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President’s Message



Mary Williams
President

AAUW Washington

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As I write this, I am traveling. I have heard that quite a few of you have felt comfortable venturing out, particularly in the past few months. I know a few of you felt brave enough to go to your winter homes in the south, and many more of have been able to see family and friends in the past few weeks. What a relief! I was going stir crazy and am really happy to be able to be out and about again, even if I do seem to be chasing our 115-degree heat around the west – which was certainly not my plan. I’m sure that by the time I get home next week I’ll find the temperate weather of the Puget Sound a welcome relief.

This past year has been a journey, too. I know I was very much afraid that this pandemic might result in the demise of many of our AAUW – WA branches, and, in fact, we have lost a few, which is still way too many. But it

could have been much worse. Despite our fears, many of us have been able to transition to a virtual world without too much angst. A result has been that we have been able to look at things much more holistically.

Our recent health care kickoff was a resounding success. Nearly 100 of us were able to hear two preeminent national speakers address health concerns through a gender and racial lens. The third round of presentations introduced our 4-part webinar series that will run from September through December. This mission-based series will look at four areas of women's health that are of great concern. We hope you will join us. More details will be available at both the (still) virtual Summer Leadership Meeting (August 7th, details elsewhere in this EL) and in an invitation that will appear in your e-mail inbox soon.

I want to thank two outgoing board members whose term ended June 30th. Karen Manelis and Jeanie Glaspell have been essential members of this organization for a long time, and their work is much appreciated. I want to welcome the two members who joined our board on July 1st, Kathy Halsan and Cathy Cavness, both of the Lewis County branch. They've done amazing things in Lewis County, and, informally, we're calling them the "Big Ideas Team." I also want to re-welcome Emily Hutchins and Sandy Heidergott, both of whom joined the board this spring, and are already hard at work.

I look forward to a second year of trying to keep us on track and moving forward during these difficult times. You'll hear a lot more about what your board hopes to get done this year at the Summer Leadership Meeting. We hope you will seriously consider joining us.

Our Bylaws have long provided financial assistance for small branches who needed help to be able to attend the Annual Meeting. At our Annual Meeting, we approved providing assistance for both the Annual Meeting and the State Leadership Meeting. Strong leadership is so important to helping our branches, both large and small, as we work toward achieving our mission. Hopefully, branches are helping their leaders attend important state events by providing registration assistance. The state board recently decided to add our help, and so we are providing a reduced registration rate for leaders in any of our states small branches (defined as fewer than 40 members). Registration links are provided after the next story, written by our Director for Programs, Karen Anderson.



AAUW-WA Summer Leadership Meeting

Karen Anderson
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It's time to hone our leadership skills! The AAUW-WA annual leadership conference for 2021 will be held virtually on Saturday, August 7 from 8:30 to 2:00 and will feature speakers and workshops on a variety of topics. We will begin with a talk on the current state of Title IX from Amy Klosterman, an attorney specializing in Title IX law and a member of the Seattle branch of AAUW. The fiftieth anniversary of Title IX will occur in 2022 and we will want to be well informed as we plan commemorative activities and work to advance the goal of gender equity in education.

We will follow with workshops on public policy skill development provided by Sandra Distelhort, our new AAUW-WA public policy director; successful membership strategies from Cathy Cavness and Kathy Halsan of the Lewis County branch and the AAUW-WA board; a discussion led by Karen Anderson focused on using branch histories and members' oral histories to build branch community; communication tools from Judy Peasley, communication director of AAUW-WA; social media tips from Katherine Cleland, a social media consultant, the newest member of the state communications team, and a member of the Seattle branch; and break-out sessions on a variety of topics to conclude the meeting.

More participants will mean higher quality discussions and better follow up after the meeting, so please plan to make time for this crucial event. We need your expertise and experience as we move forward in building our branches and AAUW-WA. Thank you for all you do to advance the wellbeing of girls and women in the state of Washington!

*Register Here for Stronger Together
Summer Leadership Meeting 2021*

If you are a member of Anacortes, Edmonds Sno-King, Gig Harbor, Issaquah, Lake Washington, Lewis County, Port Townsend, Puyallup, Seattle, Spokane, Stanwood, Camano, Tacoma, Vancouver, Walla Walla, Whatcom (Bellingham) or Whidbey Island branches, please [click here to register](#).

