



AAUW Gaithersburg Branch

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

NEWSLETTER

March 2024

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VIRTUAL BRANCH MEETING!

Meet Branch Scholarship Recipients

Students from the Universities at Shady Grove and Montgomery College will share their educational activities and aspirations with the branch and answer questions.

Tuesday, March 19, 2024

Log in to Zoom meeting: 7:00pm

Presentation begins: 7:15pm

Program

Additional information about the program and the Zoom link will be sent with closer to the meeting date.

Board Meeting

Tuesday, March 12, 2024, at 7 p.m.

Zoom

The AAUW Gaithersburg Branch Board of Directors will meet on Tuesday, March 12 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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In Memoriam – Art Medlar

Art Medlar, husband of branch member Terry Medlar, died at the age of 90 on January 28 in Austin, Texas. After living in Gaithersburg for 55 years and over 60 years of married life, Terry and Art recently moved to Austin to be closer to family. Art was a frequent and enthusiastic book-sale helper.

Presidents Message

- Edie Allison

March is Women's History month. The 2024 theme presented by the National Women's History Alliance is Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion. A few memorable anniversaries you can celebrate this month include:

The first International Women's Day, March 8, 1911.

The first major Women's Suffrage March on Washington, March 3, 1913.

Title IX was passed on March 1, 1972.

Memorable Women born in March include Ruth Bader Ginsburg, Aretha Franklin, Mary Berry. There are many more who have contributed to every aspect of our lives.

Expanding on the month's theme, the branch March program will feature several recipients of branch scholarships at Montgomery College or The Universities at Shady Grove. You will have an opportunity to meet them virtually, learn about their journey to college and their hopes for future careers. Look for more information in the Zoom meeting invitation. You will also find letters from several scholarship recipients in other parts of this newsletter. Their stories are inspiring.

Continuing the theme of equity, diversity, and inclusion, AAUW-US is asking for your vote on expanding membership to all people who support AAUW's purpose, which requires a vote to change the Association bylaws. The national election on revising the bylaws will be open for online and paper voting from April 2 to May 15. Revision of the bylaws requires approval of two-

thirds of votes. Past votes on this issue have failed by narrow margins – 63% vote for approval in 2021 fell just short of the 66.7% requirement. A favorable vote would build on this trend.

I encourage you vote for expanded membership. It will align membership with diversity and inclusion goals. The financial aspects are also important. AAUW scholarship funds provided more than \$6 million in funding to 285 fellows and grantees. Most of these funds reached their funding goals many years ago and will continue to make awards far into the future. However, AAUW dues and member donations do not provide sufficient funds for important programs such as Work Smart and Start Smart workshops, and STEMEd for Girls. Corporate sponsors are a valuable resource that every non-profit organization depends on; potential sponsors expect the organizations they support to be open and inclusive. Membership requirements have broadened many times over the organization's 142 years. Men were welcomed in 1987 and associate degrees were accepted starting in 2005. At the same time as women receive a majority of college degrees, many women's path to successful and fulfilled lives is built on life experience, on the job training, and professional and technical certifications. These women will enrich our branch and the state and national organization.



AAUW Voting Process:

In early April you will receive a ballot by email with your unique Elector ID and Password from vote@simplyvoting.com. All members without an email address on file with AAUW national will receive a paper ballot by mail.

2024 Book Sale is Coming – April 11-13, 2024

AAUW Gaithersburg Book Sale April 11 – 13, 2024

Asbury Methodist Village

Rosborough Community Rooms

The branch book sale is rapidly approaching, and we need every member's help during March and during on-site work at Asbury on Thursday, April 4 thru Sunday, April 14. Join us to work and enjoy the camaraderie of fellow members. We would also welcome the help of your friends and family. Many students will be working during the weekend, but adult volunteers are needed when students are not available.

During March

Volunteers are needed to help with publicity, and marketing, sorting, and organizing for the sale. If you know groups (such as book clubs or women's clubs) that would post our book sale information on their webpage or newsletter, send your suggestions to [liz\[at\]meral\[dot\]com](mailto:liz[at]meral[dot]com).

Thursday April 4 – Tue. April 9:

Pre-sale tasks include sorting the last-minute book donations, putting up signage on tables and walls, arranging books on the tables, signing in volunteers, and helping to oversee student volunteers on Friday afternoon and over the weekend. Guidance will be provided regarding each task, and many can be done seated or for a few hours at a time.

Wed. Apr 10 – Sat. April 13

During the book sale, we need cashiers and someone to handle the record keeping required for the student volunteers who are earning Student Service Learning hours. These activities can be done sitting and do not require any one person to work more than a few hours at a time.

The sale is open to Asbury Residents and Associates on Wednesday, April 10, then open to the public Thursday – Saturday. When the sale closes on Saturday afternoon, teachers and non-profit organizations are invited to take unsold books that would be helpful for their students/clients. If you know of a non-profit that might want free books, either send their contact information to [liz\[at\]meral\[dot\]com](mailto:liz[at]meral[dot]com), or have the organization contact Liz Hessel directly.



