



# AAUW Gaithersburg Branch

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

NEWSLETTER

May 2024

## May 2024

### VIRTUAL ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING AND PROGRAM

Candidates for branch office will be voted on and  
The 2024-2025 budget will be presented to members

Tuesday, May 21, 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 before the meeting.

AAUW GAITHERSBURG Board Meeting

MAY 14 at 7:00 pm

The AAUW Gaithersburg Branch Board of Directors will meet on Tuesday, May 14 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

Spring has brought tree buds and colorful flowers as I write this on Earth Day, an annual celebration to remind us of the need to protect the environment locally and globally. Local author, Rachel Carson's book *Silent Spring* was an important incentive to the first Earth Day in 1970, and we have made a lot of progress since then – from eliminating leaded gasoline to electric cars, and recycling in factories and homes. Which provides me a literary bridge to thank branch members and friends who helped move tens of thousands of books on to a second life instead of a landfill, while raising thousands of dollars for scholarships at local colleges. Please see the book sale report from Liz Hessel, who has worked tirelessly for months to identify, invite, and coordinate the small army of volunteers that includes many of you. A special thanks to Liz for her instrumental leadership and thank you for generously volunteering for the numerous jobs necessary to make the sale a huge success. Detailed financial reports from the book sale will be provided after all income and expense reports are received.

#### **VOTE:**

**Maryland Primary Election:** Just a reminder to vote in the Maryland Primary on May 14 or by mail-in ballot or at an early voting center. You can get information about candidates for circuit judge at [MOCO360 Primary Election 2024](#). [here](#) and for school board [here](#).

**AAUW National Election to open membership** is open for voting until May 15. If you have questions about the election, see past branch newsletters or contact me at [edieallison\[at\]gmail\[dot\]com](mailto:edieallison[at]gmail[dot]com). Your email inbox will receive your ballot with your unique Elector ID and Password and periodic reminders to vote from [vote@simplyvoting.com](mailto:vote@simplyvoting.com).

#### **AAUW Maryland**

The AAUW Maryland Annual Meeting, April 20. Members of the 12 branches and online community in Maryland meet quarterly to discuss education, philanthropy, and advocacy issues at provide informative programs. All members receive the *Marylander* quarterly newsletter. If you have not received it contact me at [edieallison\[at\]gmail\[dot\]com](mailto:edieallison[at]gmail[dot]com). A couple items of special interest are:



- Heather Reichardt, current branch Program VP was elected to be 2024-2026 state president. She will continue as a branch officer and is nominee for branch president in 2024-2025.
- AAUW Maryland sponsors the Maryland Woman of Distinction award given to Dian Belanger this year at the Women of Distinction Awards Ceremony on May 31 at the 2024 National Conference of College Women Leaders at the University of Maryland (NCCWSL). More about this next month.
- AAUW Maryland branch members plan to participate in the AAUW Atlantic Regional Conference, September 27-29, 2024, in Glen Allen Virginia. Regional conferences, which were regular events in past years, are an opportunity to broaden our understanding of successful approaches to promoting AAUW objectives. Program and registration information coming next month.

PHOTOS FROM THE BOOK SALE

Photos of workers and distinguished visitors: top Maria Roberts, Heather Reichardt and Alice Wong; Middle, member Mina Parson on her traditional birthday visit to the sale with Liz Hessel; bottom, Linda Pickle and Edie Allison welcome Asbury Methodist Village Executive Director, Michelle Potter, and Miles.



## BOOK SALE REPORT

- *Liz Hessel*

The branch's 2024 book sale was a wonderful success. Book dealers and shoppers came by the dozens with happy faces and left with bags or boxes of their chosen reading materials. The Asbury Residents were particularly appreciative of the return of the book sale after five years, as many are not able to go out to other bookstores. We raised a good amount of money for scholarships at Montgomery College and the Universities at Shady Grove. The final amount will be determined after all of our expenses are tallied. A number of families unable to afford books for their children were given bags of books for their families to enjoy. After the sale was completed, four local non-profit organizations took about 70 boxes of unsold books to use with their programs.

About one hundred volunteers who were not members of our branch helped with set-up, sorting, customer service, and clean-up. These included about 75 students, as well as Asbury residents and members of other AAUW Branches. We owe them our deep appreciation as our branch has fewer members and many are unable to assist in moving heavy boxes.

