



AAUW Arizona Legislative Day Feb. 1st

AAUW Arizona's Public Policy program underscores the mission of advancing equity for women and girls through advocacy, education, and research.

While our branches may adopt separate issues to focus on, at the state level, we are focused on five policy issues at this time:

- **support for ERA,**
- **full funding for public education,**
- **equal pay,**
- **stop sexual harassment**
- **access to health care for women.**

Harriet Young,
AAUW AZ Public Policy Chair



AZ Public Schools: A Multi-dimensional Crisis!

Though most of us undoubtedly hoped that 2022 would present new options for the public schools in order to meet the needs for educating our youth (especially given a large state budget surplus), it simply does not appear to be the case. The outlook for better funding appears to be anything but positive and, in fact, AZ public schools face massive budget cuts unless the current Legislature acts soon, notes Mary Jo Pitzl of the Arizona Republic. Coupled with the lack of funding, the schools continue to be beset by serious staffing problems as well as complications from the pandemic.

'One of 2022's "biggest education issues will be lifting the Aggregate Expenditure Limit, a 40-year-old spending cap that represents an oncoming tsunami for schools. This year's school funding has already been collected, but unless lawmakers act by March 1, schools won't be able to spend it — meaning immediate 16% across-the-board cuts, forcing teacher layoffs, program cuts, even school closures. Lawmakers have waived the limit before without issue, but this year, it's turned into a politically fraught game of chicken at the cost of Arizona schoolchildren. Passing a waiver will require a two-thirds majority, but that's looking increasingly hard to come by, as some lawmakers are unnecessarily tying the cap to Prop 208 and demanding it be overturned." Mary Jo Pitzl, Arizona Republic, Jan. 8, 2022.

As noted by SOS Arizona (Save our Schools AZ), Arizona voters continue to overwhelmingly support public education. Recent polling shows that the vast majority of our state citizens want to see teacher salaries increased and recognize that school funding remains far too low. More than nine out of 10 AZ voters agree that every school should have the resources it needs to deliver quality education that prepares every child for the future. However even with budget surplus cash, Arizona
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The AAUW Mission:

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

President's Message



Hope you had happy holidays and are staying healthy and safe.

The Fall Forum was a great success. Thank you to Michelle Higgins and her committee for a highly informative and thought-provoking Fall Forum. We all learned more about microaggressions and intersectionality. If you look at the AAUW national website, the section on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion provides a tool kit that has some very good information for us to use in our branches and our day-to-day interactions.

Harriet Young is working on our Legislative Day via Zoom. Mark your calendars for Tuesday, Feb. 1st and stay tuned for more information to find out the speakers scheduled.

I would like to remind you that our board meetings are open to the members, and I invite you to attend. The next board meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, January 19th at 4:00 pm, we meet on ZOOM, let me know if you would like to attend and I will send you the link.

I look forward to meeting and working with all of you in the coming months.

.....Ana Nygren, AAUW Arizona President

Mark Your Calendar OR Clip & Post

Wednesday, Jan. 19th 4pm. AAUW Arizona Board Meeting by Zoom. Contact President Ana Nygren for a link if you wish to attend.

Monday, Feb. 1st - AAUW AZ Legislative Day via Zoom. Further information will be provided by Public Policy Chair, Harriet Young.

Friday, Mar. 5th – deadline for March 15 state newsletter. Please email digital text and/or photos with cutlines to newsletter editor, Joye Kohl. Please do not send items in pdf format. Please label as “for AAUW AZ Newsletter.” Thank you

AAUW Arizona Branch Presidents:

| | |
|--------------|-------------------------------|
| East Mesa | Beverly Byrd |
| Flagstaff | Pam Stinson-Tattersall |
| Glendale | Terry Brown |
| Green Valley | Susan Peterson & Marie Cory |
| NWTucson | Gail Parsons |
| NW Valley | Suzanne James |
| Phoenix | Mary DiCerbo |
| Prescott | Tracy Smiles |
| Safford | Anni Craig-Wooten |
| Scottsdale | Viva Ashcroft |
| SE Valley | Candace Cox & Brianna Willets |
| Tucson | Diana Charbonneau |
| West Valley | Heather Rayner |