Please review your calendar and be generous with your volunteer time. A few hours on each of several days will be an important contribution. Someone from the organizing group will call you to ask when and how you can help. Or you can send the times you can help to [liz\[at\]meral\[dot\]com](mailto:liz[at]meral[dot]com). If you are unable to join us at the book sale, consider donating to the scholarship fund.

All this hard work is the reason we can offer multiple scholarships at **Montgomery College** and **The Universities at Shady Grove**.

Letters from student scholarship recipients

Liz Hessel, who coordinates the branch scholarship funding with Montgomery College and The Universities at Shady Grove, received letters from two scholarship recipients, Nayelli Reyes and Marie-Louise Camara, both pre-med students at Montgomery College. Their letters follow.

Dear AAUW Gaithersburg,

I am writing this letter to express my sincere gratitude for having been chosen to receive this scholarship opportunity. I feel very fortunate, as I am sure there are plenty of other students who applied for this scholarship as well. My name is Nayelli Reyes, and I am currently in my final year of studying at Montgomery College. I am from Gaithersburg, MD and graduated from Gaithersburg High School in 2020.

My community college associate degree has been a long path, due to the corona virus and realizing that my true passion has lied in the medical field. I am graduating in May 2024 and my major is biological science. I feel that Montgomery College has been one of the best decisions I've made for myself. I'm a part of a community that genuinely cares about their student's future and concerns. I have also had the honor of being invited to the Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society and spend my time in the Hispanic Latino Union, Pre-Med Society and MC Leads. I hope to be a student that proudly represents Montgomery College and what it stands for. Learning about the body and life as a whole under a microscope is truly fascinating to me.

From a young age I always knew I wanted to pursue something in the medical field, but I was always afraid of not being good enough. Witnessing my immigrant family struggle having access to medical care and the language barrier feeling humiliating for them, I knew I had to be the change that the medical care system lacked. For background references, I am a first-generation college student who fortunately had the opportunity to witness first-hand how immigrants and people of color are treated differently. I say fortunately, because this experience has helped me become the passionate person I have become, about wanting to create that equal opportunity in medicine. I believe that everyone should have access to quality care, de-

spite their background or ethnicity. I have a long journey ahead of me as I plan on going to medical school. Every day I remind myself why all of this is worth it.



My education is very important to me, and I want to be a part of the 5% of surgeons who are Latino, let alone female Latinos. I want to represent my culture and my strive for a better system. Again, I truly appreciate your donation and I hope you know that you have genuinely made a difference in someone's life by allowing them to study what they love the most and breaking the boundary of financial need.

Sincerely,

our future surgeon- Nayelli Reyes

Dear AAUW Gaithersburg,

I'm honored that you chose to make this scholarship available to me. My third semester at Montgomery College has just begun. Because I want to go to medical school to become a doctor, I have chosen to major in biological science. My classes are fun, and I also love learning about different subjects like the sciences. I'm excited to begin my third year at Montgomery College and become more involved in the campus life by joining clubs like the pre-meds club and African student association.

Outside of school, I spend time enjoying my passion which is soccer. I also work in order to help me pay my bills. Thanks to this scholarship, I will be able to focus more on my studies. I am from Guinea, West Africa. Me and my brother moved here in 2019 hoping for a better future for us. After Montgomery College, I plan to continue my studies at a 4-year university. Thank you again for your investment in students like me and our education.

Truly Yours,

Marie-Louise Camara

GREAT DECISIONS February 16, 2:30 pm meeting

- **Mary Wykes, Coordinator**



Great Decisions Foreign Policy discussion group will meet Friday, March 15 at 2:30 via Zoom.

Marc Lynch, Professor of Political Science at George Washington U. Averill Farrelly will be our discussion leader.

The Great Decisions February meeting has been rescheduled for March because of conflicting schedules of several members. The topic for discussion is "The US and the Middle East"—the first topic in the 2024 FPA Discussion Guide, authored by

As we start the new guide, this is a great time to join this interesting group. For our zoom link or copy of the guide material, call Coordinator, Mary Wykes, 301/717-1040 or email at Mary[dot]Wykes[at]aol[dot]com.

AAUW HerStory: Saturday, march 9, 2 pm in-person meeting

- **Maria Roberts, Coordinator**

Herstory Interest Group will meet on Saturday, March 9 at 2 pm in the Parkview Club Room of Asbury Methodist Village in Gaithersburg. If you need directions, please call Maria Roberts at (301) 987-6986 or email her at Meroberts27700[at]cs[dot]com.

Here is a clue about the person we will discuss: An English major fasci-

nated by secrets in written language, she did not get the credit due for her role in a great victory. Before the presentation there will be an opportunity to guess her identity. A small prize goes to the person with the correct guess.



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

HerStory – In person	Saturday, March 9 - 2:00 p.m.
Board Meeting – Zoom	Tuesday, March 12 - 7:00 p.m.
Great Decisions – Zoom	Friday, March 15 - 2:30 p.m.
Branch Program	Tuesday, March 19 – 7:00 p.m.
2024 Used Book Sale	Wednesday – Saturday, April 10-13
AAUW Maryland Spring Convention hosted by Kensington-Rockville Branch	Saturday, April 20

The American Association of University Women
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