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Newsletter – March/April 2022

President's Message

Prescott (AZ) Branch AAUW



Tracy Smiles, President

On the surface, there appears little to report. Yet, behind the scenes, this is a busy time for our AAUW branch's Board of Directors. Currently, we are working on the budget, identifying needs and priorities, and weighing those against the monies your membership dues provide. We are recruiting new board members, a critically important activity. To ensure the health of our AAUW branch it is essential that we rotate the Board with new members who bring different perspectives and fresh ideas. I cannot overstate how rewarding I have found participating on the Board to be. It has been through my involvement with the Board that I have come to realize how, as a member of AAUW, I am part of something much larger than Saturday meetings and a book group. There is little more gratifying than planning and executing endeavors that benefit women and girls in our community. Moreover, it is through

my participation on the Board that I have fostered some of my most meaningful friendships since moving to Prescott.

Additionally, several of our branch members are working in collaboration with the Yavapai College Foundation, as well as members from other local branches across the state, to plan a women's conference here in Prescott. This event is intended to provide women a day and a half of intellectual stimulation and personal enrichment that includes: notable speakers (Alice Ferris from PBS has already confirmed!); an evening reception with hors d'oeuvres, refreshments, a cash bar, and an art show featuring local women artists; cutting edge panel presentations; and breakfast and lunch catered by a local woman business owner. There will be plenty of time for fun and comradery, all set in and around the beautiful Prescott Arts Center on the Yavapai College campus. The title of the conference is "Arizona Women's Forum: Fostering a Pioneering Spirit in the 21st Century." Stay tuned for more details as plans evolve, and if you'd like to help with the organization of this event, let me know.

This month we will be holding our annual Community Conversations. Your incoming president, Penny Briner-Ewell, along with our program co-chairs Cathy Cunningham and Miriam Haubrich, are making plans for what will be an engaging experience that focuses on YOU. This non-traditional meeting, hosted by the Executive Board, is designed to provide members opportunities to meet in small groups and provide the Board with input for future programs, activities, and interest groups, as well as simply having time to get to know each other. Additionally, we will recognize and celebrate International Women's Day.

And lastly, interest group leaders continue to work on behalf of their members to provide an array of activities to keep us connected, stimulated, and entertained. I am grateful for them all, and believe they deserve trips to Disneyland! As you can see, AAUW is busy working to provide its members with a multitude of opportunities, as we look ahead to the coming year while reflecting on the past year's accomplishments and challenges.

I look forward to seeing what comes. I hope you do, too!

General Meeting – March 12, 2022

Community Conversations



Come meet in small group settings to get to know each other a bit better, discuss what issues are currently most important for women, and provide ideas for how AAUW can help us continue to strive for women's equality. Your input is important as these discussions will help guide our programming for the upcoming year. This meeting will occur in person; feel free to wear a mask if you prefer.

9:15 Social | 9:30 Announcements | 10:00 Breakout Sessions

Yavapai College Community Room **Building 3 Room 119**. [Click here for the Yavapai College Campus Map](#)

General Meeting – April 9, 2022

This Annual Business Meeting includes:

- A Presentation of the Annual AAUW Prescott Budget
- Election of Officers for 2022-2023
- Program following the official business meeting



Community Health in Yavapai County

Sharon Rickman works for Yavapai County and is the Director of the Community Health Center of Yavapai County and Prescott Free Clinic. The County and Prescott Free Clinic have a unique arrangement to co-manage the Community Health Center. This arrangement has given Sharon an opportunity few people have and requires a unique perspective on working with and negotiating with two governing boards.

Sharon holds a Bachelor of Science degree from the University of Nebraska at Lincoln and a Master of Public Administration from the University of Nebraska at Omaha. Sharon grew up outside of Omaha on a cattle farm and is a die-hard Husker fan! There were 30 people in her high school graduating class, and she is thankful for her rural upbringing, but also for parents that knew it was important to explore and learn beyond the world she grew up in. Over the past 21 years, she has managed three health clinics. Prior to that, she worked in the Human Services field. She has lived and worked in Nebraska, North Carolina, Kansas, Tennessee, and Arizona.

