

# AAUW Howard County Branch NEWSLETTER



OUR MISSION: *To advance equity for women and girls through advocacy, education, philanthropy, and research.*

## May 2025

Hello Members and Friends,

As we roll towards our last branch meeting of the season on May 13<sup>th</sup> I would like you to reflect on all the wonderful activities we've shared as well as all the scholarships we've awarded thanks to your generosity. Thanks for all you do to support AAUW and our mission of equity for women and girls. It is an important mission every single day!

As you know, the environment for higher education is under relentless attacks; however, AAUW remains strong as a tireless advocate for women in higher education. There is a critical need for strategies that inspire and educate girls to choose STEM careers. We need to continue to work towards the removal of barriers to increase the participation and empowerment of women across these underrepresented fields.

AAUW National is ratcheting up its efforts to reach out to branches in an effort to move forward together towards greater progress and we should be prepared to do our part. As voiced in recent communications about defending equity, AAUW is taking action amid growing attacks on diversity, equity, and inclusion. There is a series of recordings that equips members with key policy updates, advocacy strategies, and tools to strengthen our impact. [All recordings for the series are on our YouTube channel](#). I encourage you to take a few minutes to watch them.

I also encourage you to vote in the **AAUW National Elections 2025**. All members **were** sent emails with an electronic ballot with their unique voting credentials from [vote@simplyvoting.com](mailto:vote@simplyvoting.com). Voting closes on May 13, 5 p.m. ET.

At last month's meeting we heard about human trafficking in Maryland from Ashton Petta. More details about her presentation can be found on page 4.

To finish out the season, we are having our **Salad Supper Potluck on May 13<sup>th</sup> at 4 pm** at the Residences at Vantage Point – where we used to have our fashion shows. Paula Rasera is a resident there and the management kindly agreed for us to have our event there. Check the following page for details. I look forward to seeing you there!

Beth Hayden, President [Bhayden52@aol.com](mailto:Bhayden52@aol.com)

## APRIL PROGRAM

**You are invited!**

**AAUW Howard County Branch Annual Potluck Salad Supper  
is Back!!**

**Tuesday, May 13, 2025 4PM-6PM**

**Location: Auditorium, Residences at Vantage Point  
5400 Vantage Point Rd, Columbia, MD 21044**

Join us for:

- Learning how your donations to HCC Scholarships help students; potentially meeting a recipient
- Tasting homemade salads and desserts
- Supporting Branch Officer Installations
- Hearing about AAUW activities and committees

**Prospective members are welcome!**

Please sign up as follows, to participate in the fun:

- **Last name begins with A – J**, bring an entree salad (e.g., chicken, tuna, etc.)
- **Last name begins K – S**, bring a side or green salad (e.g. potato, pasta, fruit, bean, spinach, Caesar, etc.)
- **Last name begins T – Z**, bring a dessert

All dishes should serve 8 – 10 people. Please bring your own serving utensils.

**RSVP** to Carol Phelps (443) 878-2848 or [carolmcauliffe@verizon.net](mailto:carolmcauliffe@verizon.net) by

**Friday, May 9<sup>th</sup>** and let us know what you plan to bring.

See you there!

## **AAUW Dues News Bea Dane, Treasurer**

### **News from your Treasurer - Bea Dane**

Please keep an eye out for renewal reminder emails from National AAUW. Many of us renew our dues in June for the next fiscal year. You will receive monthly reminders if you have not paid your dues. The first reminder for June renewals will be April 30<sup>th</sup>. National increased dues by \$2, so your total dues for National, State and Branch are now \$97. If at all possible, please pay online. However, I am also happy to take a check from you made out to AAUW Howard County and I can do the renewal for you. You can bring your check to our May meeting, or mail to me at: 4050 Hobbs Hill Rd, Glenelg, MD 21737.

New members get a 50% discount on National dues for the first year. Their dues will now be \$60. This is a great incentive to bring in new members!

