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President’s Message



Mary Williams
rePresident

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Happy New Year! I know we’ve all said those words during the first days of each of the past several years, only to watch things go from bad to worse to even worse as the year progressed. We all are weary of this pandemic, of nothing but dissention and bad news, and the many moments of despair bordering on hopelessness. Between the lousy weather and the deaths of a number of our iconic entertainers, this year seems to be off to a particularly awful start. But maybe there’s hope.

We’re just a couple of weeks away from the Chinese New Year. February 1st will bring us the Year of the Tiger. Tigers are strong and ferocious, like the women who make up AAUW. I’m hoping that our strength and perseverance will allow us to face the challenges that are before us and get us

through to the other side. It's hard to be optimistic, but I think we need to work at staying that way. I'd like to think that at the very least we are in the eye of the tiger – the eye of the storm – and things can only improve from here on out.

2021 wasn't all bad. We inaugurated our very first statewide virtual webinar series. From the kickoff in June to the last of our four fall webinars, they were informative and well received. We learned about several issues that impact women's healthcare access. This information established a great foundation for a discussion about what is one of our legislative priorities in 2022. Later in this newsletter you will learn more about KOCA – the Keep Our Care Act—which addresses hospital/health care system mergers. Leah Rutman will speak to us at Lobby Day on January 24th about why this legislation is so important. Toward the end of 2021, AAUW-WA joined the KOCA coalition and supporting this legislation is an important outcome of its work.

My goals for 2022 are to resolve some of the thornier issues that cropped up in 2021. Judy Peasley (thanks, Judy) is chairing a committee that is working to make recommendations to the board so that we can finalize and memorialize the relationship between AAUW-WA, our Tech Trek program, and the Special Project Funds. A board committee has been established to investigate land use acknowledgments and make policy recommendations to the board and branches. AAUW-WA past president Barbara Sando and Finance Officer Kyle McEligot are working to figure out what we have to do to once and for all resolve our IRS issues and move forward (thanks, Barbara and Kyle). Wouldn't it be nice (more like a miracle!) if 2022 brought resolution to all these issues as well as the end of the pandemic!

We have some exciting times coming. As I mentioned, Lobby Day is in just a couple of weeks. Program Chair Karen Anderson is working on what we believe will be an informative Annual Meeting on April 9th. Look for more information about the AM in next month's EL. And, this month, the board will be discussing a proposal to move forward with another June kickoff that would lead into a fall 2022 webinar series. By definition, a webinar series is virtual, but we still haven't completely given up hope that our Summer Leadership Meeting will be at least hybrid if not totally in person. However, we present it, I'm confident that the state team will put together an informative and inspirational morning.

I have high hopes for 2022. It's going to be a better year – no, a great year! If nothing else, we can all be grateful for every day of it, for the friends and family we share it with, and the challenges it brings us. I know we'll approach it with all the splendor that the streak of tigers we are (if you don't believe me, look it up) can muster.

State News

Public Policy

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AAUW-WA is a nonpartisan organization. AAUW-WA supports bills sponsored by Democrats and Republicans that fit within our [Public Policy Priorities](#). Each year, AAUW-WA hosts Lobby Day, which is a workshop at which the AAUW-WA Public Policy team explains these priorities, hosts several speakers, and explains how our lobbying efforts work.

The Public Policy team is doing something different this year! For 2022 we will have a Short List of Bills to spotlight on Lobby Day and a Long List of Bills that branches and members can review and consider for individual support during the session.

A big THANKS to Kate Nielsen, Public Policy Director at AAUW national for vetting 25 Washington state bills for our long list before she started her parental leave January 1st!

A message from Kate: "I am fortunate to have access to this critical benefit. Please urge your elected officials to provide comprehensive, paid leave to all."

The LOBBY DAY List and talking points will be posted on the website and sent to Lobby Day registrants with the registration reminder. The Long List of Bills will be posted on our website. We are still reviewing bills and vetting bills with national, so the final list is still to come.

Preview of two of the bills featured on Lobby Day

Keep our Care Act [SB5688](#), sponsored by Senators Randall-D and Rolfes-D. The companion bill [HB1809](#) is sponsored by Representatives Simmons-D and Berry-D. This bill address hospital and other health system entities mergers and the impact on access to care, increased community costs and decreased quality of care. See the [Keep Our Care Act coalition one-pager](#).

