

AAUW Milwaukee Welcomes Helen Bannan as she presents Jessie Jack Hooper

(Saturday, March 6th, 2021 Meeting Event)

Helen Bannan earned her PhD in American Studies from Syracuse University and taught Women's Studies and history and directed Women's Studies programs in public universities in three states (New Mexico, Florida and West Virginia) before accepting a similar position at the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh in 1998. After 30 years of teaching, Helen had her first sabbatical at UWO in 2005, and began research for a biography of Jessie Jack Hooper. Totally absorbed in this project, Helen decided to retire early to complete it--and is still working on that! Having read all of the Jessie Jack Hooper papers available in Wisconsin and elsewhere, she knew her subject well, and found that audiences seemed to enjoy hearing her speak AS Jessie rather than about her, and she has made many such presentations since 2008. Helen has been an AAUW member for more than 25 years, is a past- co-president of the Oshkosh branch and currently a dual member of Oshkosh and Milwaukee branches. Since retirement (and before COVID), Helen and her husband (Alan Bannan) became Sierra Club National Outings leaders and led family, hiking, and service trips in several states.

Women's HerStory



Shanna Benjamin, PhD

Shanna Greene Benjamin is a biographer and scholar who studies the literature, lives, and archives of Black women. Dr. Benjamin earned her Ph.D. in English (2002) and M.A. in Afro-American Studies (1996) from the University of Wisconsin-Madison; she received a B.A. in English from Johnson C. Smith University (1994)-a historically Black college in Charlotte, North Carolina-where she was class valedictorian. A one-time professor and associate dean at Grinnell College, Dr. Benjamin is a member of the 2016-2017 HERS class-a program administered by the Higher Education Resource Service. Her book, *Half in Shadow: The Life and Legacy of Nellie Y. McKay*, will be released on April 12. Join AAUW for an insightful and informative conversation with AAUW fellowships alumna Dr. Shanna Benjamin, Ph.D., Educator and Scholar, to discuss her upcoming book. The webinar will be held on March 4th, 2021 at 5:00 PM Central Time. To register for the webinar go to: https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_YLyqMhUcRfG6Yu2qgqakgw

For more information regarding AAUW Fellows and Grantees go to: <https://www.aauw.org/>

President's Message



A Job Well Done

We had two amazing presentations this month that I hope you were able to join. Both showcased women who were distinguished, informative, and passionate about equity and inclusion as part of Black History Month and the International Day of Women and Girls in Science.

Thanks to Mia Tatum-Crider for organizing our February 6th Event meeting and Jessica May for organizing "Picture a Scientist". These events provided us a sobering yet hopeful look at navigating education for BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, or People of Color) and what some women in STEM did to address an untenable situation.

Additional thanks to Jessica May for organizing the screening of "Picture a Scientist" and moderating the February 11th panel discussion about the film that was held on the International Day for Women and Girls in Science. At both events, we heard from savvy panelists who offered their personal perspectives on how women are still affected by discrimination and sexism.

District #2 Updates

I attended our virtual District meeting on Monday, February 8th. Among the topics discussed were the AAUW By-Laws vote (see article in this issue), and State Convention in April. The District seeks candidates for the following positions:

- District #2 Coordinator
- District #2 Nominations Committee Rep and Alternate

If you are interested in learning about what is involved with any of these positions, please let me know. All begin July 1st.

Regional Board Meeting

Members of the AAUW WI Board of Directors were invited to a Regional meeting organized by AAUW Michigan on January 30th. I was one of 96 attendees from 11 states, mostly in the Midwest. Kim Churches was the keynote speaker followed by breakout sessions with counterparts from other states. It was a great opportunity to see how each state supports AAUW's mission.

Public Policy Update

The AAUW WI Public Policy committee asks us to keep updated on the following: redistricting and Fair Maps, which will affect voting in our State; the election of a new state Superintendent of Schools which affects education in our state, and progress of the Paycheck Fairness Act in Congress.



AAUW WI Annual Convention Goes Virtual!

Have you ever wondered what the AAUW Wisconsin State Convention is like, but didn't want to travel, or couldn't afford the expense? This is your year to experience the convention without the travel or expense. While a Zoom convention won't be quite the same, it will give you a taste of what an in-person convention is like. Save the dates, and plan on joining via Zoom for all or parts of the convention.

The AAUW-WI Annual State Convention will be held virtually Friday, April 23 and Saturday, April 24, 2021. Registration opens March 1, 2021. Registration is FREE! For more detailed information go to; <https://aauwisconsinconvention.com>.