## **VOTE IN AAUW'S 2025 NATIONAL ELECTION!**

Voting is currently going on for AAUW National Board of Directors members, Public Policy initiatives and Bylaws changes. Members across the country are eligible to vote. If you have not already voted, look for an email from AAUW sent on Monday, April 4, at 12:00PM under the subject "AAUW Election 2025." It contains your unique identifier. Click on the link and you will be taken to the voting section.

You do not need to be knowledgeable about AAUW because all the information you need in order to make an informed decision is provided.

Voting ends on May 13, so take five minutes to vote now!

## **Welcome to Our New Member!**

### **Suzanne Soules, Membership and Diversity VP**

#### **MEMBERSHIP**

Please welcome our new member, Sara Poggio. I met with her in April to tell her a little more about AAUW and our Branch. Here is what she said by way of introducing herself:

*My name is Sara Poggio, I was born in Argentina, where I did my university degree in Sociology. I came to America to pursue a Ph.D. in Sociology at the University of Maryland, College Park. Once I got my degree, our intention (Daniel, my husband, and I) was to go back to our country, and we did, but we returned in 1994 when I got a tenure track position at UMBC.*

*I have lived in America for more than 30 years, and I found Columbia my place in the world. I have recently retired and decided to start doing the list of things I have always wanted to do because I have more time now. Among other things, like reading, I do some work for my community, and I have forever had the idea to join the American Association of University Women. Since my undergraduate time, the topic of women has been critical, and I have always centered my research on women's issues. When I finally started my professional research agenda about the immigration of Latin American women to the USA, I centralized my research on the effects of migration (the process of migration) on the women and the children of the family. I am very excited to join the organization with so many areas in which I could contribute and at the same time learn more about areas of my interests that I have not had the opportunity to explore yet.*

Welcome Sara!

## Diversity

Our April 8<sup>th</sup> meeting, held at the East Columbia Senior Center, included a presentation by Ashton Petta from the Howard County Office of Human Trafficking Prevention. She outlined the basic issues, including the fact that trafficking goes on with any race or class or gender or age. Generally, it can be seen in forced labor like domestic cleaners or construction jobs, or sex workers.

Her office partners with a group called TurnAround which provides direct services to people who have been trafficked. One idea they been exploring is assembling “Go Bags” for clients—these would include essential items for survivors in crisis. They are in the early stages of creating a wish list for needed supplies and would love to know if that might be something our Branch might be interested in supporting.

If you were unable to attend the meeting, but would like to view the slides from Ashton’s presentation, please let Beth Hayden, Susan Hailman or myself know and we can email them to you.

*Suzanne Soules, Membership and Diversity VP*

Speaker Ashton Petta received a token of thanks from President Beth Hayden.



## AAUW Maryland State Convention

AAUW Maryland State Convention – April 26, 2025

Theme: “Women Supporting Women: Global Influences and Opportunities”

Diane Roca, Bea Dane and I attended the annual convention where we heard several dynamic speakers tell their stories about how they became successful in their careers that focus on women and minority needs.

- Maryland Delegate Lily Qi talked about the challenges and joys of immigrating to the US from China when she was 26 years old.
- Bria Marie Hodge, Director of Small Business Development, Latino Economic Development Center, spoke about how she helps advance the economic and social advancement of low-to-moderate income Latinos and other underserved communities. Through the use of grants, business coaching, workshops, training, and webinars Ms. Hodge helps many women establish and grow small businesses.
- Robyn Nietart, President, Women’s Microfinance Initiative, took us on a journey of the company she started to support women in three African countries. Through small loans and training, she helps carry the hope of prosperity to poor, rural areas of Uganda, Kenya and Tanzania.

Congress (and AAUW) is still working to get the ERA published as the 28<sup>th</sup> Amendment to the U.S. Constitution even after former President Biden announced that it had met all requirements.

Christine Schmitz, Barb Carter, Edith Allison and Roxann King were installed as new officers of AAUW MD,

AAUW MD Summer Virtual Meeting will be July 26, and the Fall meeting will be on October 18.