If you are a member of Cowlitz County, Colville, Dayton, Federal Way, Highline, Hudson's Bay, Kirkland-Redmond, Olympia, Palouse Garfield, Southeast King Co., Tri Cities, Twin Harbors, Washington Online, or Willa Pacific branches, please [click here to register](#).

If you are a State Board of Director, please [click here to register](#).

Public Policy

Sandra Ripley Distelhorst
Public Policy Director
AAUW-Washington
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I am looking forward to working with Branches and members as the new AAUW-WA Public Policy Director. Please feel free to email me or give me a call to talk about AAUW-WA Public Policy!

The big news this month is our Local Primary Elections on August 3rd. Ballots will be mailed out the week of July 16th. The Voter's Guide for each county is already online. <https://www.sos.wa.gov/elections/viewauditors.aspx>

This is an important primary. There are 320 local races, including 89 school district positions. **School board elections are especially critical** this year. The Kidsburgh website (<https://www.kidsburgh.org/6-reasons-school-board-elections-require-your-attention/>)

lists some good reasons why:

- **Schools are the foundation of government involvement.**
- **The quality of schools determines the quality of your neighborhood.**
- **How school boards react to emergencies — like the pandemic — is crucial.**
- **Your school board controls (a lot of) your tax dollars.**
- **It's up to you to evaluate school board candidates.**

Please see the Advocacy tab on the AAUW-WA website and look in the pull-down menu. At that site you will find a lot of information about the best ways to evaluate school board candidates.

The Leadership Conference on August 7th will have a Public Policy Session. We can talk more about candidate comparison, surveys, policy cafes, and other advocacy tools then. I hope you will join me at the Public Policy Session at the Leadership Conference.



Tech Trek: Getting Ready for Camp

Nancy Williams
AAUW Gig Harbor Branch

[Editor's Note: This year's Tech Trek is underway this week \(July 11 – 17\). This article describes the behind the scene effort to make the online camp succeed\).](#)

You hear that ducks who appear so serene gliding across a pond are paddling furiously under just the surface. It turns out that Tech Trek is exactly like that, as I found out on a recent summer morning in Gig Harbor.

The Gig Harbor Branch has been actively involved with Tech Trek since its inception. From the beginning, the concept resonated with our members, and the Branch has sponsored dozens of campers over the years.

Claudia Thompson is long-time chair of the Gig Harbor Tech Trek committee, Marlene Buffington has been a Dorm Monitor from the beginning (2013), Patricia Gwin has been a Dorm Monitor and has recruited and managed volunteers throughout the state for seven years, and Bobbie Busch has taught Robotics and was the Curriculum Coordinator in 2019 and is again this year. Many other branch members have participated in various ways, including organizing fundraising efforts, encouraging middle school administrators to recruit potential campers, and interviewing and mentoring the applicants. As former branch VP-Finance I was involved in tracking donations and paying bills, but until this June I hadn't participated personally in Tech Trek.

A few weeks ago, Patricia Gwin asked if I'd like to help put together the packets for the 2021 virtual Tech Trek. Not knowing what to expect, I was amazed when I arrived at the Community Room of the Gig Harbor YMCA on June 14. At 9 in the morning the bee hive was already in full operation. I asked Jan Gardner (Whidbey Island branch) what I could do to be helpful. She put me at the end of an assembly line putting together the basic bags of supplies for each camper.

After other busy bees inserted pens, pencils, calculators, etc., my job was to add a plastic ruler and a USB drive, then place the bags in boxes for use later.

I could see one group assembling boxes, another distributing materials for specific campers – name tags, special career choice envelopes, materials and information for selected classes, spiral notebooks, and a little candy for sustenance.

Most interesting were the specific class materials. I understand each teacher submitted a list of supplies they wanted each student to have available – everything from empty 2-liter bottles for the Growing Without Soils class, to vinegar for Chemistry is pHun and Understanding Climate Change, even a frog suitable for dissection.

