



AAUW Gaithersburg Branch

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

NEWSLETTER

June-August 2023

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AAUW Gaithersburg

ANNUAL CELEBRATION AND POTLUCK

Saturday, June 10 - 11 AM to 1:30 PM

Parkview Club Room, Parkview Building 211

Asbury Methodist Village

Our next branch meeting will be an in-person potluck meal taking place on Saturday, June 10, in the Parkview Club Room, in the Parkview building at Asbury Methodist Village from 11 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. This is our (formerly) annual potluck and planning event and the time to celebrate the past year's achievements while enjoying each other's company. So, please bring a tasty dish to share. While we are enjoying a delicious meal, feel free to provide any feedback you may have to branch leadership.

Everyone is encouraged to attend AND bring a friend or relative who you think would be interested in joining the branch. This is a great opportunity to get together in person, have some good conversations, and possibly meet some potential new members! We look forward to seeing everyone!

Board Meeting

Tuesday, June 20, 2023, at 7 p.m.

Zoom

The AAUW Gaithersburg Branch Board of Directors will meet one week later than usual, on Tuesday, June 20 at 7 p.m. via Zoom. The Zoom code will be sent by email. These meetings are open to all branch members.

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Presidents Message

- Edie Allison

Summer is almost here and many of you may be busy with graduation celebrations, family and friends. School (vacation) and news about ten percent tax increases for Montgomery County homeowners to support increased funding for education are on my mind so this seems like a good time to dig into the details. What are members who are committed to education and educational equity getting for their money?

The proposed county operating budget for Fiscal Year 2024 is \$6.833 billion, an increase from the current year's budget of \$6.3 billion. The 2024 budget allots \$3.2 billion to Montgomery County Public Schools, the amount requested by the school board. Montgomery College is allocated \$345.2 million. The county would spend \$12,744 per student and total spending per student would be \$19,554, the highest of all Maryland school districts, but lower than the District of Columbia and several other northeastern states.

School Board President, Karla Silvestre cited pandemic-related recovery efforts, the student mental health crisis, increased inflation, and competitive staff salaries as reasons why

the increased funds are needed. Low post-pandemic math grades are a concern. Recent data from the state shows that middle school math proficiency within MCPS dropped from 42.5% before the pandemic to just over 23% in 2022, with success rates sinking further for students from underrepresented communities.



The driver for raising teacher salaries is the Blueprint for Maryland's Future—a long-term state-mandated plan to improve education—requires all school districts in the state to raise their minimum teacher salary to \$60,000 by 2026. Currently, the minimum starting salary for a teacher in MCPS is \$54,038. Given the cost of living in Montgomery County, make it feasible for a new Montgomery County teacher to live in Montgomery County.

ELECTION OF 2023-24 OFFICERS

The branch officers for the fiscal year starting July 1, 2023, are:

President: Edie Allison

Vice President for Programs: Vacant

Vice President for Membership: Heather Reichardt

Treasurer: Ellen Teague

Secretary: Terry Medlar

RECOGNIZING AND THANKING BRANCH HONORARY LIFE MEMBERS

In accordance with AAUW-National policy, this month Mary Wykes has been granted honorary life membership in AAUW. The honor reflects 50 years of continuous membership in AAUW and the Gaithersburg branch. It also reflects years of service to the branch and its members as a branch officer, leader of interest groups such as Great Decisions, and caring friend.

Mary joins a distinguished group of Gaithersburg branch honorary members, Anna Fraker, Cathy Manning, and Jean Young. These women have served as branch officers multiple times and

worked on numerous fund-raising projects and student enrichment programs. Mary Eaton, another of our honorary members, has also been a member for 50 years, part of that time in Gaithersburg Branch and part in a Pennsylvania branch.



AAUW NATIONAL ELECTION RESULTS

The AAUW National Election voting closed on May 15, and we have the results.

- Kimberly S. Adams, Edwina Frances Martin, Jenna Kirkpatrick Howard, and Mary Zupanc have been elected to serve on the AAUW National Board of Directors.
- The bylaws revision was approved by 95.1% of voters.
- The Public Policy Priority revision was approved by 96.3% of voters.

RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP IN JUNE

National, State and Branch Dues will be due in June. This year National dues are going up \$3.00 to \$72, \$69 of which is deductible as a charitable contribution. State and branch dues are unchanged at \$10 and \$18, respectively. Yes, the total is \$100.

Do not renew your dues until you receive an email reminder. The first batch of renewal notices should have arrived in late April. Other renewal notices will arrive in June. Your renewal reminder describes the procedure to renew

online. You can always renew by sending your check to the branch treasurer, Ellen Teague, 8621 Plum Creek Drive, Gaithersburg, MD 20882.



Special note! Dual members, i.e., members of two branches, are strongly encouraged to renew online.

Student Scholarships – Can you help?

For years our Branch has funded local college scholarships for women students through book sales. Our branch was not able to hold its big annual Book Sale this year due to Covid, but the student scholarship needs are higher than ever. Last year we were able to help five students (one at the Universities at Shady Grove and four at Montgomery College) with scholarships after we asked for donations from members to augment the smaller amount of funds we had raised through direct book sales. Letters of appreciation from two students, Marie-Louise Camara and Maya Kotek, are included in this newsletter. Other student letters were published earlier this year. They include a diverse set of women.