Plans are being made for the next AAUW Regional Conference to be held in Lancaster, PA in September 2026.

Presently, AAUW has 441 members in Maryland. Since January 2024, we have 60 new members.

Did you know that older women have the highest voting block?

*Beth Hayden, President*

## AAUW MARYLAND STATE CONVENTION



Bria Marie Hodge listening to Robyn Nietert.



Gaithersburg Mayor Jud Ashman chatting with Delegate Lily Qi. Heather Reichert, AAUW Maryland President, at the microphone.

# Public Policy

## MLAW LEGISLATIVE AGENDA 2025

### RESULTS

The Maryland Legislative Agenda for Women (MLAW) is a coalition of organizations and individuals that advocates before the Maryland legislature on behalf of proposed bills that would benefit women and children. For the 2025 legislative session, MLAW members selected ten proposals to support. Five were passed by the legislature and five failed. Following is a summary of the bills that passed.

### PASSED

HB297/SB 5

Extends the very successful Young Adult Health Insurance Subsidy Program to help young Marylanders enroll and maintain their health insurance.

<https://mgaleg.maryland.gov/mgawebsite/Legislation/Details/HB0297?ys=2025RS>

HB334/SB 156

Creates the Workgroup on Universal Newborn Nurse Home Visiting Services, which will collect data and costs, identify service gaps and needs. The Workgroup is required to issue a report on its findings by the end of 2025.

<https://mgaleg.maryland.gov/mgawebsite/Legislation/Details/HB0334?ys=2025RS>

[The Nurse Visiting Service offers families the opportunity to receive visits from a licensed registered nurse after the birth or adoption of their baby. Results of this type of program show improved outcomes for infants.]

HB 424/SB 357

Prescription Drug Affordability Board

The bill extends the authority of Maryland's Prescription Drug Affordability Board to establish a process for setting upper payment limits for prescription drugs and payor reimbursements for them.

<https://mgaleg.maryland.gov/mgawebsite/Legislation/Details/HB0424?ys=2025RS>



## **MLAW RESULTS CONTINUED**

### **HB 930/SB 848**

The bill establishes the Public Health Abortion Grant Program to provide grants to improve access to abortion care clinical services. Maryland providers are seeing an increase in uninsured and underinsured people and this program will pay for their care.

<https://mgaleg.maryland.gov/mgaweb/Legislation/Details/2025RS0930>

### **HB 933/SB 679**

Nursing Homes – Cost Reports is legislation that ensures that revenue received from the Maryland Medicaid program is spent on direct care and on the caregivers who are primarily women. It also requires the Maryland Department of Health to review cost reports submitted by each nursing home that participates in the Maryland Medical Assistance Program.

<https://mgaleg.maryland.gov/mgaweb/Legislation/Details/2025RS0933>

## Interest Groups

### **ADVENTURES IN DINING**

We will be meeting at La Palapa Too, 7500 Montpelier Road in Laurel on Tuesday, May 6th at 5pm. Please RSVP if you are able to attend so that I may make reservations for us!! Hope to see you there!!!  
[carolmcauliffe@verizon.net](mailto:carolmcauliffe@verizon.net)  
Carol Phelps

### **GREAT DECISIONS**

The Great Decisions Discussion Group will meet Tuesday, May 20, at 2:00 PM at Brightview Senior Living. The address is 6670 Martin Road in Columbia. We will discuss Topic #5 *"International Climate Cooperation in an Era of Geopolitical Turmoil."*  
Contact: Carol Phelps,  
[carolmcauliffe@verizon.net](mailto:carolmcauliffe@verizon.net)

### **FOOD PANTRY**

AAUW Volunteers for the Howard County Food Bank-  
Our next session is Friday, July 11, from 10 AM-noon.  
Join us. The two hours involve working with Food Bank staff and other group volunteers. The Food Bank is closed to shoppers to allow stocking shelves and bagging fresh vegetables. Come out for one session to try it out. It is set up to look like a regular food market and is located close to Snowden River and Broken Land Parkway on Gerwig Lane.  
Contact: Laura Violand  
[lvioland123@gmail.com](mailto:lvioland123@gmail.com)  
410-733-5732

### **AAUW READERS**

Meetings are held every other month on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday at the East Columbia 50 Plus Center and will begin at 10:30 AM, followed by an optional lunch at a nearby restaurant. The schedule is as follows.