Thanks to all of our members and other volunteers who helped. For the first time this year we

accepted credit cards, a successful way to increase sales. Edie Allison spearheaded this and was assisted by Linda Pickle, Averill Farrelly, and Jim Pearson. Maria Roberts did an excellent job at being sure all volunteers signed in daily, and she managed all of the paperwork required for the over 75 middle and high school students who earn Student Service Learning Hours as they assist us. Barbara Garrard and Edie Allison quietly managed sale deposits and financial accounting during the sale. Other members who helped included Barbara Brooks, Carolyn Fisher, Anna Fraker, Pat Johnson, Carol Plummer, Heather Reichardt, Ronnie Roberts, Elizabeth Schwartz, Judy Sholes, Alice Wong, Mary Wykes. Over the last 5 years, Cathy Manning, Barbara Brooks, Elizabeth Schwartz, Edie Allison, Aurora Sevilla and Heather Reichardt and others have picked up, sorted, and moved many boxes into storage for this sale. Our thanks go to everyone who has contributed. Before we have another book sale, we will need to develop other approaches to distributing the workload and acquire more assistance in moving books.



MORE BOOK SALE PHOTOS: from the beginning shopping rush to the pile of boxes containing the books remaining after the sale and being sold to Wonder Books.

## NOMINATIONS FOR 2024-2025 BRANCH OFFICERS

The current president, Edie Allison, and the treasurer, Ellen Teague, have served for your years, which is the maximum term of service stated in the branch by-laws. A nomination committee led by Edie Allison, which the assistance of Heather Reichardt and May Wykes have nominated the following who will be voted on at the May 21 branch meeting:

### Nomination for Branch President: Heather Reichardt



Heather Reichardt served four years as branch president and four years as VP of Programs for the Gaithersburg Branch. At the state level, Heather served as Co-Vice President of Programs since July 1, 2022 and will assume the office of AAUW Maryland president in July 2024. Heather earned her bachelor's degree from American University in Washington, DC, and master's degree from Johns Hopkins University. She has worked in the property tax area of the real estate industry, including 25 years at Marriott International headquarters in Bethesda and now with Ernst & Young in Tysons, VA. She is active in professional organizations including having been the Chapter Chair for the DC area chapter of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS), an international property standards organization. She has lived in Montgomery County for over 30 years and is originally from the Philadelphia area.

### Nomination for Vice President Membership: Dr. Carolyn Fisher



Dr. Carolyn J. Fisher, a South Carolina native, relocated to the Washington, D.C. Metropolitan Area in March 2010. She earned a B.S. in Chemistry from South Carolina State University and was a nuclear chemist in the utility industry for some years in Tennessee and Florida. In 2002, Carolyn, earned an M.S. in Pharmaceutical Sciences from Florida A&M University and received her Ph.D. in "Free Radical and Radiation Biology" from the University of Iowa in 2007. She has conducted research related to cancer and radiation biology and is currently the director of writing services and a senior science writer in the consulting industry.

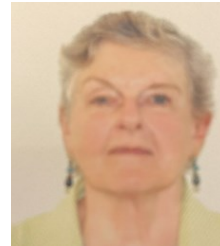
Since joining the Gaithersburg Branch of AAUW in 2012-2013, Carolyn has held different roles, such as STEM coordinator and VP of Programs. She is finishing of the 2022-2024 term as Diversity Officer for AAUW Maryland. Carolyn volunteers with other science, civic, and social organizations, including the Graduate Women in Science (National Capitol Branch), National Council of Negro Women (Montgomery County Section), and most recently, the National Association of University Women (College Alumnae Club).

### Nomination for Treasurer: Edie Allison



Edie Allison has been active in the AAUW Gaithersburg branch for 25 years. She currently is branch president and has served in other branch officer positions including treasurer in the past. Edie has also served as Maryland AAUW president, membership co-VP and newsletter editor in the past. Ms. Allison grew up in California, received a bachelor's degree in geology from West Texas State University and master's degree in geology from the University of Utah. She worked in the petroleum industry for ten years and the U.S. Department of Energy for 24 years, which brought her to the Washington, DC area. She was policy director for the American Association of Petroleum Geologists for four years and has been an independent consulting geologist for the past nine years focusing on technology to reduce emissions from oil and natural gas.

### Nomination for Secretary: Averill Farrelly



I first encountered the Gaithersburg AAUW Branch at a book sale after I retired from the federal government, and later moved to Asbury Methodist Village. I served for a time as secretary of the Gaithersburg AAUW Branch and continue to participate in the Great Decisions group. I have lived in the Washington, D.C. area, mostly in northern Virginia, since the mid-1960s and have been fortunate enough to have had postings in Asia and Europe. For many years, I worked as an economist with a special interest in international trade and international relations. My degrees are from American University in Washington, D.C. and the University of Denver in Denver, Colorado. I grew up in Oregon, where evergreens, rather than flowering trees, predominate. I find spring in the DMV an annual revelation when the cherry trees, pink dogwoods, redbuds, and other flowering trees blossom.