You can see that these are bright female students preparing for careers where women have been under-represented. They are the role models of the future for the younger generation. Our prior scholarship recipients have overcome significant obstacles working toward their dream of becoming engineers, architects, medical doctors, scientists, and business owners.

To continue to support scholarships for these types of bright young women, we are asking members to consider making a donation for the scholarship fund. The scholarship donations collected from members will be combined with the modest funds we have raised through book sales and donated to The Universities at Shady Grove and Montgomery College. If you have any questions, call Liz Hessel 301-840-1258 or write her a note at [liz\[at\]meral\[dot\]com](mailto:liz[at]meral[dot]com).



To donate, send a check to our Treasurer Ellen Teague at 8621 Plum Creek Dr., Gaithersburg, MD 20882. Make out the check to AAUW Gaithersburg and send it by June 15th. We need to transfer the scholarship funds to the colleges by July first so that they can identify the students before the Fall semester starts.

LETTERS OF APPRECIATION FROM SCHOLARSHIPRECIPIENTS

Dear AAUW Gaithersburg,

I am so grateful to have received this scholarship. I very much appreciate that I was selected out of many other candidates. This scholarship gives me the opportunity to continue my education and earn a degree.

I grew up and live in Silver Spring, Maryland with five siblings who I am very close with. I was homeschooled throughout high school, and earned my GED in the middle of eleventh grade. This achievement is something I'm really proud of. I celebrated this milestone with a graduation party with my friends and family. After earning my GED I began attending Montgomery College.

This year has been my second year at Montgomery College. I am studying computer science, and am thoroughly enjoying my classes. I chose this major because I love math, coding, problem solving, and being creative, and this major is a perfect combination of all of the above. I am a part of the Raptors Who Code club at MC, which has been a really great opportunity. It is a way for me to connect with other like-minded students who are very helpful when I get stuck on problems with computer science assignments. I've really enjoyed being in Montgomery College because of the small class sizes and dedicated professors.

I hope to complete my Associates Degree in computer science at the end of this semester. Next year I plan on transferring to University of Maryland in College Park to complete a bachelor's degree. I do not know yet exactly what job I want, but I do want a career that utilizes my degree. I have considered becoming a software engineer, or teaching children or teenagers how to code. I believe that coding skills will be necessary for many jobs in the future, and that it is important to teach these skills to the next generation.

I am very thankful that I have been awarded this scholarship, because it gives me the opportunity to continue pursuing my degree. I am excited to see where the future will take me, and I am forever grateful for your contribution to my education.



Sincerely,
Maya Kotek

Dear AAUW Gaithersburg,

I am writing this letter to express my heartfelt gratitude for the scholarship you awarded me. I am honored and humbled to be one of the recipients of this prestigious scholarship, and I cannot express my appreciation enough.

I am now entering my fourth semester at Montgomery College. I am majoring in biological sciences, and I desire to become a doctor later. As I think that whatever you learn could be useful, I appreciate learning new things. I work a job outside of school to help pay for my tuition. Yet because of this scholarship, I will work less hours so that I may devote more time to my education.

Following this semester, I intend to enroll in a 4-year university. Once again, I would like to thank you for your generous support. Your Kindness and encouragement will always be remembered and cherished.

Sincerely,
Marie-Louise Camara

GREAT DECISIONS June 16 meeting

- **Mary Wykes, Coordinator**



The FPA Great Decisions interest group will meet via Zoom at 2:30, Friday, June 16. The topic for discussion is "Economic Warfare and US Policy." Anna Fraker will be the discussion leader. The Study Guide article is authored by Jonathan Chanis, currently manager of New Tide Asset Management.

New members are always welcome. If interested, call Coordinator Mary Wykes for zoom link and Study Guide article. (301-717-1040, [Mary.wykes\[at\]aol\[dot\]com](mailto:Mary.wykes@aol.com))

AAUW HerStory: Saturday, June 17, 2 pm, Conley Hall, Trott Building

Note the change in time and location, a week later than usual at Conley Hall, Asbury Methodist Village

- **Maria Roberts**

She founded three national organizations, advised three presidents, educated millions of young people, and headed a new government agency. Mary Wykes will tell us all about her in a new location this one time: Conley Hall in the basement

of Trott Building, Asbury Methodist Village. For directions call 301-987-6986.



AAUW GAITHERSBURG BRANCH

Website: gaithersburg-md.aauw.net

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

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Newsletter Managing Editor

AAUW GAITHERSBURG CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Branch Annual Luncheon	Saturday, June 10, 2023 – 11am – 1:30 pm
Great Decisions – Zoom	Friday, June 16 - 2:30 p.m.
HerStory – In person	Saturday, June 17 - 2:00 p.m.
Board Meeting – Zoom	Tuesday, June 20, 2023 - 7:00 p.m.

The American Association of University Women
Gaithersburg Branch
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