**May 15, 2025 The Day the World Came to Town by Jim Defede**

**July 17, 2025 The Violin Conspiracy: A Novel  
By Brendan Slocum**

Contacts: Jean Salkeld (410) 992-4198  
[jesalkeld@gmail.com](mailto:jesalkeld@gmail.com) and  
Debbie Munley  
[debbiemunley@verizon.net](mailto:debbiemunley@verizon.net)  
(301) 776-7388

### **LUNCH BUNCH**

We will meet on Thursday, May 29 at 11:30am, Nordstrom Cafe, Columbia Mall. No RSVP needed, just a casual lunch.  
Hope to see you there!  
Caroline Tunison  
301-346-1750

## **2025 – 2026 AAUW Howard County Branch Officers**

President: Beth Hayden (410)-707-2018

First Vice President: Position open

Financial Officer: Bea Dane (410) 299-8403

Programs Vice President: Susan Hailman (443) 994-5453

Philanthropy Vice President: Position open

Meetings/Social Co-Vice Presidents: Carol Phelps  
carolmcauliffe@verizon.net  
and Bobbie Brooks (443) 545-5642

Secretary: Debbie Munley (410) 381-6351  
Alt: Bobbie Brooks (240)-888-5231

Education Vice President: Cindy Graham (214) 912-5656

Public Policy Vice President: Position open

Membership and Diversity Vice President: Suzanne Soules (410)  
872-8603

Communications Vice President: Diane Roca (443) 255-1628

Adventures in Dining: Carol Phelps carolmcauliffe@verizon.net

AAUW Readers: Jean Salkeld (410) 992-4198 and  
Debbie Munley (301) 776-7388

Food Bank: Laura Violand (410) 733-5732

Great Decisions: Diane Roca (410) 964-3523

Lunch Bunch: Caroline Tunison (301) 346-1750

Website Manager: Position open

## AAUW Howard County Branch Calendar

### 2025

#### MAY

6 -- Adventures in Dining; 5:00 pm; La Palapa Too; Montpelier Center, Laurel

6 – Board Meeting if needed; 2pm; location TBD

**13- Branch Meeting, Potluck**, New Officers; 4:00 – 6:00 PM; Auditorium; Residences at Vantage Point, 5400 Vantage Point Road, Columbia

15 - AAUW Readers; 10:30 am; 50+ Center, East Columbia Library

20 - Great Decisions; 2 pm; Brightview Senior Living

22 — Lunch Bunch; 11:30 am; Nordstrom Café

28-30 – NCCWSL, U of MD, College Park, MD

#### JUNE

3 -- Adventures in Dining; Seafood restaurant, details TBD

6 - Help at HoCo Food Bank; 10am to 12pm; Columbia

17 - Great Decisions; 2 pm; Brightview Senior Living

26 - Lunch Bunch; 11:30 am; Nordstrom Café

#### JULY

**NO Adventures in Dining**

**NO Great Decisions**

11 - Help at HoCo Food Bank; 10am to 12pm; Columbia

17- AAUW Readers; 10:30 am; 50+ Center, East Columbia Library

24 - Lunch Bunch; 11:30 am; Nordstrom Café

#### AUGUST

**NO Adventures in Dining**

**NO Great Decisions**

28 - Lunch Bunch; 11:30 am; Nordstrom Café

#### SEPTEMBER

2 - Adventures in Dining resumes

9 - Branch Meeting – details TBD

16 – Great Decisions; 2 pm; Brightview Senior Living

25 - Lunch Bunch; 11:30 am; Nordstrom Café