



AAUW some NEWS

News & Views from the
West Chester – Chester County
PA Branch
wccc-pa.aauw.net

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June 2020

AAUW West Chester-Chester County Branch MAY 2020 Virtual "MEETING" Held May 13

On our AAUW calendar, the meeting and banquet in May is one of the highlights of the year. We took care of the official end-of-the-year business, including the election and installation of officers, approval of the budget, and recognition of members. See articles in this issue:

- New Officers for 2020-2021 Installed
- Gateway to Equity Award: WCU Resource Pantry Selected Again
- Alice Lawson Scholarship Awarded
- Members Receive Awards, Outgoing Officers Recognized
- And more ...



This June newsletter is the last one until September. Your Editor thanks you for your contributions this year and looks forward to the newsletter appearing again in September. Stay safe and healthy and enjoy your summer!

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Letter from the President

“Adversity is an opportunity for creativity, because it forces one to dig deeper and discover something new about oneself.”

Paul T. P. Wong

This past year has certainly tested the organization and the resolve of its members. We came through all the challenges with creativity and grace.

Last summer we moved forward with our Gateway to Equity winner and chose a shelter under the auspices of Decade to Doorways. The management of D2D came back with a request to help all of the shelters that met our criteria of assisting women and girls. That led us to helping four shelters instead of one. With the guidance of Mimi and Peggy, we organized our work to best meet this challenge, and surprised ourselves with the success we had. We supplied more items, provided more volunteer hours, and raised more money by far than we ever had in the past.

In January we became aware that we had been scammed out of money from our treasury. I was so proud of our members who rallied to support each other in this crisis. It reflected the understanding that we are all volunteers doing the best we can, and that is to be respected by everyone.

Having handled the scam, we were so excited to plan many lovely activities for the spring, including GETT, the fund-raiser for the Domestic Violence Center, and our own Anniversary Celebration. Everything was organized and ready

to roll. Then came word of virus, and none of us could have imagined the impact it would have on our lives. Once we understood that we would not be able to get together as a group, many feared the worst. To my delight Zoom came to the rescue! We now have our book groups, Mah Jongg, and the Stitchers meetings on-line. The Board meetings and even the Annual meeting were conducted through Zoom, maintaining a sense of normalcy for our members. Should the pandemic continue through the summer, we know that we can continue to meet virtually in the fall.

I'd like to give recognition to the officers, the committee chairs, and the special interest chairs who have worked so hard this year to bring wonderful programs and activities to the branch. Through all the challenges they have continued to provide leadership to the organization and to serve the community.

My deepest gratitude goes to Anne, our Co-President, for being a dependable, sensible, and organized officer, as well as a good friend. Anne and I spent countless hours planning the multitude of activities that an organization of our size runs. She will be an excellent lead president in the coming year!

Thank you, everyone, for a very unusual year that brought out the best in us! Have a safe summer!

Eva Kaufmann

Officers for 2020-2021 Installed



AAUW West Chester-Chester County members chose their board leaders for 2020-21 at their annual meeting. Officers include (top row from left) Anne Anderko and Janet Kane, co-presidents; Barbara Lathroum, program co-vice president; Diane Dougherty, recording secretary; and (bottom row from left) Patricia Schultz, membership co-vice president; Carol Haaf, corresponding secretary; and Suzy DeGeorge, treasurer. Not pictured Jean Speiser, program co-vice president, and Susan Skiles, membership co-vice president.

Branch again selects WCU Resource Pantry for Gateway to Equity Award

-- Cathy Palmquist

For the third time, branch members have selected the West Chester University Resource Pantry to receive the Gateway to Equity Award for 2020-21. The annual award *honors an individual, group or organization that has shown by action and philosophy the promotion of the AAUW mission to advance equity for women and girls through advocacy, education, and research.*

The Resource Pantry mission is to eliminate barriers to degree completion for students with

financial need by providing access to resources, while empowering students to learn independent living skills, and achieve long-term stability.

Pam Frontino, Associate Director of Service-Learning and Volunteer Programs at West Chester University, manages the pantry. With a bachelor's degree in political science from Susquehanna University, and a master's in (continued on next page)

WCU Resource Center (continued)

sustainable international development from Brandeis, she is also involved with the WCU Sustainability Committee.

Thanking AAUW for its support, she commented "the program has grown from a small closet of food supplies to four rooms of dedicated space at the university, serving over 200 students per week. The pantry is testament to the support of the entire community," she added, explaining that the county food bank, churches and community



Pam Frontino manages the WCU Resource Center chosen for the chapter's Gateway to Equity Award

organizations, such as AAUW, regularly contribute non-perishable items, fresh produce, clothing items, and monetary donations.

