



AAUW Gaithersburg Branch

Advancing equity for women and girls through advocacy, education,
philanthropy, and research.

NEWSLETTER

Dec. 21—Jan. 22

Dec. 2021— Jan. 2022

HOLIDAY PARTY!

Monday, December 6 - 11:15 A.M.

Carrabba's Italian Grill

1935 Century Boulevard, Germantown

Come celebrate the end of the year and our first get-together in almost two years. Visit with your old friends while enjoying a casual lunch. Make it festive--wear an interesting mask, either seasonal, special interest, or unusual in some way. Bring your spouse or a friend. We can provide a ride for anyone who needs one.

Please let Liz Hessel know you will be coming so that we have enough tables: [liz\[at\]meral\[dot\]com](mailto:liz[at]meral[dot]com) or 301-717-5076.

BRANCH MEETING

Saturday, January 22, 2022 at 10:30 AM

Gaithersburg Library (2nd floor)

Topic: Changes in the US Asylum System

Speaker: Giulia McPherson

Director of Advocacy & Operations

Jesuit Refugee Service/USA

For many decades, the United States has been a global leader in welcoming people seeking protection from violence in their home countries. Yet over the past few years, thousands of asylum seekers have been turned back at the U.S. southern border after the government implemented a series of travel and asylum restrictions. The "Remain in Mexico" policy and a public health regulation known as Title 42 have significantly limited access to asylum in the U.S. essentially denying persons seeking international protection from persecution and other threats from doing so. This presentation will provide an overview of the U.S. asylum system, current U.S. policies related to asylum, and how advocates can take action to protect asylum.

Board Meeting

Tuesday, January 11 - 7 P.M.

The AAUW Gaithersburg Branch Board of Directors will next meet on January 11 at 7 p.m. via Zoom. The Zoom code will be sent later by email. These meetings are open to all branch members.

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IN MEMORIAM

Our sympathy to our member Maria Roberts on the death of her husband, Larry, who died on October 21.

Dr. Larry Roberts was an eminent parasitologist, author, marine biologist, underwater photographer and college professor. He and Maria were married for 59 years and had four children. Larry attended our branch meetings and was a member at one time.

To Maria, we wish the wound of Larry's death will be eased by pleasant memories of their life together.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

- **Edie Allison**

I hope you and your family have a joyous holiday season, enhanced by the progress in taming the coronavirus. However, Asbury facilities are not yet open to events that include a majority of nonresidents, so our traditional holiday potluck dinner will have to wait another year. As an alternative, Liz Hessel has arranged a covid-cognizant lunch for December 6 for you, your family and friends. In 2022 in-person activities will be expanded. January and February branch meetings are scheduled for Saturday mornings at the Gaithersburg library meeting rooms.

Both national AAUW and the Gaithersburg Branch will celebrate major anniversaries in 2022. AAUW celebrates 140 years and Gaithersburg Branch celebrates its 50th year.

AAUW Anniversary

In 1881 fifteen alumnae from eight northeast colleges held their first meeting, and, in 1882, they launched what they then called the American Collegiate Association. In 1884 several branches, including one in Washington, D.C., were founded. In 1885 the association published its first research report, "Health Statistics of Women College Graduates." The report countered the widely held belief that attending college was detrimental to women's health and fertility. Continuing the commitment to publishing timely research, in 2021 AAUW published its latest report, "Pandemic Inequality: Latinas and the COVID-19 Experience."

Gaithersburg Branch Anniversary

In June 1972, Mary "Lib" Schlager, the first Gaithersburg Branch president, announced in the Gaithersburg Gazette a call for an organizational and get-acquainted meeting of college women. This led to the official chartering of the Gaithersburg Branch on September 27, 1972. Two current branch members, Mina Parsont and Anna Fraker, were among the 28 founding members. Since its first year our branch has raised funds to support the AAUW mission. Since 1987, a used-book sale has been our major fundraising effort.

To celebrate our anniversaries, AAUW and the branch will host special programs. Watch for announcements in this newsletter.

Local and State Government Issues to Watch For In 2022



The Maryland Legislative Agenda for Women (MLAW), has announced 15 draft bills, some of which will be chosen for energetic campaigns to influence state House and Senate committees and legislators. Before the General Assembly convenes on January 12 is a good time to review this draft legislation at <https://mdlegagendaforwomen.org/2021/11/11/legislative-proposals-for-the-2021-conference/>. For those bill issues that are important to you, the MLAW website explains the legislative progress and how you can communicate with your legislators.

The widely awaited draft Maryland and Montgomery County voting district maps were released for public comment in early November. Although the Maryland legislature was expected to vote on their preferred maps in February, Governor Hogan called the legislature into special session starting December 6. Debate about voting districts is expected to last several months, so you have time to review the maps and contact your representatives to express any concerns before the final district boundaries are selected.

1. The Maryland legislature has released four draft variations of U.S congressional district maps that can be viewed at <https://www.marylandmatters.org/2021/11/09/legislative-redistricting-advisory-commission-releases-four-concept-congressional-maps-for-public-comment/>.

2. The Maryland Citizens Redistricting Commission has released one set of maps for U.S. congressional districts and Maryland Senate and Maryland House of Delegates districts at <https://redistricting.maryland.gov/Pages/final.aspx>

3. The Montgomery County Council, Commission on Redistricting, has released its proposed map, which adds two new district seats that voters approved in the 2020 election, at <https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/COUNCIL/BCC/redistricting/>. The Council will select this or a modified version in late January.