Each camper chose one core class and three mini-labs to attend. Based on those choices, Karen Manelis, Washington State Tech Trek Program Director, selected a potential STEM career for them. Every box needed to be personalized based on those options. If Tech Trek were meeting on campus, the class materials would have been prepared by the individual teachers prior to the camp. But this year, the Tech Trek organizers had to figure out how to get all the necessary class supplies to each camper individually.

Bobbie Busch and Patricia Gwin spearheaded assembling the individual camper Toolkits on June 14, but Bobbie had already spent endless hours gathering all the necessary components and packaging them in individual packets for every core class and lab. The core class teachers provided Bobbie with a list of materials each camper would need to participate fully in their class. Many teachers even provided the links to where the materials could be purchased. As the number of campers in each class became available, Bobbie ordered all the materials for the classes. Bobbie says Amazon Prime trucks delivered almost daily for two months. Fred Meyer provided a very generous discount on 60 bottles of vinegar and 20 boxes of baking soda. Bobbie sorted all the materials into individual brown paper bags then labeled all the bags. That's how the busy bees knew what to put into each box.

Karen Manelis typed labels for each class and lab so the volunteers could put them on the packets, as well as Toolkit address labels and personalized programs for each camper. After lunch, the volunteers regrouped to carefully label every box with the name and sponsoring branch of each camper, organized the boxes by delivery route, and distributed the boxes to AAUW members to deliver to campers who lived near them.

When all of that was done, the effort was reorganized once again to put together similar boxes for 29 teaching assistants, eight teachers, and three additional workshop leaders. I skipped out mid-afternoon when it became clear what was needed was knowledgeable input not just the willing hands I could contribute.

The core group worked on until early evening. That's when Washington Tech Trek 2021 Camp Director, Kat Hughes (Issaquah Branch) and Karen Manelis organized all the boxes by delivery route. Boxes were distributed to AAUW branch members to deliver to campers who live near them. Chris Wick and the Puyallup branch workers took their Toolkits, Jan Gardner took the Whidbey boxes, and Leslie Roubal took the Pt. Townsend boxes. Bobbie offered to deliver the Gig Harbor and Olympia ones, because Kat didn't have room in her motorhome for those! Karen drove off with the Vancouver area boxes, while Kat and Cheryl Gmerck (Online branch) took all the rest. There was a total of 135 boxes.

Karen spent the next week calling other branches to organize drop offs, then drove all over greater Seattle, plus eastern and northern Washington delivering boxes. Patricia Gwin says Karen deserves monumental thanks for the last bit, because Patricia delivered only one Toolkit to nearby University Place.

Thanks to all the planning, organizing, and hard work by dedicated AAUW members and Tech Trek supporters, 88 Tech Trek campers will participate fully in Tech Trek 2021 – the virtual campus. When you hear that the virtual Tech Trek went off without a hitch later this month, you'll have a much greater appreciation of just how hard everyone involved was paddling just under the surface to make all it look so effortless.

I look forward to reading in next month's edition of Evergreen Leader all the highlights of Tech Trek 2021, the lessons learned, and the fun shared by the campers and volunteers who make this remarkable opportunity possible.



Calendar and Upcoming Events

AAUW-WA State Calendar

AUGUST		
7	AAUW-WA Summer Leadership Meeting	8:30 AM– 2:00 PM
SEPTEMBER		
14	AAUW-WA Women’s Health Webinar	Evening
OCTOBER		
12	AAUW-WA Women’s Health Webinar	Evening
NOVEMBER		
9	AAUW-WA Women’s Health Webinar	Evening
DECEMBER		
14	AAUW-WA Women’s Health Webinar	Evening

General Information

Publishing Schedule

The next issue will be published on Sunday, August 15, 2021. Articles submitted for publications are due by Sunday, August 8, 2021. Please send the articles to Mary Williams at president@aauw-wa.org, Judy Peasley at communications@aauw-wa.org, and/or Melinda Hearsey at evergreenleader@aauw-wa.org.

State Officers

The list of state officers can be found on the AAUW-WA website at:

<https://aauw-wa.aauw.net/about-aauw-wa/about-us/officers/>