The pantry is open to all undergraduate students at WCU, regardless of their need level. No appointment is necessary, and walk-ins are welcome at any time during the hours of operation. "Student food insecurity has been growing, not only at WCU but at campuses across the country," said Frontino. According to the pantry's 2017-18 annual report, almost 32 percent of students on campus have food insecurity.

"The goal of the program is that when students graduate, they will have the tools to succeed," she said, noting that educational workshops on financial literacy, food preparation, applying for government assistance programs, and social service aids are provided in partnership with financial, career development and other programs at WCU.

"With the campus currently on lockdown, we are now just able to provide packages of prepared items," she said, "and we don't yet know if students will be on campus in the fall."

Decade to Doorways Expresses Thanks

-- Cathy Palmquist



Lauren Baker of Chester County's Decade to Doorways thanked the chapter for its support this past year.

Lauren Baker, staff member of Chester County's Decade to Doorways (D2D) program offered "tremendous gratitude" to our branch and its members for assistance to the county's homeless prevention program, speaking at our virtual "May Banquet." Decade to Doorways was the recipient of our chapter's Gateway to Equity Award for 2019-2020.

She noted that beginning

with support of their "Be the Key" reception, "Your organization and its members made a

significant impact on our service providers," she said, citing positive comments she received from Jennifer Lopez, director of Friends Association for the Care and Protection of Children. "Your recent generous monetary donation to CYWA (Community Youth and Women's Alliance shelter) is most appreciated, as well as your monthly endeavors on behalf of the three other shelters to whom you provided support. What you've done and what you do is truly appreciated. It's been a privilege to work with you," she said in closing.

Co-president Eva Kaufmann mentioned the funds raised in our upcoming "Teapot Fundraiser" will go to help with the needs of the homeless who are in hotels due to the shortage of shelters.

Alice Lawson Scholarship Awarded to Non-Traditional Student

-- Cathy Palmquist

"If there is a single word that describes the Alice Lawson Scholarship winner, Mykia Bridgett," said Deb Liczwek, co-chair of the scholarship committee, along with Diane Dougherty, "it's 'determined'." Mykia, who received the \$1,500 scholarship awarded by our branch at our May meeting started her journey in higher education in 1993.

Marriage and children interrupted her schooling, and for a time, she fostered children in addition to raising her own children and adopting a foster child who is now 15 years old. Still she did not give up her dream of pursuing higher education. "I wanted my children to see me succeed," she said. Mykia enrolled in Community College of Philadelphia, earning her AA degree with high honors in 2009. That fall, she enrolled at Temple University in the Bachelor of Social Work program, but she was unable to continue because she had reached the maximum in allowed loans.

Again, she persevered, working to clear her debt. In 2019, Mykia enrolled at West Chester University, where her academic adviser rates her as exceptional in all areas: initiative, motivation, reliability, creativity, leadership, communications skills and intellectual abilities. Her advisor praised Mykia for her "extraordinary social justice and advocacy skills," in addition to her "strong commitment to and knack for academic excellence."

Her experience as a mother and foster mother have shaped her educational path and choice of career, Mykia explains. Her hope is to provide a group home for teens who are about to "age out" of the foster system, but who have few plans for their futures.

"I am so grateful and emotional to have someone believe in me," she said, upon receiving the scholarship. "I was ready to give up."

The scholarship, awarded to a non-traditional female student, is named for the late Alice Lawson, a lifelong AAUW member who joined AAUW branches wherever she

and her husband moved. "She had a special empathy for young women who faced financial challenges in pursuing a college degree," said Lawson's daughter. "She loved teaching and helping others." Alice was offered an opportunity to enroll in college by a nun at Seton College, when her family did not have money for college after educating her four older siblings, and the Depression came along.

Mykia's daughter is a student at the University of Virginia on a full academic scholarship and is scheduled to graduate in 2021. "Even if my daughter beats me to the punch and graduates first, I will proceed," adds Mykia. "After graduation, I hope to pay it forward to someone else," she told AAUW members. "We are pleased to have had a part in Mykia's journey," said Deb.



Mykia Bridgett is the recipient of this year's Alice Lawson Scholarship.

Awards Presented to Members at May Meeting

Another important feature of the annual meeting is the recognition of chapter members for their contributions with awards as voted on by members. Anne Anderko noted that flowers and certificates were brought to the awardees the day before the meeting, and she recognized the following awards:

Peg Anderson Award – to Mimi Jones

This award recognizes a long-standing member who has served in many capacities over the years and continues to work in the background to support and inspire leaders and members. She was especially recognized for her overseeing the community outreach program.

