

# Mt. Vernon Voices

AAUW advances gender equity for women and girls  
through research, education, and advocacy.

Volume 66 Issue 7 March 2023

Mt. Vernon Branch



## PRESIDENT'S CORNER

**W**hat a month February was! Our branch stays so active! The support you give to our issues and activities is amazing. February was a good example of that. Thank you!

As you know I recently spent two weeks on the coldest continent in the world and have returned to one of the warmest days on record here in Alexandria! I experienced a place with no flora and came home to blooming daffodils! While away, I experienced a positive sense of community among a group of very diverse people. We were all bound by the beauty of a new and strange place, by the science that was all around us, and by the wonder and excitement of our activities. Friendliness and openness showed on every face. We were from California, Texas, Virginia, Georgia, Florida, Illinois, England, and elsewhere. We talked about everything from Jimmy Buffet to climate change. We were imbued with the optimistic hope that Antarctica would continue to be a place for science, collaboration, and peace; that that place would be an example of cooperation among nations; that it feels great to be a



part of adventure, discovery, and unspoiled nature. It was a very heartwarming experience!

I returned home to news of gun violence, political sparring, and divided opinions on everything! My cat won't stop meowing! I need to go to the grocery store! However, I find myself at peace with the contrast. I want to step outside of it all and take in the big picture: a wonderful, crazy, mixed-up world in which there is room for all the ups and downs. I can take it all in and still be amazed, grateful, and appreciative for all that it offers. This quote attributed to Buddha begins to make sense:

*Develop a mind that is vast like space, where experiences both pleasant and unpleasant can appear and disappear without conflict, struggle, or harm. Rest in a mind like vast sky.*

May we women of AAUW develop minds like vast sky and learn to use our minds to advocate for equity without feeling conflict, struggle, or harm. Let's make it look easy!

*Patsy*

## Annual Business Meeting—March 25, 10 a.m. Via Zoom

Our **Annual Business Meeting** is a time for reflecting on the program year, hearing reports from branch leaders, voting on a proposed budget, and electing new board officers.

This year we will vote on President, Program Vice President, and Secretary. **We need a quorum for everything we vote on, so please attend this important meeting.** At this meeting, we shall also collect program ideas for 2023-24 and address any concerns felt by branch members. I repeat: It is an important meeting! Please attend!

After the meeting (around 11 a.m.) **Maya Kearney**, AAUW Fellow, will inspire us by sharing highlights of her research. See her bio on page 3.

Whether you have video camera on or off we want you to Zoom with us! **Join us at 9:45 if you want to chat with members before the meeting at 10:00 A.M. on March 25! Zoom link will be sent via email.**

**Don't Miss!**

## Elections will take place at our Annual Meeting, March 25

The following members have agreed to be nominated  
for the July 1, 2023 to June 30, 2025 Term!  
All positions can be shared! Pair up with a friend (or make a new friend).

- **President ?????**  
Are you interested in this exciting position?  
Do you have a friend who would like to co-president with you?
  - **Program Co-Vice-Presidents**  
- Solveig Eggerz  
- Janet Hedrick
- **Secretary ?????**  
A major opportunity to share in the fun and congenial Board meetings.

All current officers are available to mentor and help with the transition  
Nominations may also be made from the floor with the consent of the nominee.

Please email: **Lois M. Passman** [LMPassman@hotmail.com](mailto:LMPassman@hotmail.com)  
or call Lois: 703-781-7626 (after 1 p.m.) to take advantage of this amazing opportunity.

## BRANCH LEADERSHIP 2022 – 2023

### Elected Officers

**President:** Patsy Quick  
**Program Vice President:** Solveig Eggerz  
**Membership Co-Vice Presidents:** Susan Farmer  
 Mary Wall  
**Treasurer:** Anne Simpson  
**Secretary:** Paula Lettice

### Appointed Chairs

**Bylaws:** **vacant**  
**AAUW Funds:** Elaine Kolish  
**Public Policy:** Mary Ellen Mehler  
**Newsletter/Website:** Bianca Daugherty

**Newsletter/Directory Distribution:** Mary Ellen Mehler  
**Nominating Committee Chair:** Lois Passman  
**Hospitality:** **vacant**

### Interest Groups

**Book Group:** Liz Promen  
**Diversity Outreach Group:** Janet Hedrick  
**Dining Out:** Paula Lettice, Cathy Conron, Bianca Daugherty  
**Game Night:** Bianca Daugherty, Paula Lettice  
**ImpromptEvent:** Joanne Clark

**Contact Email:** [AAUW.MtVernon@gmail.com](mailto:AAUW.MtVernon@gmail.com)

In principle and in practice, AAUW values and seeks an inclusive membership, workforce, leadership team, and board of directors. There shall be no barriers to full participation in this organization on the basis of age, disability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, geographical location, national origin, race, religious beliefs, sexual orientation, or socioeconomic status.

