

***This Thumbsketch Includes:***

**President's Message**

**March General Meeting**

**April General Meeting**

**Program Topics Poll**

**Leaders in Prescott**

**Public Policy**

**Legislative Day**

**NCCWSL**

**Tax Deduction**

**Birding Interest Group**

**Lunch Bunch**

**Travel Discussion Group**

# Prescott (AZ) Branch AAUW

AAUW branch in Prescott AZ



## Newsletter March-April 2021

### President's Message



Tracy Smiles,  
President

Social justice has become a central theme across the public discourse and popular media. Proponents of social justice challenge us to recognize, question, and reflect on systems that perpetuate inequity on the basis of gender, social class, ability, sexual identity, race, religion and politics. Of equal importance are questions related to how we, as an organization, respond to this knowledge. Oftentimes, we, as women, strive to provide every member of the broader community opportunities to address inequity through explorations of individual identity and cultural and social intersectionality in order to participate fully in a democratic society. Members of AAUW understand the critical importance of this work, and actively pursue ways to enact activities that address the challenge of disrupting hegemony and fostering a welcoming, humanizing, and intellectual social and political environment. Similarly, members of AAUW recognize that through social engagement and community action we unleash unlimited promise for realizing the goals of a socially just society.

This month we will be hosting our annual Community Conversations, a meeting whereby members are provided opportunities to interact with each other and provide input into what we, as an organization, would like to see with regard to programs, interest groups, and community activism. This meeting is critical, and I encourage you to attend and participate. Have you enjoyed the outstanding programs this AAUW year? These programs grew out of ideas presented and shared at the March meeting. Would you like to learn more about how to become more active in AAUW? Would you appreciate the opportunity to meet and talk with other members? Would you like to know more about leadership opportunities? This is the meeting for you! Most of all, the March meeting is time to reflect on and envision how we as an organization of vibrant women can use our talents and energy to pursue the loftiest goals of our mission, "To advance gender equity for women and girls through research, education, and advocacy," as we work toward our vision of "equity for all." I hope to see all of you there.

## Programs

### Saturday, March 13th – General Meeting

**AAUW Women have Ideas and Opinions: We want to Hear Them!**



**Lend your voice to the conversation about how to keep AAUW Prescott Strong and Vital!**

On March 13, we will meet in small groups to discuss the direction of Prescott AAUW and how to make our branch stronger, more inclusive, responsive, and relevant to our members. This is also your opportunity to suggest new interest groups, volunteer (no pressure), and discuss the poll results for 2021-2022 programs.

**9:15 Join Zoom Mtg. | 9:30 Announcements | 10:00 Program**

After you have joined our Zoom general meeting, our President Tracy Smiles, will conduct a brief business meeting and show the video about Gertrude Ederle. Then our media savvy Communications Committee will divide us into smaller zoom groups. A Board member will facilitate the conversation in each group: brief introduction of members, discussion of organization, and next year's programs and speakers.

### Saturday, April 10th – General Meeting

**A Growing Economy and a Skilled Workforce: Essential Elements in Advancing Equity for Women and Girls**

**Teri Drew** has successfully led the way in investing millions of dollars to build strong communities and create job opportunities for thousands of individuals. She is Regional Director for the Northern Arizona Council of Governments Economic Development District (NACOG), and she serves as Executive Director for the Yavapai County Workforce Development Board.

Teri currently is Chair of the Arizona Workforce Association and is a past President of the Arizona Association for Economic Development. She is also a member of the national association.

In 2012 Teri was named *Prescott Area Leadership Woman of the Year*. She graduated from the University of Oklahoma Economic Development Institute, is a certified development professional, and is recipient of numerous regional, state and national innovation awards.

**Leah Chickavage** is Operations Manager of the Economic/Workforce Development District for NACOG. For over 12 years she has worked on various state and federal workforce development initiatives, the latest being the Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act of 2014. Leah oversees and supervises ARIZONA@WORK Yavapai County, which provides workforce development services to local businesses and job seekers.