Member Making A Difference – to Trish Alfano

This award is made in recognition of recent term contributions by an unsung member who represents the spirit of being there to lend a helping hand. Trish was recognized for her creative fund raising and work on the handbook.

Outstanding Branch Member – to Eva Kaufmann

This award is presented for meritorious service in over multiple years to the chapter and the community.

2 Year Honorees – two members were recognized for celebrating 25 year of AAUW membership: Sarah Caspar and Alice Delducco

Two named gift honoree awards from the State AAUW: **Trish Alfano and Eva Kaufmann.**

Outgoing Officers also recognized

Pat Bove, outgoing Secretary, was thanked for her service to the chapter.

Eva Kaufmann, outgoing co-president of our



branch, is pictured alongside the baskets presented to her by co-president Anne Anderko, who acquired the baskets with donations from the board members. In addition to the two floral baskets for Eva's porch, Anne purchased and cleverly arranged a "Pandemic Basket," containing toilet paper, hand sanitizer, a "lockdown" bottle of wine, and several gift certificates on behalf of grateful branch members.

Anne noted that Eva ended her two-year term on a challenging note, when the coronavirus pandemic hit the nation early in 2020, and sidelined many ambitious, service-oriented activities of branch members. Despite the challenges, Eva and Anne continued to lead the branch in supporting the Decade to Doorways program and four shelters, the West Chester Food Cupboard, and other community activities. Eva was an enthusiastic, tireless cheerleader for the branch and its members, and along with Anne, provided outstanding leadership.

TEAPOT FUNDRAISER: Over \$1,500 - Amazing Generosity!



We would like to thank our members for their continued generosity during these difficult times. Despite not being able to have our anticipated

banquet and Teapot decorating contest in May, **our members have stepped up once more and contributed over \$1,500 for our 2019-2020 Gateway to Equity fundraiser.** This Teapot fundraiser money will be divided among the Friends Association for the Care and

Protection of Children, Safe Harbor, and the Domestic Violence Center of Chester County.

Don't forget about your Teapots. You now have extra time to decorate them and (if you can find a garden center that's open) perhaps plant something in them. We will vote on the most attractive Teapots in the Fall when we can once again meet together.

Stay well,
Trish Alfano & Marie Knox (Fundraising Co-Chairs)

What Zoom Is Like 😊

Thank you, Sandy Alexander, for these screen shots of our May 13 ZOOM meeting!



Membership

-- Patricia Schultz & Susan Skiles

Thanks to all of you who have already sent your dues and donations! We would like to have everything **by June 20** to allow Suzy DeGeorge time to process and send to national. If you need another form, let Patricia know and it will be emailed to you. **(It is also included in this newsletter.)**

Thanks! We now have 97 members! We are so close to reaching our goal of 100 members in honor of the 100th year of the suffragists who won the right to vote for women in 1920! Only 3 to go!

We are eager to speak with anyone you know who may be interested in joining. The fee for new members is **\$55.50. A great deal!** We hope that each of you will talk to your friends about our branch and send us their contact information so we can reach out to them.

Stay safe and be well during these challenging times.

Patricia: 610-436-9752

pls@patriciaschultz.com

Susan: 610-431-4278

whimziecieux@gmail.com

Renewal Time

Below you will find the revised Membership Renewal form for 2020-21. This provides more clarification of the first section of the form. Please read carefully.

Please print the form and complete it, then send it with a check for your dues to Patricia Schultz by June 20th.

A few notes: we have listed the various membership categories. Some members get reduced dues because they have pre-paid the national dues in advance. Women who have been members for 50 years or more do not pay dues.

We have added a new category: **Pandemic Relief Option**

If you are among the many people who are experiencing financial strain due to the pandemic, we'd like to help you with your dues. In this blank write what you can afford to pay toward your dues, anything from \$1 to \$84. It is important to us that everyone can continue to be part of our branch!

To help our fellow members with their dues, we have added **Members Helping Members** to the form. If you are able to help out, consider contributing to this fund to benefit members of our branch.

Everyone: Please fill out the second page, which asks about your interests in branch activities. Please don't skip this or assume that we know what you did this year! We would like to be able to provide accurate lists to the Committee Chairs.

Date:

2020-2021

Please select only ONE of these:

Pandemic Relief Option: if needed	\$1--\$84	Refer to the cover article	\$
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Donation to the Branch	\$
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Total: \$

Name
Last
First

Mailing Address

Telephone (H) _____ Cell _____

E-mail

AAUW Bylaws require that you have at least an Associate Degree. If you do, but you prefer not to list your college and other information above, please check here to verify that you do have a degree.