Be sure to thank your legislator if they are a sponsor or co-sponsor. You can call, email, or use the online [Comment on this bill button](#) once you are on a bill webpage. Just follow the prompts. You can see our **2021 AAUW-WA Legislator Scorecard** on our web site at <https://aauw-wa.aauw.net/2022/01/12/legislators-scorecard/>

MMIW/P [HB1571](#) Concerning protections and services for indigenous persons who are missing, murdered, or survivors of human trafficking. Sponsored by Representatives Mosbrucker-R, Dye-R, and 21 other legislators. This is a strong bipartisan bill introduced at the end of the 2021

session. Links to more information, including recent reports from the United Indian Health Institute, can be found at on our Lobby Day page at <https://aauw-wa.aauw.net/2022/01/06/lobby-day-2022/>.

New Pathways in Education

I am super excited to hear Alissa Muller, the Director of Mastery-based Learning, Washington State Board of Education (SBE), talk about *New Pathways in Education* on Lobby Day. See the SBE website for background information on Mastery-based Learning. https://www.sbe.wa.gov/faqs/mastery_based_learning

The AAUW-WA Panel will spotlight the other Lobby Day bills.

This year we will pilot test a **BillTrack50 widget** on our public policy webpage to track the long list of bills. It is a work in progress, so expect a few glitches and changes during the session as we try it out. Nancy Sapiro, our Lobbyist, will continue to provide a weekly **Legislative Update** for the Lobby Day bills. Her updates will be posted on our website (thanks Leslie) and sent to the Legislative Update email list (thanks Judy). Check our website for more information.

We are super lucky to have Nancy Sapiro guiding us from the “ground” in (virtual) Olympia. I asked Nancy how we could describe her role to branch members:

“I lobby/provide advice to AAUW-WA and I am a presence “on the ground” for any questions or concerns legislators may have.”

Hope to see you all on January 24th. To register for Lobby Day, use the link on the Lobby Day page at <https://aauw-wa.aauw.net/2022/01/06/lobby-day-2022/>. As always, let me know if you have any questions or ideas about public policy!

Annual Meeting

Karen Anderson
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AAUW-WA’s annual conference is on Saturday, April 9, 2022! Our topical focus will be the state of education in the nation and in the state of Washington. The keynote speaker will be Jennifer Berkshire, co-author with Jack Schneider, of *A Wolf at the Schoolhouse Door: The Dismantling of Public Education*, a very important book on current school politics. She will be joined by speakers with expertise on Washington’s schools.

Many of us remember when one of the primary missions of AAUW was to fight the proliferation of charter schools and fight vouchers that would take money away from public education. But there are many of us who have forgotten why these initiatives were so important then, and are still very important now. We thought it was time for a refresher, and who better to provide it than Jennifer Berkshire, one of the authors of this national recognized book.

We will also hold our annual business meeting, which will include the election of directors and officers for the AAUW-WA board. We will also conduct any of the other business that can only be done at the annual meeting.

To help prepare us for the meeting, we are coordinating a statewide book group meeting on March 30 at 10:30 a.m. and again at 7:00 p.m. We will discuss *A Wolf at the Schoolhouse Door: The Dismantling of Public Education*. This is not meant to interfere with any branch book groups. You can get the book at the King County library, which has three copies, as an e-book; Pierce County Library, which has two copies; and at other libraries in the state. It is available on Amazon as a hardback, an audible book, or on Kindle. The hardback is also available at Powell's books online or through Audiobooks.

We are also asking branches to identify and sponsor educators and education advocates, preferably non-members, and invite them to attend the April meeting with the branch assuming registration costs. They may also attend the book group if they choose to do so. More information about registration for both the book groups and annual meeting will be in the February EL.

Thank you for your active participation in our program events and your continued support for a strong system of free public schools.

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion:

Indigenous Land Acknowledgements

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Our AAUW-WA state president, Mary Williams has set up an Ad Hoc Committee on the subject of indigenous land acknowledgements. Our committee of five is currently doing research and studying different views and perspectives on the issues surrounding this subject. We are also looking at land acknowledgments from a couple of universities in Washington and Arizona and consulting indigenous tribes and some individual tribal members as an opportunity to build relationships with local tribes. We hope to educate ourselves and gain enough knowledge in order to make recommendations to the branches.