In 2016, Leah received the Yavapai County Workforce Development Board of Director's Award for service, performance, and dedication. She serves as an active member on a variety of professional boards and councils.



*Teri Drew*



*Leah Chickavage*

Without growing economic opportunity (jobs) and workforce development (job skills), the ability of women and girls to build financial security is difficult. And, this makes our mission of advancing equity for women and girls problematic. Join us on **Saturday, April 10**, as two leaders in Yavapai County economic and workforce issues explain current programs and trends in our area. The introductory video will focus on highlights of the life of Maggie Lee Walker, a prominent African-American business woman and teacher.

**REMINDER: Complete the Program Topics Poll by March 5th. [Click here to access the poll.](#)**

## AAUW Business

### AAUW Prescott Needs Leaders Like You!

Every year, by design, half the board position become open to new members. This policy ensures the leadership of branch stays healthy and full of vitality as those who continue on the board mentor new members who themselves bring fresh energy and ideas to the branch leadership. The Prescott AAUW Branch is seeking nominations for the following board positions:

- President,
- President Elect,
- Treasurer,
- Program Co-VP,
- Membership Co-VP, and
- Community Action Chair.

You do not need to be nominated in order to express interest in serving in any of these positions, simply let either myself, or **Lynne Murphy** know and we can give you more information about each position, including job descriptions. I think I speak for other board members, both past and present, when I say I have found serving on the board to be rich and rewarding experience. Through my participation on the branch's executive board, I have developed some of my most important relationships with like-minded women in Prescott, the surrounding areas, and across the state. I encourage you to consider joining this dynamic team!

Tracy Smiles, AAUW Prescott Branch President 2020-2021

## Public Policy Committee



The Arizona State Legislature for 2021 convened January 11 and will adjourn May 7. Early in the legislative session, Governor Ducey delivered his State of the State speech, which ended with release of the Executive Budget Recommendation. That recommendation included education initiatives by the Governor, such as funding for early literacy and investments to accelerate student learning for those most impacted by the pandemic.

*Victoria Sweet,  
Public Policy  
Chair*

Moving forward, we in AAUW-Prescott have a strong interest in supporting greater accountability for charter schools. Our K-12 district schools are also in crisis and need emergency assistance.

Furthermore, advocacy groups have identified additional needs, such as easing how we track student performance in light of the impact of the pandemic on student learning; funding summer school due to learning loss during the pandemic; increasing broadband access by all students; and increasing per-pupil funding for poor students.

Members of AAUW-Prescott have an opportunity to be heard by advocating for a number of public education policy issues. To participate in a Community Action Team or as an independent citizen in partnership with Save Our Schools Arizona Network in Northern Arizona, you may access <http://tiny.cc/teamsosaz>

## AAUW Arizona Legislative Day



AAUW Arizona held their annual **Legislative Day, February 9**, where participants met our state AAUW lobbyist Jodi Liggett, and three powerful women legislators: Senator Jamescita Peshlakai, first Native American woman elected to the AZ Senate, Representatives Athena Salman, former minority whip, and Raquel Teran, chair of the AZ Democratic Party. (Please note that Republican representatives were also invited but declined to participate.)

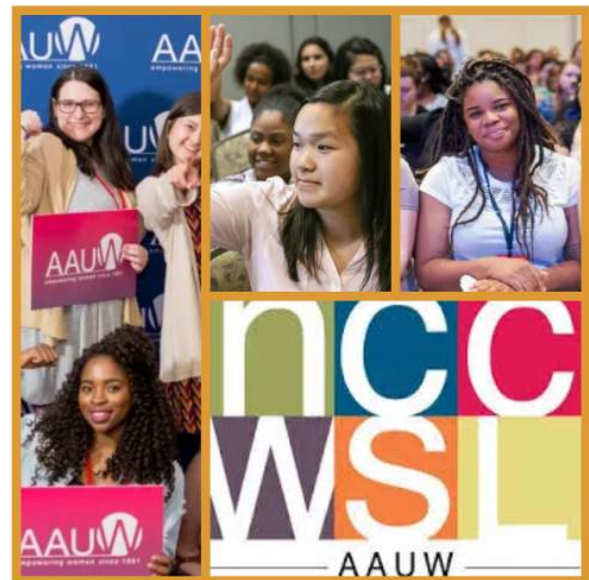
Topics that were examined included how the fifty-fifth legislative session opened with coordinated attacks on voting rights and women's health. In addition, constitutional challenges and budget maneuvers that would defeat the purpose of voter-passed Proposition 208 were discussed, although the efforts to suppress the tax on high income earners to support education was defeated in court. Furthermore, bills related to voting rights, reproductive rights, violence against women, voucher expansion, and economic rights were also discussed. Click [HERE](#) to watch the recorded session.