## GUEST SPEAKER AAUW FELLOW MAYA KEARNEY



**Maya S. Kearney** is a socio-cultural and urban anthropologist, specializing in urban ethnographic methodologies, carceral studies, as well as urban policy and spatial transformation. She has had over 15 years of both academic and applied training in anthropology and attended one of two remaining anthropology programs at a Historically Black College and University (HBCU), Spelman College. She strives to understand the how and why of urban issues and phenomena that disproportionately impact Black communities to inform strategies for restorative and transformative justice. Her dissertation builds on this research where she identified housing as the most important need of prisoner reentry by examining how gentrification impacts access to stable and affordable housing for individuals returning with a felony conviction (returning citizens). Maya's work has been supported by the American Association of University Women (AAUW), American Association of Geographers (AAG), and American Anthropological Association (AAA).

## MAXIMIZING IMPACT THROUGH COLLABORATIONS

### Northern District Meeting February 25, Beatley Central Library, Alexandria

Four Mt. Vernon Branch members attended the Northern District Meeting which was held in Alexandria on February 25: **Janet Hedrick, Mary Ellen Mehler, Solveig Eggerz, and Patsy Quick**. The meeting was focused on "maximizing our impact in the community through collaborations." We learned about two non-profits in the area that are worth collaborating with or helping out.

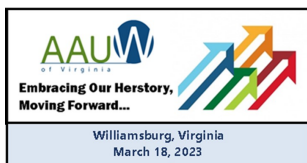


The first organization was called **Generation Hope** <https://www.generationhope.org/>. Their mission is to ensure all student parents have the opportunities to succeed and experience economic mobility. Generation Hope engages education and policy partners to drive systemic change and provides direct support to teen parents in college as well as their children through holistic, two-generation programming. They have a high success rate! We can help them by collecting and donating diapers, grocery cards, and cleaning supplies. Their biggest need is for volunteers who will mentor these young parents. Click on the link above to learn more.

We also learned about **Women Giving Back** <https://womensgivingback.org/mission-impact/>. Women Giving Back supports women and children in crisis on a first step to stability by providing quality clothing at no cost, assisted by a caring and committed community. The result is that their clients persevere, thrive, increase their self-confidence, and enable themselves to improve their lives and achieve independence. We can help by donating clothing in good shape and on-trend. The clientele is aged 40 and below.



After the speakers, branch members shared info about their upcoming events. (Email info about those events will be shared on time.) **Janet managed to sell 2 LTA tickets!!** It was a very good meeting!



The next event will be the **State Conference on March 18 in Williamsburg**. Register now for that: <https://aauw-va.aauw.net/conference-2/>

*Patsy Quick  
President*

## Conclusion of Virginia General Assembly Short Session

The Short Session of the Virginia Assembly concluded without agreement on the state budget. Following is a summary of the outcomes regarding this year's major AAUW legislative and policy priorities:



### **Education:**

Those bills AAUW was concerned about that would have diverted state education funding of public schools into voucher accounts died in committee.

Two bills that would have restricted transgender students' participation in school athletics and would have required parent notification if students identified as trans in school were defeated in the Senate.

A Senate committee killed multiple bills from the House that aimed to increase parental oversight in public schools.

AAUW will continue as a member of Fund Our Schools Coalition which we joined this year.

### **Reproductive Rights and Abortion:**

All abortion bans were defeated prior to crossover. Some abortion-related bills did move to the State Senate.

A bill mandating that the Virginia Department of Health list crisis pregnancy centers (which can be misleading to patients and which the AMA has called "unethical") was defeated.

A constitutional amendment adding a right to reproductive freedom in the Virginia constitution was defeated in the House Courts of Justice Subcommittee.

A bill protecting online menstrual data from subpoenas was defeated in the House, along with a bill requiring health care insurers to provide coverage for contraceptives.

### **Workplace Rights:**

Efforts to expand Paid Family and Medical Leave and Paid Sick Leave were defeated in House committees.

Both a salary history ban and a mandate for workplace harassment training were defeated.