Occupation/Title/Company	Active?	Retired?
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How did you hear about AAUW: Friend (name) _____ Other _____

Volunteer Experience/ Community Activities

Hobbies

Send newsletter via e-mail? Yes _____ use e-mail address above. No _____ use my mailing address.

Previous AAUW Member? _____ Member # _____ Branch? _____ Offices held? _____

**ACTIVITIES, INTEREST GROUPS AND PROJECTS
OF AAUW WEST CHESTER-CHESTER COUNTY BRANCH**

Name:	Please Check
Alice Lawson Scholarship Fund	
Annual Handbook	
Book Club 1 (3 rd Mon.(DAY)	
Book Club 2 (3 rd Wed.(EVE)	
Book Club 3 TBD	
Branch Facebook Page	
Branch News & Publicity	
Branch Website	
Bridge	
Community Outreach Programs	
Food Interest Group (FIG)	
Fundraising	
GETT (Girls & Technology)	
Historian	
Hospitality	
Laundromat Library League (LLL)	
Legislation & Public Policy (LAPP)	
Mahjongg	
Membership	
Newsletter Publication	
Nominating Committee	
The Stitchers	
Travel Interest Group (TIG)	
Walkers	
WC Food Cupboard	

Return Form to:

**Patricia Schultz
Co-VP Membership
235 Chatham Way WCPA 19380
610-436-9752
pls@patriciaschultz.com**

Inquiries to:

**Susan Skiles
Co-VP Membership
1033 N. New St. WCPA 19380
610-431-4278
whimziecieux@gmail.com**

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

Our Chapter – 2019-2020:

<i>Toni Gorkin</i> 610-363-7627	Newsletter Editor tgorkin@comcast.net
<i>Newsletter email</i>	tgorkin@comcast.net
<i>Eva Kaufmann</i> 610-793-3809	Branch Co-President ekaufmann1@gmail.com
<i>Anne Anderko</i> 484-885-4943	Branch Co-President ananderko@msn.com
<i>Barbara Lathroum</i> 610-321-9783	Co-Vice President for Program blathroum@gmail.com
<i>Jean Speiser</i> 610-738-3363	Co-Vice President for Program jeansp@gmail.com
<i>Patricia Schultz</i> 610-436-9752	Membership Co-Vice President pls@patriciaschultz.com
<i>Susan Skiles</i> 610-431-4278	Membership Co-Vice President whimziecieux@gmail.com
<i>Pat Bove</i> 610-692-2742	Co-Secretary pmbove@aol.com
<i>Carol Haaf</i> 610-299-8801	Co-Secretary carolahaaf@verizon.net
<i>Susan DeGeorge</i>	Financial Officer suzydegeorge@yahoo.com
Branch Website	wccc-pa.aauw.net

Newsletter

The newsletter is published by the first of each month except for the summer months. **The next newsletter will be in September.** The deadline for submissions is the 10th of August. Please send emails to tgorkin@comcast.net. Thank you to everyone who contributes to these issues; it can't be done without you! --
Toni Gorkin

Facebook Page

Don't forget to check our Facebook Page. It's **AAUW Chester County PA**. Thank you to Alice Lenthe for getting it up and running.

Chapter Web Page

Thank you to Sandy Alexander for updating the chapter Web Page at <https://wccc-pa.aauw.net/>. NOTE: Be sure to share your photos with Sandy to keep the content fresh and inviting!

Trifold Brochure

The trifold brochure that describes our chapter has been updated and has been printed. It's a good tool to use when exploring interest with potential new members.



**AAUW State and National News
Stay Involved from Home**

Join the Weekly Webinars

Make sure to check out our weekly member webinars. You can peruse our [archive of recent topics](#), such as last week's session on governing during a crisis or our interview with radio personality Diane Rehm. Or you can register for an upcoming session, including next Thursday's webinar on [Social Media Advocacy 101](#).

Special Member Discount on Long-Term Care

AAUW is pleased to offer a discounted long-term care insurance program to AAUW members and their families through LTC Global. Protection is available should you need care at home, in assisted living or in nursing-home facilities. To request information on this benefit, which is available to members and their spouses, parents and grandparents, [visit this web page](#) or call 888.305.4582.

Your COVID-19 Resource Center

Stay abreast of the latest research and member information related to the COVID-19 pandemic by visiting our [online resource center](#) on how we're staying connected through this crisis.

Special Interest Groups

Note: Because of the Covid-19 Coronavirus Stay-at-Home/Safe Distancing orders, meetings have been cancelled, but some groups are exploring virtual meeting options. See related article above.