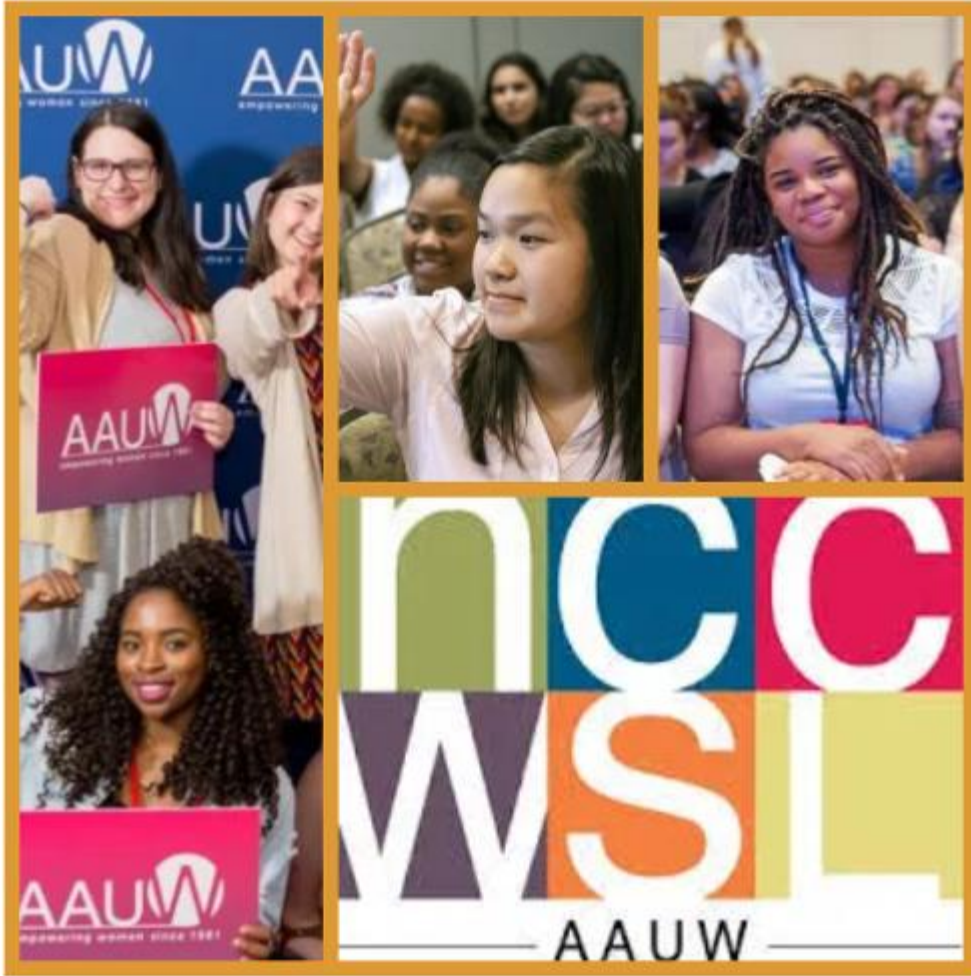
Welcome, Sharon as a new member of AAUW Prescott.

Community Action

National Conference for College Women Student Leaders

Virtual Event Scheduled May 24 through May 26, 2022

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



New for 2022 >>> Three attendance options:

1. Half Day Only (Tuesday, May 24)
2. 2-day Conference* (Wed-Thu, May 25-26)
3. Bundle Package* (May 24-26)

*AAUW Arizona NCCWSL scholarships are available to attend the 2-day Conference or Bundle Package

Early Bird Registration is open until March 11, 2022

National Conference for College Women Student Leaders (NCCWSL)





Prescott Branch has received notification from AAUW Arizona that applications for 2022-2023 **AAUW State of AZ Community Action Grants** will be accepted until March 15th. These applications need to be sent to aauwtucsonmembership@gmail.com. Contact that same email with any questions about this program. Remember the **March 15th** deadline.

How the AAUW AZ Community Action Grant program works:

- By March 15, submit the [Community Action Grant Application](#)
- Complete the AAUW mission based project
- By June 1, submit the [Community Action Grant Final Report](#)

View and download the complete application instructions at [CAG Application](#)

AAUW Business

Open Board Seats

Prescott AAUW is seeking nominations for the following seats on the executive board:



- President-Elect
- Public Policy Chair
- Public Relations Chair
- Recording Secretary
- Program Co-VP
- Membership Co-VP
- Community Action Co-Chair

If you are interested or have questions, contact Lynne Murphy or Tracy Smiles, prescottaauwbranch@gmail.com



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 2021.

If you paid the full amount of \$98 for the year 2021-22 you may deduct \$59.

If you joined in a Shape the Future event and paid ½ price dues to National, you may deduct \$29.50.