AAUW Arizona Officers

| | |
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| President | Ana Nygren |
| Program VP | Michelle Higgins |
| Membership VP | Sharon Phelps |
| Recording Secretary | Connie Harrison |
| Corresponding Sec. | Sara Schmitt |
| Treasurer | Gail Garrison |

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| | |
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| Bylaws/Parliamentarian | Alice Buck |
| AAUW AZ 4 Public Educ. | Kathy Davisson & Sharon Rezac Anderson |
| College/Univ. Relations | Ann Mitchell |
| Newsletter Editor | Joye Kohl |
| AAUW Funds | Karen Ramos |
| Webmaster | Jane Russ |
| Community Action | Becky Saylor |
| Public Policy | Harriet Young |

Public Policy

Public School Crisis Continued from page 1

remains last in the nation for per student spending and too many in the Legislature refuse to support educators and students. Since fall 2021, schools have struggled to fill a variety of critical positions – from teachers and substitutes to bus drivers – reflecting the multiple associated stresses of Covid-19 on our school systems and the public who staff them. The current public education crisis needs bipartisan work in order to do what is best for all of Arizona's youth, our state's number one resource.

Though the state is sitting on billions of dollars in surplus cash, the needs of our long-term, poorly funded public schools go unaddressed. To name just a few of the problems, class sizes remain far too high; school counselors remain an endangered species; teachers remain underpaid and under-valued by too many. Add to those issues, the problem of being a global pandemic hotspot requiring additional unsupported coping by school administrators and teachers and the push to expand school vouchers which drain funding for our base of public schools.

Additionally, from AAUW Arizona member, Anne Schneider's Legislative Alert, 'There are reports that the AZ Legislature is planning an 'end run' around the citizen-driven proposal last year that succeeded in putting the 'flat tax' proposal onto the November 2022 ballot for a possible citizen's veto.' The flat tax would take millions out of the education budget, as well as other public services. The strategic move would be to simply repeal that bill that proposed the flat tax, and replace it with a different tax cut—thereby preventing citizens from voting against the flat tax in November.'

What can we do as citizens, AAUW members and branches?

1. Pay attention to and learn the facts from reliable sources rather than merely attending to the sound bites. Schedule or attend community meetings to get the facts. (SOS AZ can be a good resource)

2. Remember each voice matters — including yours. As SOS Arizona advises, the act of a simple phone call or email to your lawmaker asking them to prioritize funding for schools and responsible policies for education goes a long way. Pay attention to critical legislation and advocate. Use the Legislature's Request to Speak option.

"Let your lawmakers know you expect serious policy discussions, not extremist politics guided by private interests that don't have Arizona's children's interests at heart. Tell them you reject unaccountable private school vouchers and punitive measures meant to silence teachers and students. Make it clear that you expect well-funded and well-resourced schools where educators feel supported and students feel safe." SOS AZ.

3. Then don't forget to connect the dots between your expectations for funding/ support of public schools and how your public office representatives actually voted. That is critical information to remember when it comes time for future elections.

.....Joye Kohl, AAUW Arizona Newsletter Editor and Harriet Young, AAUW Arizona Public Policy Chair

Letters to the Editor or An OpEd?????

Letters to the editor and op-eds are especially effective in local community papers. But what exactly are they, and how do you know which mode of outreach is right for your goals?

Letters to the Editor: Letters to the editor are usually written in direct response to an article, editorial, op-ed, or column that the target paper has printed. They can also be a reaction to or notification of a newsworthy event. They are printed on the editorial page, one of the most-read pages in the paper, making them an effective way of reaching a large audience in the community. Letters to the editor are also more likely to get published than an op-ed and can be published in a quicker turnaround than an op-ed. An LTE may be the best choice for your content if

- Your topic has been mentioned in the paper recently, especially on the opinion page.
- You have just one or two points that can be succinctly stated.
- You can write a response to the topic mentioned in the paper within one to two days (LTEs have a faster publishing turnaround).