Women's Social Bridge

To have your name added to the e-mail list,



contact Sandy Alexander at frau.salexander@gmail.com.

The social bridge group will not be meeting

until further notice.

Couples Bridge

A chair is needed. Please contact one of the presidents if interested.

Mah Jongg Newbies

Nine AAUW members attended 2 sessions to learn to play Mah Jongg with Donna Eaves, Kim Glavin, Mary Smith and Sandy Alexander. While we can't meet daily, some of us are paying online and Sandy is sending out a daily email with a practice hand to analyze. Contact is Sandy at frau.salexander@gmail.com.

FIG (Food Interest Group)

Invitations with all details will be emailed to FIG members about one month before the event. Please wait for your invitation to RSVP. For more information or to get on the mailing list, contact Donna Eaves, FIG chair, at 610-692-5277 or deaves@live.com.

Book Groups:

AAUW branches are known for their book groups, and membership in a group often encourages

continuing membership. The West Chester-Chester County Branch currently has two book discussion groups meeting in the day and in the evening at different times of the month.

LIT I: Daytime Literature Group

Fiction & Nonfiction Lit I Book Group meets at 1:00 pm on the third Monday of the month. Lit I used Zoom for a virtual meeting in May to share reviews of books members read recently. Plans are being made for a virtual get-together to select next year's books in June. Any questions? Contact Janet Kane: jfentonkane@gmail.com or 610-399-1149.

LIT II: Evening Literature Fiction & Nonfiction Book Group

Lit Group II used Zoom in May for a virtual meeting. If you are not already receiving emails from Lit Group II, please let Jean Speiser (JeanSp@gmail.com) know that you are interested so that you can be informed of any schedule changes or modifications.

NOTE: a survey has gone out to explore the interest in a third Lit Group. Contact Janet Kane if you are interested.
jfentonkane@gmail.com.

Great Decisions

For information contact Jacky Page at 610-359-9887 or jacquelinepage9@gmail.com

TIG (Travel Interest Group)

The Travel Interest Group is composed of members and their guests who like to go to interesting places and often enjoy a meal together before or after. All TIG outings are on hold for the present, but an option for a virtual TIG is described earlier in this newsletter.

Contact Sandy Alexander (frau.salexander@gmail.com), Mary Marco (Mary.m.marco@gmail.com), or Jane McDowell (jlmcdowell@gmail.com) if you want to be on the list for future events. Being on the list does not obligate you to attend any trips. Anyone is welcome to coordinate an event or trip they are interested in.

Stitchers Group

Stitchers is meeting via ZOOM every Thursday @ 10AM. Please join us for creative stitching

& interesting conversations! Contact Patricia Schultz 610-436-9752 for details.

Walkers Group

The group usually meets on Tuesdays at the Trestle Bridge Trail (officially the Brandywine Meadows Trail) off Rt. 322 near Downingtown. Parking is in the lot near the Trestle Bridge. They leave promptly at 9 A.M. You can walk as fast and as far as you would like. Expect lots of talking and laughter. No emails will go out; just show up and be ready to shove off at 9:00 A.M. Contact Phyllis Dunn at dunn.phyllis@gmail.com to be added to the email contact list.

NOTE from Phyllis: *AAUW Walkers are suspended as a group for now but Walkers are encouraged to walk on their own and use safe distancing practices. We will let everyone know when the ban is lifted.*



119 Llandoverly Drive, Exton, PA 19341.

June 2020 Newsletter

Have a safe summer.

wccc-pa.aauw.net

AAUW Mission Statement

The AAUW advances equity for women and girls through research, education, and advocacy.

AAUW Vision Statement

AAUW will be a powerful advocate and visible leader in equity and education through research, philanthropy, and measurable change in critical areas impacting the lives of women and girls.

AAUW West Chester – Chester County Branch Vision Statement

The West Chester-Chester County Branch will

- Actively recruit members who support Association goals.
- Nurture these members through active Interest Groups, through monthly meetings with intellectual and social merit, and through member support.
- Sponsor at least one project per year with volunteers and with funds to promote Association and branch goals.
 - Sponsor at least one local scholarship per year for a nontraditional student
- Support programs for training and self-development of branch members to promote Association goals.
- Raise funds through community projects and member gifts to support Association goals.

Since its first meeting in 1881, AAUW has been a catalyst for change. Today, with more than 100,000 members, 1,000 branches, and 500 college and university partners, AAUW contributes to a more promising future and provides a powerful voice for women and girls—a voice that cannot and will not be ignored.

www.aauw.org www.aauwpa.org wccc-pa.aauw.net