AAUW Prescott Membership Update



Membership Zoom

Led by Patti Allen-LaFleur and Annette Gauthier, Co-VPs for Membership

Since July of 2021, the Prescott Branch has welcomed 15 new members, bringing our total to 177 members. Before the COVID pandemic, we had over 200 members and hope that, as the infection rate decreases, our membership numbers will increase. We are looking forward, at this point, to meeting in person in March when, our annual Community Conversations event takes place. Every March AAUW Prescott members meet in small groups to help decide the direction of general meetings and other issues.

The “newish” members of AAUW (those who joined our branch since COVID began) and several board members met via Zoom at the end of January. Board members shared information about their positions on the board, their interest group involvement, and the frustrations of meeting on Zoom rather than in person. We got to hear from our newer members, as well and discovered that several had been involved with other AAUW branches prior to moving to Prescott. We are such a diverse group of women. It is such a pleasure to be part of AAUW Prescott.

The screenshot above is of the January Zoom Meet & Greet and captures members as they hear about Tracy Smiles's journey to joining AAUW Prescott.



National AAUW Dues are Set to Increase by \$5; Local and State Dues will Remain the Same



The AAUW membership year is from July 1st through June 30th. Members should be receiving an email regarding renewal in April. National Dues are going up \$5, which will bring the membership dues up to \$103.00.

Please watch your emails for renewal announcements. As a member, the email you receive from National will have a link to renewing and paying online.

Public Policy



Victoria Sweet, Public Policy Chair

Public Policy advocates statewide are watching to see if the Arizona Legislature will approve a waiver to restore a devastating 16 percent cut of 1.2 billion dollars to school district budgets triggered by a reduction of 50,000 students enrolled and that a sales tax for schools is no longer exempted from the state constitutional cap in the fiscal year 2022.

The legislature's 2022 session convened on January 10 and will adjourn May 13. Since the cumulative total in Arizona's education budget for the fiscal year 2022 exceeded the state's \$6.6 billion voter-approved constitutional cap, known as the Aggregate Expenditure Limit, set in 1980 for education, the waiver must be granted no later than March of 2022 to affect the districts' April 1 budget deadline. As employment decisions are made in early March by school boards, passing a waiver before March 1 is desired. Arizona school districts were notified in October 2021 that their budgets would be reduced by 16 percent, amounting to \$1,300 per student. Charter schools are not impacted.



While there has been a recent infusion of federal dollars to address the impact of learning loss from COVID, public schools have been allocated these one-time dollars from the federal government to counter the negative impacts on learning from the pandemic, the funds come with restrictions. Specifically, the money is limited to improving infrastructure, such as ventilation and technology, and allocating temporary employees to address learning loss among students.

The non-pandemic state budget is essential to address ongoing education expenses, including essential teaching positions. Without legislative approval of a budget exemption, known as a waiver, to restore the short-changed 16 percent to each school district, significant cuts to general expenditures will be implemented for the fiscal year 2022 education budgets. The likely outcome is "Reduction In Force" notices to some teachers that their positions have been cut and closing of schools.

AAUW-Prescott's Public Policy Committee advocates that state funding for public education (district and charter schools) be raised at least to the national average per student, and that uniform operational, budget, and reporting requirements be enforced equally among all public schools. The state's K-12 education system currently receives \$3.5 billion less in funding than the national average.

Together, we continue to advocate for dedicated, equitable, and adequate funding for public education in Arizona, and now especially, the waiver to override the constitutional budget cap spurred by federal pandemic relief.

Update: The Arizona Senate waived the education spending cap, 23-6 on February 21, 2022.





Celebrate the women who came before us and their accomplishments

Interest Groups

Craft Group



Margie Crider

The Craft Group has been on hiatus for a while due to the waxing and waning of COVID. I am hoping to have a gathering of everyone in the near future. I have several craft books that I got from a friend, and we have members who would like help with some of their projects. We have a member interested in learning quilling and one who would like help with the quilting. If no one offers their house for the gathering I thought we could meet at Cuppers on Montezuma to discuss plans and help one another. I would offer my house, but my six cats tend to cause overwhelming sneezing. When the weather warms up, we will meet in my backyard (under my social distancing tree) to work on our mosaic pieces.



I received a very large box of boxes in various sizes and shapes (round, square, heart) that we can paint and decorate as gift boxes, if anyone is interested. Let me know if this sounds good to you. Please let me know if there is anything that you would like to learn or work on together so we can start organizing projects and getting supplies.

Best wishes for 2022 crafting!



Travel Discussion Group



Are you starting to plan summer travel? Let's share plans for summer travel on **March 8th at 1:30 pm** at the Prescott Public Library, Founders Suite B.