Op-ed: Op-eds (or “opposite editorial”) are articles devoted to commentary, feature articles, and opinions. Authors are not officially affiliated with the newspaper and can range from state legislators to local business owners and interested local citizens, like AAUW members! Op-eds must be approved by the editorial page or opinion page editor and will also be cleared by a copy editor. Editors usually put together their editorial calendars the month before, so getting your desired column into the paper without a newsworthy hook can be challenging. An op-ed may be a viable option for your desired content if

- Your topic will be of interest to most of the paper's readers.
- You have something new, interesting, or unexpected to say.
- You are writing about a larger theme that will not fit into 150 words or less.
- Your piece will be relevant in a few weeks' time (op-eds have a longer lead time before publishing).
- You are willing to pitch your piece to the editors

Advocacy: Tips on effective letters to the editor and op-eds



Research the guidelines - Most papers have a length limit on LTEs and op-eds. LTEs are usually 250 words or less. Op-eds are usually around 700 words, though this varies by outlet. Also find out where to submit your content (typically via e-mail or through an online form).

Pick a timely topic and find a local angle. Readers are more interested in an issue when they see how it affects their lives and communities.

Assume nothing. Do not assume that your readers are informed on your topic. Give a concise but informative background before plunging into the main issue. If you are responding to a specific newspaper article or editorial, reference it by date and title.

Identify yourself as part of AAUW. Most papers prefer printing opinion articles written by a local authority or community leader. Signing your LTE or op-ed as an AAUW office holder or member with expertise on the topic may make it more likely to be chosen.

Clarify your expertise. Someone with a closer-than-normal perspective on the issue is an expert. This may include a local lawyer discussing the impact of a Supreme Court nomination or a teacher discussing how cuts in education translate into the day-to-day situation in her classroom. You should submit your content not only as an AAUW member but also according to your personal experience and expertise.

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Writing Letters to the Editors and Op Eds continued from page 4

Avoid form letters. Do not send the same letter to two competing papers in the same circulation area or many copies of an identical letter to a single paper.

Close with a call to action. Encourage your state legislature to pass stronger equal pay legislation! Tell your senators and representatives in Congress to pass the Paycheck Fairness Act. You should tailor that call to the topic you're writing about.

Edit your document. Have some fresh eyes review it for the requirements above. Make your writing concise, clear, and conversational. AAUW staff are available to help proof your LTE or op-ed if requested; e-mail advocacy@aauw.org.

Follow up for op-eds. It is vital to call the paper after an op-ed is submitted to verify that the opinion page editor received your e-mail and to pitch your topic in order to increase interest. With larger papers, you might want to wait a day after submitting. With smaller papers, you can call within a couple hours. For more on developing your contact list and pitching, read the AAUW guide for working with the media. LTEs do not require a follow-up.

Get creative. Throw a party to write letters to the editor! Gather branch members to learn about an issue and write letters to your local paper. This way, you'll support one another through the writing process and increase the likelihood that your letters will be published.

- Incorporate letters to the editor into your existing activities. For example, if you are hosting a speaker on school vouchers, ask everyone to write a letter to the editor about a state school voucher bill after the presentation.
- Team up on op-eds! Have a unique perspective on an issue but want to add that extra oomph? Op-eds can have shared bylines. Work with other advocacy organizations to really drive your point home. Team up with someone who has her own story of facing unequal pay. Brainstorm ways that a joint op-ed can help your article gets chosen and published.

.....from the AAUW.org website.



AAUW Friends:

It has been an honor to work with you on the AAUW AZ 4 Public Education state funding. We have succeeded in advancing our school districts initiatives during extremely difficult times.

School districts across the state are still struggling with pandemic issues. Let us continue our support virtually whatever way possible.

You have certainly advanced education equity. I wish each of you the very best in 2022!