## NCCWSL – May 25th and 26th

Questions can be sent to [Ann Mitchell](#), Chair – AAUW-AZ College Relations

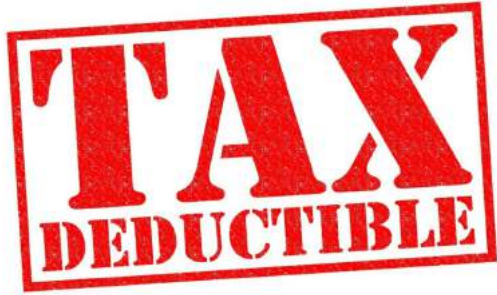
AAUW invites hundred of college women from around the country for two days of leadership training, inspiration and networking at our National Conference for College Student Leaders (NCCWSL).

Virtual Event: May 25-26, 2021. See 'News & Events' on the AAUW website for more information.



## Tax Deductible Benefit for AAUW Members

This is just a reminder that a portion of your National AAUW dues is tax deductible for the year 2020.



- If you paid the full amount of \$95 for the year 2020-21, you may deduct \$56.
- If you joined in a Shape the Future event and paid ½ price dues to National, you may deduct \$26.50.

## Interest Groups



### Are you interested in joining a Birding Interest Group?

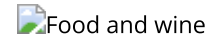
According to the Audubon Society, “A significant percentage of American birders, if asked to choose their single favorite regional destination, would pick [Southeastern] Arizona. Within a relatively small region here, you can find Sonoran Desert, oak woodland, high-elevation conifer forest, and riparian areas. There’s more to Arizona than the southeast, of course, including Grand Canyon National Park, the San Francisco Peaks near Flagstaff, the White Mountains in the east, and wildlife refuges along the Colorado River to the west. Overall, Arizona’s species list of around 550 is the highest of any state without an ocean coastline. The total is aided by quite a few rare vagrants that occasionally cross the border from Mexico” (retrieved from: <https://www.audubon.org/news/birding-arizona>).

Those of us who live in Prescott and the Quad-Cities can attest to the extraordinary number of birds that winter at our local lakes, seasonally migrate through our mountains, as well as the diverse range of year-round residents that we enjoy watching at our backyard feeders. Recently, I solicited our membership to see if there was interest in developing a Birding interest group. Currently, we have enough members who have expressed interest in such a group that will include possible activities like: learning how to identify birds, field trips to local and out of town birding destinations (perhaps in coordination with the Adventure Group), guest speakers, and sharing our personal finds with each other, among other possibilities. If you are interested in participating in this brand-new interest group please **contact Tracy Smiles**. No experience necessary, everyone is welcome.

## Lunch Bunch

Lunch Bunch had been meeting at outdoor venues until it

got too cold. We have not met in January or February. We are hoping to find a suitable place if the weather is nice enough to meet in March. We welcome any suggestions you may have. For more information contact Margie Crider.



## Travel Discussion Group



Join a trivia event – “Sailing the 50 Seas!” Start making a list of questions about the seas that you have seen or want to see.

**March 8th, Tuesday at 1:30 on Zoom.** Members will be sent a link before the meeting.

Contact Janet Orr or Kathy Lopez to join this meeting if you are not a member.

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