Friday, April 23, 2021 (7:00-9:00 PM)

Welcome

Presentation of Conversations between suffragists Carrie Chapman Catt and Jessie Jack Hooper

Saturday, April 24, 2021 (9:30 AM - 3:00 PM)

9:30 – 10:45 Business meeting

11:00 – Noon Featured Speaker: Rep Sheila Stubbs

12:10 – 2:00 Breakout sessions

2:00 – 3:00 Jessica Michna presents “Women Who Dared”

AAUW Fellows and Grantees Making and Chronicling Black History



Keisha Blain - Historian



Rachel Rollins - DA of Boston, MA



Ayana Johnson - Marine Biologist

AAUW National



By-Laws

The last issue of our newsletter noted AAUW members will have the opportunity to vote on a proposed change in by-laws allowing an “individual who supports AAUW’s mission and pays annual AAUW dues to be an eligible member with all rights and responsibilities of AAUW membership.”

Listed below are some points to consider:

If the proposal passes, college students would now be eligible for full membership. Current Life members will not be affected nor are College/University members.

The rationale for this change found on the National website reads, in part: “AAUW’s mission is to advance gender equity, yet the requirement for membership explicitly denies access to membership to those without college degrees. AAUW does not promote equity for all women and girls if the organization maintains exclusionary membership requirements. The membership requirement is not fair, is not right, and is not equity. This is simply the right thing to do.”

Malinda Gaul, AAUW Vice Chair, shared in a video that the average age of AAUW National members is **72** years of age or older, while half of the population in the U.S. was born after 1980, a significant gap. We are international (for 100 years) and we have been open to men since 1987.

This change will update the relevance and image of AAUW as the world reckons with inequality and systemic racism, much of which disproportionately affects women. Have you ever met someone who would be a great addition to our branch only to discover they do not have a degree? Does the organization miss the talent and energy such a person could offer? Today, there are more alternatives to college degrees which have burdened women with two-thirds of the national college debt. With more careers open to women, i.e., firefighters, pilots, entrepreneurs, artists, politicians, manufacturers, retail managers, and more, who may have the potential for a variety of new ideas.

Public Policy

In addition to the by-law change, the proposed updates to AAUW Public Policy include:

- Refinement and added specificity regarding AAUW’s commitment to addressing systemic racism
- Refinement of our commitment to equitable access to higher education for all
- Emphasis on the importance of high-quality data collection

Voting will take place from April 7-May 17 online. Members who wish to request a paper ballot may either email AAUW at <https://www.aauw.org/contact-us/> or send a written request to the address below:

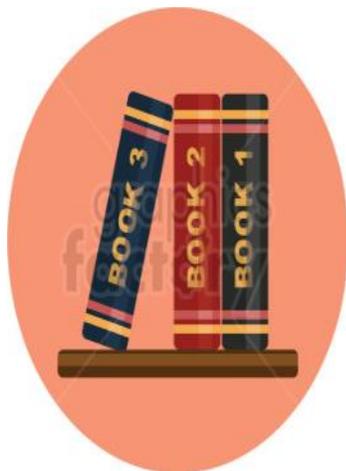
AAUW, 131 K St, NW, Suite 1000
Washington, DC 20005



Book Club: 2020-2021 - Anne Lehman & Ellie Moseley

The AAUW of Milwaukee Book Club meets on the fourth Tuesday of the month from 1:00 to 2:00, September to May. The meetings will be virtual via ZOOM. These are the wonderful books selected for the remainder of the season.

- Mar. 23: **News of the World** by Paulette Jiles
 - Discussion Leader: Margaret Courtright
- April 27: **Crazy Brave** by Joy Harjo
 - Discussion Leader: Anne Lehman
- May 25: **Caste: The Origins of Discontent** by Isabelle Wilkerson
 - Discussion Leader: Sharon Munson
- Sept. 28: Select books for 2021-22
- Oct. 26: TBA



Office Hours

Tuesday and Wednesday

9:30 am - 12:30pm

Thursday

9:30 am - 1:30pm

Noted Women Inventors

Katherine Burr Blodgett

Katharine Burr Blodgett was an American physicist and chemist known for her work on surface chemistry, in particular her invention of "invisible" or nonreflective glass while working at General Electric. She was the first woman to be awarded a Ph.D. in physics from the University of Cambridge, in 1926.

Mary Elizabeth Walton

Mary Elizabeth Walton was a nineteenth-century American inventor who was awarded two patents for pollution-reducing devices. In 1881, Walton created a method for reducing the environmental hazards of the smoke emitted from locomotive, industrial and residential chimneys.

Patricia Bath

Dr. Patricia Era Bath was an African American ophthalmologist, inventor, humanitarian, and academic. She was the inventor of laser cataract surgery. Her invention was called Lazerphaco Probe.

Valerie Thomas

Valerie Thomas is an African American scientist and inventor. She invented the illusion transmitter, for which she received a patent in 1980. She was responsible for developing the digital media formats image processing systems used in the early years of the Landsat program.