Fondly, with Gratitude,
Sharon Rezac Andersen, AAUW AZ 4 Public Education



College Connections: Supporting the Education of Women and Girls

Challenges & Opportunities Facing Maricopa Community Colleges



L to R: Ann Mitchell; Neely Lewis, Instructional Services Supervisor, Rio Salado College Surprise; Mellissa Lawrence, Program Manager & Community Education, Rio Salado College Surprise; Dr. Linda Thor, Governing Board Member, Maricopa Community Colleges; Angeles Clark, Fiscal Technician, Rio Salado College; and Dr. Stella Perez, Vice President Academic Affairs, Rio Salado College.

Dr. Linda Thor, Governing Board Member, Maricopa Community Colleges, was the guest speaker of the Northwest Valley Branch. Thirty-five members and guests attended the hybrid meeting.

Dr. Linda Thor has worked in community colleges for 42 years. For 29 of those years, she was a college president or chancellor. She was President of Rio Salado College for 20 years. Dr. Thor was elected to the Maricopa Community Colleges Governing Board in 2016 and was Board President in 2019. She was recently re-elected and continues to serve today. Dr. Thor is a member of AAUW.

Dr. Thor's candid presentation touched on many aspects of how the pandemic has impacted the community colleges. Her discussion included the following topics: decline in enrollment; new approaches to teaching and counseling students; funding for community colleges; the need for more vigorous marketing to entice students to return to college; offering a four-year degree in areas of workforce need in the state; and improved workforce training that includes partnerships with business and government.

Dr. Thor certainly inspired AAUW members to continue their support of community college students!

.....Ann Mitchell, AAUW Arizona Chair- College Relations



AAUW College/University (C/U) Membership Continues to Grow

Congratulations to Rio Salado College and Arizona Western College. Both institutions have joined the AAUW College/University Membership program.

Rio Salado College is located in Tempe and is part of the Maricopa County Community College District. Kate Smith and Angela Clark will serve as the campus representatives.

Western Arizona College is located in Yuma, Arizona and serves 5 other communities in the western portion of the state. Diane Carrasco-Jaquez will serve as their representative.

These community colleges have joined seven other institutions in Arizona as C/U Members. Many "perks" are available to these AAUW partners including: national visibility; grants & fellowships for the staff; FREE e-student affiliation; and a wealth of current information on topics that affect women.

The colleges and universities that are AAUW C/U Members are: Arizona State University East; Coconino Community College; Estrella Mountain Community College; Pima Community College; South Mountain Community College; University of Arizona; and Yavapai College.

.....Ann Mitchell, AAUW Arizona Chair - College Relations



Community College Spotlight Arizona Western College

The main campus of Arizona Western College is located in Yuma, Arizona. This community college offers associate degrees, occupational certificates, and transfer degrees. The college opened in 1963 and serves 12 locations across 10,000 square miles including communities in Yuma and La Paz counties such as Dateland, Wellton, San Luis, Quartzsite; and Somerton.

The college offers over 100 degrees and occupational certificates in a wide range of categories. It is one of the few community colleges in the nation that features on-campus housing. Students can participate in over 50 clubs and organizations. College President, Dr. Daniel P. Corr says, "Your education is not just a spectator sport - get involved!"

Speaking of sports, AWC athletics features four men's and four women's sports teams. They are known as the Madadors with their colors of Cardinal and Gold.

We welcome Arizona Western College to the AAUW College/University (C/U) Membership program!

Sources: Wikipedia.org; www.azwestern.edu.

.....Ann Mitchell, AAUW Arizona Chair - College Relations

**GET INVOLVED ❖ LEARN ❖ MAKE NEW AAUW FRIENDS
CONTRIBUTE IN THE COMMUNITY ❖ HAVE FUN**



Green Valley Branch



Happy New Year everyone out there sharing the mission to advance gender equity for women and girls through research, education, and advocacy. It seems that we need to continue fulfilling this mission as much now as in yesteryears, in spite of advancements in commerce and technology.