The "Silence No More Act" prohibiting non-disclosure and non-disparagement provisions in employment contracts was passed.

### **Voting Rights:**

The Virginia Senate passed HB1948 (Bloxom) unanimously. It removed the witness requirement for absentee ballots beginning July 1, 2023. Instead, voters will be required to provide the last four digits of their social security number, their date of birth, and their signature.

# LETTER OF CONGRATULATIONS



February 23, 2023

Senator Jennifer McClellan  
Pocahontas Building  
Richmond, Virginia

Dear Senator McClellan:

On behalf of the 1000 members of AAUW of Virginia, we want to express our congratulations on your historic election to the US House of Representatives. We have been grateful for your tireless advocacy for women and girls during your years in the Virginia General Assembly and we are thrilled that you can now take this advocacy to the national stage.

On March 14, AAUW and other organizations will mark Women's Equal Pay Day. This is the day in 2023 to which women on average must work to equal the pay men received in 2022. It is tragic that for women of color, this date is many months later in the year. Over half the states have a better ratio of pay equity between men and women than Virginia. The AAUW national website offers many resources that may be helpful to you and your staff in your new role.

<https://www.aauw.org/resources/article/gender-pay-gap-by-state/>

We look forward to continuing to work with you in your new role and are looking forward to addressing our next letter to you as a member of Congress. Please let us know if we can be of assistance in any way.

Warmest regards,

Janine Greenwood and Denise M. Murden  
Co-VP of Public Policy  
AAUW of Virginia  
[Aauwvpublicpolicy@gmail.com](mailto:Aauwvpublicpolicy@gmail.com)

Cc: Robin Lucas, AAUW

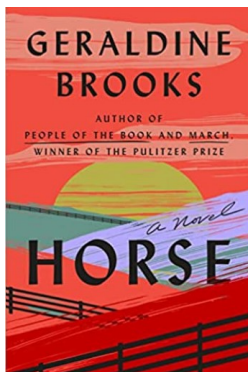
## BOOK GROUP

Monday, March 20, 2023, 7:30 p.m.

*Please inform the hostess whether or not you plan to attend.*

**HOSTESS:** Susan Farmer  
7758 Belvale Drive  
Alexandria, VA 22315

**CO-HOST:** Mary Ellen Mehler



**BOOK:** Horse  
Geraldine Brooks

**REVIEWER:** Janet Hedrick

**NEXT BOOK:** The Story of More: How We Got to Climate Change and Where We Go from Here  
Hope Jahren

## GAME NIGHT

Join us for a fun evening with various games

Friday, March 24, 2023, 7:30 p.m.  
Home of Anne Simpson

Spouses and significant others are welcome to join in!

All participants must be fully vaccinated.

Contact Paula Lettice or Bianca Daugherty  
if you would like to join the group.

[AAUW.MtVernon@gmail.com](mailto:AAUW.MtVernon@gmail.com)



## DIVERSITY OUTREACH GROUP



**AAUW Diversity Outreach Group**  
of the Mt. Vernon Branch will meet on Wednesday, March 8 - 4 P.M. by ZOOM

The group is continuing to read "The 1619 Project". We will be discussing **Chapter 12**, titled "Medicine" and written by **Linda Villarosa** and **Chapter 13**, titled "Church" and written by **Anthea Butler**.

The group welcomes new members and invites ideas for reading and for activities.

Contact **Janet Hedrick** at [jhedrick815@gmail.com](mailto:jhedrick815@gmail.com) if you wish to join the group and/or have ideas for readings and/or activities.



### March 14 is Equal Pay Day 2023

This symbolic day denotes how far into the year women must work to be paid what men were paid the previous year. Equal Pay Day 2023 is on March 14 to represent the current state of the gender pay gap: 83% for full-time workers and 77% for all workers (including part-time and seasonal).

## Alexandria Community Remembrance Project's (ACRP) "Transformational" Pilgrimage to Montgomery, Alabama

Lynchings of black people were commonplace during the Jim Crow era. In the years 1882-1968 there are recorded 4,743 victims of racial terror lynchings. Of these 11 occurred in Alexandria. Two of them were Alexandria teenagers, **Joseph McCoy**, on April 23, 1897; and **Benjamin Thomas**, on August 8, 1899.

"Confronting a terrible past to create an inclusive future," was the theme of the Feb 18 AAUW program conducted by **Audrey P. Davis**, co-director of Alexandria Community Remembrance Project (ACRP) and **Tiffany Pache**, ACRP's project coordinator.