## **NEWS ABOUT DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION (DEI) to PERSUE**

**- Carolyn Fisher, AAUW Maryland Diversity Chair**

### **AAUW-Maryland DEI Virtual Town Hall**

On March 11, 2024, the DEI Committee hosted a town hall to better understand the DEI interests and resources needed and to discuss advancing diversity and inclusion in the Branch's activities. The agenda included a brief review of AAUW's commitment to DEI, a review of the DEI definitions, highlights of current DEI activities in the Garrett County branch, and a group discussion. The AAUW Gaithersburg Branch was well-represented.

### **DEI in Baltimore County**

Sevetra Peoples-Brown, Chief DEI Officer, and her division received an equity assessment from the Baltimore County Council to establish a baseline on how the county is doing and where it can improve equitable decision making. The contract also will assist in developing a DEI strategic plan and training staff based on those findings.

### **DEI in Higher Education**

The Ash Center for Democratic Governance and Innovation's Institutional Antiracism and Accountability (IARA) Project founded and led by

Professor Khalil Gibran Muhammad (Harvard University) and the Journalist's Resource co-hosted a webinar titled "DEI in Higher Education: Five Truths and Five Myths" on March 28, 2024. The speakers explored practical tips for strengthening news coverage on the past, present, and future of DEI in higher education. The full recording can be accessed at the IARA Project's YouTube via the link above.

### **Maryland Business and DEI**

Maryland is considered the most diverse state on the East Coast, and home to the top three most diverse cities in the U.S. A diverse, equitable and inclusive environment makes Maryland a great place to live, and a great place to do business.

## GREAT DECISIONS May 17, 2:30 pm ZOOM meeting

- **Mary Wykes, Coordinator**



The Great Decisions interest group will meet via Zoom on Friday, May 17 at 2:30. Topic for discussion will be "Risky Science Across Borders" as authored in the FPA 2024 Study Guide by Mila Rosenthal, Executive Director of the International Science Reserve at the New York Academy of Science and Climate and Human Rights Professor, Co-

lumbia University. Edie Allison will be the discussion leader of this timely topic. New members are always welcome. Contact Coordinator for the zoom link and copy of Study Guide article at: Mary[dot]Wykes[at]aol[dot]com.

## AAUW HerStory WILL MEET IN PERSON MAY 11 at 2:00 PM (The last one before summer break.)

- **Maria Roberts, Coordinator**



Aileen Murck will present the story of a woman and here is the clue: When the public finally got to see her work, there was an accusation that it was fake.

Join us on Saturday, May 11, 2 pm in the Parkview Club Room of Asbury Methodist Village. For directions email meroberts27700[at]cs[dot]com.

### AAUW GAITHERSBURG BRANCH

**Website:** [gaithersburg-md.aauw.net](http://gaithersburg-md.aauw.net)

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

#### **President**

Edie Allison

[Edieallison\[at\]comcast\[dot\]net](mailto:Edieallison[at]comcast[dot]net)

#### **Vice President for Membership**

Heather Reichardt

[hjr1234\[at\]gmail\[dot\]com](mailto:hjr1234[at]gmail[dot]com)

#### **Treasurer**

Ellen Teague

[Ellensteague\[at\]gmail\[dot\]com](mailto:Ellensteague[at]gmail[dot]com)

#### **Secretary**

Vacant

#### **Appointed Member of the Board**

Liz Hessel

[Liz\[at\]meral\[dot\]com](mailto:Liz[at]meral[dot]com)

#### **Newsletter Editor**

Qing Jiang

[Qjmailbox\[at\]gmail\[dot\]com](mailto:Qjmailbox[at]gmail[dot]com)

#### **Newsletter Managing Editor**

# **AAUW GAITHERSBURG CALENDAR OF EVENTS**

HerStory - in Person	Saturday, May 11 – 2:00 pm
Branch Board Meeting	Tuesday, May 14 – 7:00 pm
Great Decisions – Zoom	Friday, May 17 - 2:30 p.m.
Branch Annual Meeting & Program	Tuesday, May 21 – 7:00 pm

The American Association of University Women  
Gaithersburg Branch  
437 Fellowship Circle  
Gaithersburg, MD 20877