I think many of us feel we are living in a strange place right now, to mask or not, to fly or not, to dine out or not, to visit grandchildren or not and I know you can fill in many other choices that have become so bothersome, if not difficult. But, steady the course for AAUW.

Our Green Valley Branch has had a fall full of wonderful speakers at our virtual meetings. We are especially glad for Zoom as many of us have not returned to Green Valley (from Wisconsin, Iowa, North Dakota, Maine, Washington and elsewhere). Yet we see those friends (hair growing a bit longer and grayer perhaps) and appreciate the technology that keeps us together. I am writing to you from Madison, Wisconsin where the temperature has fallen below zero for several days. My husband and I plan on a return to a warmer land at the end of this month.

It is scholarship fundraising time in Green Valley. We are busy setting up the process that brings Luna Fest films produced and directed by women, an online raffle offering gift certificates and charming treasures, and this year, a special beautiful Arizona themed quilt to be raffled off as well. This gem has been designed, embroidered, pieced and lovingly quilted exclusively by our branch members. Our Luna Fest celebration will take place **February 19**. Since all is virtual, please join us. For ticket and raffle information contact either Susan Kirk at chicadee329@icloud.com or Phyllis Debertin at pdebertin@nwi.net. Join the fun and help us send some deserving women to college.

Stay warm everyone.

Susan Peterson, Co-President, Green Valley AAUW

Scottsdale Branch

The Scottsdale Branch held their annual **Holiday Luncheon** on Saturday, December 11 to raise funds for the AAUW Fund and local scholarships. We had over 40 attendees and in addition to lunch, we had a jewelry sale, white elephant sale and silent auction. The annual Red Envelope letter was sent to all members in November asking them to donate to the AAUW Fund. Between that solicitation and our Holiday Luncheon, we were able to send \$2,250 to National to support the AAUW Fund and additionally send funds to our Maricopa Community College Foundation endowment for local scholarships. A successful Fundraiser and one we will continue next year! Thanks to all who helped make the luncheon a success, including the volunteers and those who donated items for the sale and auction.



Judy Hubbard and Gail Stempil did a great job as Holiday Luncheon chairs.

Scottsdale Branch continued

The Scottsdale Branch January Program meeting featured **Jodi Liggett**, our AAUW Arizona lobbyist, who talked about what to expect from the Arizona Legislature in 2022. Meetings are back on ZOOM for the time being due to the virus situation.

Public Policy chair **Janet Larkin** has been hard at work asking members to contact their state representatives for information about their agenda for the year. Janet also encourages members to sign up for the Two Minute Activist and Right to Speak. We look forward to Legislative Day and becoming more involved in advocating for our top issues – Education and Women's health.

.....Karen Ramos, Scottsdale Branch President



Shown to the left: The Scottsdale Branch jewelry and scarf sale was coordinated by Joyce Yarbrough with help from Marcia Gonzales, Esther Groves and Claudia Carman. L-R Marcia, Esther, Joyce and Claudia)

Getting Ready for a Busy Year in Tucson

Our Tucson Branch finished out the year strong with a Holiday Party and giveaways while celebrating a year of success. Throughout the year, we supported education through our collaboration with the Tucson Regional Educator's Collaborative (TREC) including providing gift cards for teachers, paying for critical materials and hosting specialized teachers like Kate Hoffman with Earn to Learn.

In 2022, the Tucson Branch looks forward to supporting our local women and girls through several partnerships such as facilitating a Women in Stem/Engineering (WISE) *Your Career Symposium* and at the YWCA *Women's Leadership Conference* -- both in February. We continue to work with the Girl Scouts of Southern

Arizona, Tucson Young Professionals (TYP), Women and Gender Studies at the University of Arizona and several local organizations to exponentially increase our impact.

Our branch continued to add new members through our Branch Snapshots which have been a success, thanks to our VP Membership and have several more scheduled through the spring. In collaboration with the University of Arizona Graduate Center, we look forward to expanding offering Start Smart and have several additional facilitators being trained to provide this crucial information on Salary Negotiation to our local community members.

