basis of age, disability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, geographical location, national origin, race, religious beliefs, sexual orientation, or socioeconomic status.**

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<b>February 9, 2026, 6-8 p.m. – Blueprint Day on Lawyers Mall in Annapolis</b>	2 – Public Policy Update 3 – Funds report
<b>September 25-27, 2026 - AAUW Atlantic States Regional Meeting</b>	3 – Winter Board Meeting 4 – Membership Update 4 – 2026 Regional Meeting 5 – Branch News 6 – Blueprint Day 7 – AAUW Tools for Branch Leaders 8 – AAUW Maryland Board Members