Established in 2019, and working in partnership with **Bryan Stevenson's** Equal Justice Initiative in Montgomery Ala, ACRP conducted a pilgrimage last fall to Montgomery to commemorate the lives of lynching victims, **Thomas and McCoy**.

Goal of the pilgrimage was to bring a symbolic soil collection for each victim to the Legacy Museum in Montgomery, where their lives are commemorated and a marker placed.

A total of 165 people went on the pilgrimage, including 47 students from Alexandria City High School. Pilgrims ranged in age from 18 to 79. The visit to Montgomery included a walk over the Edmund Pettus Bridge in Selma, Alabama, plus visits to museums and civil rights sites, such as the Freedom Riders Museum and the Rosa Parks bus. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uS43s8mjEGc>

Among the older pilgrims was 79-year-old Alexandria activist and "living legend," celebrated for her community involvement, **Rosa E. Byrd**, who said she worried about crossing the Edmund Pettus Bridge due to her knees. But she was the third to cross the historic bridge in Selma, Alabama.

For **Byrd** the trip was transformational. "Everything I absorbed I will never forget," she said. It may have been transformational in a larger sense. She chairs Alexandria's Martin Luther King Committee that honors King in an event each year on his birthday

weekend. After the pilgrimage she sensed a change in race relations, perhaps a gesture toward what Martin Luther King called "the beloved community," as demonstrated by the "chairs in the aisles" attendance of blacks *and* whites at the annual MLK event held in January at Alexandria's Masonic Temple.

"I think more of us are more together than the media would have you believe in my America. We have to spread it," **Byrd** said.

**Darly Kimbunda**, a senior at Alexandria City High School, was also deeply moved by the pilgrimage. "There were no filters. They just gave it to us straight." He

noted he had learned little about slavery in school and expressed disappointment that programs about African-American history are often not promoted.

"It is difficult to confront the past because in school they don't tell us about the past," he said. "The trip was a monumental discovery for me. There's a complexity about the past we have to dive deep into. I am so thankful for this trip. Now I see the circumstances of where I stand and what I need to do to improve society."

He vowed to keep sharing what he learned. "We need to educate people my age and younger than me."

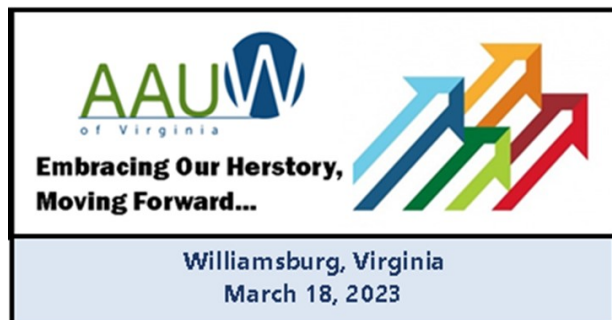
ACRP is an ongoing project working "toward creating a welcoming community bound by equity and inclusion."

<https://www.alexandriava.gov/cultural-history/alexandria-community-remembrance-project>

ACRP will conduct a program on Transformational Justice at the Lee Center, March 4 at 4 pm.

And on MLK Day, ACRP launched an essay contest. Contestants submit an essay of 800-1,000 words on racial justice for more than \$5,000 in scholarships and prizes. Deadline is March 17, 2023, and the awards ceremony is May 20.

# 2023 AAUW-VA STATE CONFERENCE



**2023 AAUW-VA State Conference  
Part 1  
Saturday, March 18, 2023  
10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.**

**HOLIDAY INN & SUITES –WILLIAMSBURG / GATEWAY  
515 Bypass Road, Williamsburg, VA 23185**

Join AAUW members from around the state at the 2023 AAUW of Virginia Conference in Williamsburg. Mt. Vernon branch members **Patsy Quick, Janet Hedrick, and Solveig Eggerz** plan to attend. These three will attend the activities on Friday night before the conference on Saturday. Solveig says she would love a roommate if anyone else is interested in attending.

**THERE IS STILL TIME TO REGISTER!**

**Open the conference brochure link below for all the information you need.**



**[AAUW-VA 2023 CONFERENCE BROCHURE](#)**



The 2023 in-person AAUW-VA Conference Part 1 will be held on March 18 at the Holiday Inn & Suites Williamsburg ~ Historic Gateway in Williamsburg, VA. Included in the sessions will be the Keynote Address, a discussion regarding the under-representation of girls in the STEM fields, and a public policy presentation on the future of K-12 education in Virginia. In addition, our own past state president, **Caroline Pickens**, will share the work AAUW has done to promote the education and protect the rights of women and girls.