A Happy New Year to All and here's to a Successful 2022.

.....Diana Charbonneau, Tucson Branch President



Above: Tucson President, Diana Charbonneau drawing a winner at the Branch Holiday Party.



AAUW Tucson Branch Holiday Party



Sarah Porter, Director of the Kyl Center for Water Policy at the ASU Morrison Institute for Public Policy.

Northwest Valley Branch Report

The North West Valley branch had an eventful fall. This fall eight members have been mentoring the new members that have joined since January 2021 and has resulted in their participating in many activities from joining our committees such as College Connection and the Newsletter as well as SIG groups.

In November we had a tremendous turnout for our General Meeting. Joyce Olson, Program Co-Chair, introduced our presenter Sarah Porter, Director of the Kyl Center for Water Policy at the ASU Morrison Institute for Public Policy whose topic on the history and current status of water in Arizona was timely and well received.

The Special Interest Groups (SIGs) put on the festive SIG Fair where each group had representatives to introduce their group and sign-up members. I noticed many signups for each group.

Hospitality and Event chairs Rosemary Dougherty and Sharon Phelps hosted our December Holiday General Meeting Breakfast at Briarwood Country Club that was well attended. Everyone enjoyed the Christmas music provided by Ed Johnson, and the delicious breakfast. Karen Bunting and the Fundraising Committee raffled the beautiful Champagne and Waterford Chrystal Basket with the generous proceeds going to our Scholar fund. Lu Marchese, Scholarship Chair, introduced four of our very talented STEM scholars.

College Connections led by Ann Mitchell and Joye Kohl continues to plan and do supportive activities with colleges and the YWCA.

The late fall surge of COVID-19 then Omicron caused reservation numbers well below the requirements for our annual major scholarship fundraising Fashion Luncheon at Briarwood Country Club January 24th. Disappointed we had to cancel this event for the second consecutive pandemic year.

Happy New Year 2022.

1st photo: President Suzanne James and President-elect Karen Bunting show off the Exciting raffle basket.

Branch members gather for a festive lunch together.



....Submitted by Suzanne James, NWV Branch President



Prescott Branch

The Prescott Branch kicked off the new AAUW year with an outdoor open house in the Yavapai College Sculpture Garden. The Prescott Branch then held the following two meetings in person at the college's community room. October's meeting featured a presentation on issues facing Native American tribes here in AZ. In conjunction with the presentation, the branch held a clothing drive of casual work clothes for the Native Women's conference.

November's meeting hosted two community activists who presented how different organizations are supporting veterans in the Quad Cities. In December, the branch held its annual holiday brunch at the Prescott Lakes Country Club. Local restaurant owner and food bank activist, Barry Barbe, shared a message of hope and gratitude, and awarded each participant with two \$50.00 Safeway gift cards to be gifted to an organization or individuals in need within the Prescott community. Additionally, the Prescott Branch, upon learning that the Prescott Unified School District has no money budgeted for the purchase of new books for the school libraries, used their red envelope fund raiser to raise over \$2800.00, making it possible for the Yavapai County Free Library District to purchase over 500 books at a discount through their distributor for local elementary school libraries.

Because of the rise in COVID cases the branch has gone back to meeting over Zoom. Last month's meeting featured DACA recipients and local immigration activists who discussed their experiences and addressed issues facing DACA recipients and other immigrants in our community.

..... Tracy Smiles, Prescott Branch President



I Love To Read

The Northwest Valley AAUW continues to support children in their community. The month of February is titled "I Love To Read" month and the branch is supporting this theme by encouraging the members to bring one children's book to a luncheon scheduled January 27th. Heidi Speed, librarian at the Youngtown, AZ library will be the guest at the lunch, along with City Manager Jeanne Blackman and Youngtown Mayor Mike LeVaunt.



Could your branch use this approach to continue community support of children?

.....Ann Mitchell

**HAVE A
GREAT
2022!**