LETTERS FROM OUR SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

Dear AAUW Gaithersburg

Thank you for your generous AAUW Gaithersburg Scholarship. I am extremely pleased and appreciative to have been selected as a recipient of this scholarship award.

Let me tell you a little about myself. I was born in a small town in El Salvador and came to the United States at the age of ten....Being in the United States allowed me to receive a better education than that of my parents. Before graduating high school, I was skeptical of attending college and pursuing a career due to my family's financial situation. However, when researching colleges, I came across Montgomery College and decided to apply. Applying to Montgomery College is one of the best decisions I have made because it is much more affordable than four-year institutions, has a great STEM program, and over time I have made priceless friendships.

I am about to begin my last semester at Montgomery College and will receive my degree in chemical engineering this coming fall semester....I am looking forward to this semester such as: continuing being the PR officer for the Engineers Without Borders Club, once again seeing my friends and creating new friendships.

For this semester I hope to successfully complete my associate degree and transfer to a four-year institution where I can complete my bachelor's degree. Furthermore, I want to leave with a fulfilling experience. This scholarship award will reduce my financial burden which will allow me to focus more on school and not worry about tuition, books, and other necessities. You have no idea how much this award means to me. I am extremely grateful to you for this generous award.

Sincerely,

Silvia Caceres

Dear AAUW Gaithersburg,

I am honored to be a recipient of the Fall 2021 AAUW Scholarship for students at Montgomery College. Thank you so much for your continued support to women wishing to further their education at Montgomery College.

I grew up in Gaithersburg with my older sister in a single-parent household. We struggled to afford anything above our necessities. I have al-

ways known that for me to obtain a better life for my family, I would have to work diligently in school. I found a program that I felt would help me grow as an individual interested in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics in high school. The program was called Project Lead the Way, or PLTW for short. PLTW guided students like me to search the depths of the scientific community and discover potential careers. Going into college, I understood the challenges that I would be under, but I only really felt the pressure when the pandemic hit. It felt like adulthood had caught up to me in a matter of minutes. I had to reevaluate my life and get back in touch with what pushed me to seek higher education in the first place, science.

Since reevaluating my academic plans and taking time to explore careers out of STEM, I have a new found re-assertion that my future career should indeed be in STEM. I am in my official second year at Montgomery College, majoring in biochemistry. I am excited to learn more about what makes life just work at the end of the day, and how I can utilize what I learn to help remedy the climate crisis.

Outside of school, I work part-time as a shift supervisor at Starbucks year-round. This past spring semester, I participated in MC LEADS, a program that fosters leadership traits in students at Montgomery College. I plan to join Montgomery College's STEM Club in this coming semester.

I aspire to be a part of life-changing research, more likely than not regarding climate change. Ultimately, I want to obtain a graduate degree in something like soil science or environmental engineering. There are some kinks in my educational journey that I will work through by gaining hands-on experience. For now, I strive to obtain an associate degree in biochemistry from Montgomery College.

Your scholarship has allowed me to focus on succeeding in my studies and helped me to feel more confident in my abilities as a student. Words cannot describe how grateful I am to you and AAUW for investing in my future.

Sincerely,

Christina Garcia

GREAT DECISIONS

- Mary Wykes, Coordinataor



Hopefully we can meet in person at Mary Wykes' home, 18900 Diary Rd, Montgomery Village Friday, January 21, 2022 at 2:30. (At this time we will discuss whether to continue meeting via Zoom or in person.). The new study guides will be available and topics will be assigned for the NewYear. The cost of the new guide will be approximately

\$28. (Topics were listed in our November newsletter.)

This is a good time for new members. For any questions or interest in the group, call or email Mary Wykes, Coordinator—301-717-1040; mary[dot]wykes[at]aol[dot]com.

HERSTORY SNAPSHOTS

Take the paper bag. At first they were only an envelope style--like what they give you with the birthday card you buy--and they were mass produced and cheap.. But they were not good for big and heavy loads. There were some square-bottomed paper bags available that could carry bigger loads, but they were made by hand and expensive.

Mary Knight solved the problem. She created a machine that would cut, fold and glue the square bottom to the paper bag. This allowed the mass production of square-bottomed paper bags, and at a much lower cost. But her design

was stolen by a man who had observed the machine. Trying to counter the patent suit Knight brought against him, he declared there was no way a woman could have developed such a complex machine. Knight won the patent suit and, in 1871, was granted a patent. We now had cheaper, abundant, efficient paper bags brought to you by female inventor Mary Knight.

Perhaps you won't look at your square-bottom paper bags the same way again!



HERSTORY INTEREST GROUP

- Maria Roberts



The HerStory Interest Group will not meet in December.

However, in January Edie Alison will acquaint us with Angela Merkel's long road from deprivation in Communist East Germany to the posi-

tion of chancellor of a reunified Germany.

Mark your calendar for this special treat: Saturday, January 8, 2022, at 2:00 p.m. in the Park View Club Room of Asbury Methodist Village.

AAUW GAITHERSBURG BRANCH

Website: gaithersburg-md.aauw.net

Advancing equity for women and girls through advocacy, education, philanthropy and research.

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AAUW GAITHERSBURG CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Holiday Party - In Person	Monday, December 6 - 11:15 a.m.
HerStory - In Person	Saturday, January 8 - 2 p.m.
Board Meeting - Zoom	Tuesday, January 11 - 7 p.m.
Great Decisions - In Person	Friday, January 21 - 2:30 p.m.
Branch Meeting	Saturday, January 22 - 10:30 a.m.

The American Association of University Women
Gaithersburg Branch
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