Conference Part 2 is the 2023 AAUW-VA Annual Business Meeting to be held VIRTUALLY on March 25.

***You can also find this information at the [AAUW-VA Website](#).***



# 2022 - 2023 MT. VERNON BRANCH PROGRAM YEAR

Meeting Date and Place	Focus/Activity
Saturday, September 17, 2022, 11 a.m. Via ZOOM hosted by Sherwood Regional Library Joint program with AAUW Alexandria Branch	Virginia Elections: Voter Access? Will my Vote Count? Panel Discussion
Saturday, October 15, 2022, 10:30 a.m. Sherwood Regional Library 2501 Sherwood Hall Lane, Alexandria, VA 22306	The STEM Gap: How Can We Build a Better Future for Girls and Women? Speaker: <b>Kathi Hanrahan</b>
Saturday, November 19, 2022, 10:30 a.m. Sherwood Regional Library 2501 Sherwood Hall Lane, Alexandria, VA 22306	The State of Public Education: Issues and Concerns Speakers: <b>Karen Corbett Sanders</b> and <b>Holly Hazard</b>
Saturday, December 10, 2022, 11:30 a.m. Cedar Knoll Restaurant 9030 Lucia Lane, Alexandria, VA 22308	Holiday Event Brief presentation by Legacy Circle Liaison, <b>Kristin Moyer</b>
Saturday, January 21, 2023, 10:30 a.m. Location: ZOOM	Richmond Legislature: AAUW Issues Speakers: <b>Janine Greenwood</b> and <b>Denise Murden</b> , AAUW-VA Public Policy Co-Chairs
Saturday, February 18, 2023, 10:30 a.m. Location: ZOOM Joint program with AAUW Alexandria Branch	Alexandria Community Remembrance Project (ACRP): Lynchings in Alexandria Speakers: <b>Audrey P. Davis, Co-Director ACRP &amp; Tiffany Pache, Project Coordinator for ACRP</b>
Saturday, March 25, 2023, ABM 10 a.m. / Speaker 11:00 a.m. Location: ZOOM	Annual Business Meeting (ABM) followed by Speaker AAUW Fellow <b>Maya Kearney</b>
Friday, April 21, 2023, 7 p.m. Reception / 8 p.m. Performance Little Theatre of Alexandria 600 Wolfe St, Alexandria, VA 22314	LTA Annual Fundraiser Schiller's Mary Stuart
May 2023 Location, Date and Time TBD	Annual Potluck
June 2023 Location, Date and Time TBD	Annual Planning Session



## OTHER IMPORTANT DATES:

March 18, 2023

AAUW of Virginia 2023 Conference, Part 1

March 25, 2023

2023 AAUW-VA Annual Business Meeting, Part 2

## AAUW Greatest Needs Fund: Update

I am pleased to report that AAUW has adjusted its Funds reporting system and now members who donate through their Donor Advised Funds are included in the periodic reports of member giving. As a result, our total for 2022 jumped significantly.

Individuals donated \$4,568 and the Branch donated \$2,803 for a total of \$7,371. Previously our 2022 total was \$5,195. **Accordingly we were eligible to submit 14 names for Named Honorees. Stay tuned to learn who are these deserving individuals.** If you would like to donate online please go to [aauw.org](http://aauw.org) and click on the red donate button.

**DONATE**

Thank you everyone for your generosity and participation in fundraisers.

*Elaine Kolish  
AAUW Funds Chair*



## March 2023

- **7 Board Meeting**  
Zoom 7:30 p.m.  
Contact Patsy Quick  
703/360-8676
- **8 Diversity Outreach Group**  
Zoom 4 p.m.  
Contact Janet Hedrick  
571/213-2670
- **20 Book Group, 7:30 p.m.**  
Contact Liz Promen  
703/780-7342
- **24 Game Night, 7:30 p.m.**  
Contact Anne Simpson  
301/203-0454
- **25 Annul Business Meeting and branch program**  
Zoom 10 a.m.  
Contact Patsy Quick  
703/360-8676

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7 Board Meeting	8 Diversity Outreach Group	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20 Book Group	21	22	23	24 Game Night	25 Annual Business Meeting
26	27	28	29	30	31	



Check out our website <https://mtvernon-va.aauw.net/>  
Follow us on Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/mtvernonvaaauw/>