Land acknowledgments are statements being spoken at the beginning of meetings and events, both online and in person. They are verbal tributes to the indigenous people who lived in the land where the meeting is held, prior to contact with Europeans. However, the issue is much more complicated than a single statement. Currently, actions range from a sentence or two mentioning the tribe’s name, to invitations to indigenous speakers to speak about the issues surrounding land acknowledgments. We are studying opinions that perceive these statements as performative and others that see them as the first step to creating awareness of what can be changed.

The committee will review literature regarding the pros and cons of using land acknowledgements. If the results of our studies support the value of doing land acknowledgments, we would develop a web page that explains why and how we could use land acknowledgements and when it is appropriate to use one that is local versus regional. We are also seeking to determine which branches already have developed a land acknowledgement, so your branch leadership will receive a call from a committee member to survey your opinions. You may also let us know what you think at diversity@aauw-wa.org. Our next meeting is January 21, 2022. The committee would then develop proposed policies and procedures regarding land use acknowledgements for consideration and possible adoption by the full board.

AAUW Legacy Circle



Mary Alice Peterson
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The beginning of each year brings resolutions of what you might have thought about during the previous year. 2021 was such a year that most would like to forget but stop a moment and think what was a thought that you might have had regarding how can I make the lives of women and girls better long after the COVID pandemic is over.

Over fifty Washington AAUW members and “friends” have already joined the AAUW Legacy Circle. What they all have in common is their special commitment to AAUW through the Legacy Circle. The Legacy Circle is an esteemed group of visionary supporters who are advancing AAUW’s mission long into the future through planned giving.

When you decide to leave a planned gift to AAUW National in your will, trust or estate, you too can join the AAUW Legacy Circle. Planned gifts such as bequests, beneficiary designations or other deferred gifts are a wonderful way to support AAUW at no cost to you during your lifetime. Some of you may have already made provisions for AAUW, if this is the case, please let us know so that you can be honored with a special Legacy Circle pin.

Please think of starting the new year by affirming your commitment to women and girls by joining the Legacy Circle. Make this a resolution that is as easy as filling out a form. Please visit the [AAUW Planned Giving](#) website to [enroll](#), or contact [Heather Miller](#), Director, Major & Planned Giving, at 202.785.7766, or contact me with any questions you might have.

Tech Trek News

Karen Manelis
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Welcome to the newest member of the Tech Trek WA administrative team! Rachel Karlsen, a Tech Trek core teacher since 2013, has taken on the task of Curriculum Coordinator for the program. Rachel is a math/science teacher in the Battle Ground Public Schools in SW Washington. She became a National Board Certified Teacher in 2015 and has taught engineering, computer programming (App Inventor) and cybersecurity core classes for Tech Trek annually since 2013. She served as Assistant Director for Tech Trek WA in 2014-15 and helped get the camp at EWU started in 2015. Welcome Rachel!

Since Omicron is still raising its ugly head, Tech Trek WA in person camps are still not a sure deal. The good news is that both PLU and EWU have very low infection rates and, since their student bodies are smaller than other campuses, they continue to hold in-person instruction for the coming term. We will have a vaccination requirement as well as a negative Covid test within 48 hrs. of arriving at camp.

With the experience of the 2021 virtual camp, we feel that we can quickly pivot to the virtual platform as late as April so no decision will be made until then.

As always, the need for on-campus (or virtual) volunteers is real. Please check out the revamped Tech Trek WA website (techtrek-wa.aauw.net) and read the job descriptions under the Volunteer tab and volunteer!

Branch Events

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion in the Court Systems



Geri Carlson
Co-Vice President of Programs
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AAUW Issaquah February Branch meeting
Saturday, February 12th, 10:00 am
On Zoom

Please join us on Saturday, February 12th as King County Superior Court Judge, Jason Poydras, gives a status on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion in the court systems. Judge Poydras started his judicial career as a hearing examiner for the Washington State Department of Licensing. He then moved to the Washington State Office of Administrative Hearings, where he served as a Senior Administrative Law Judge. In May 2017, he was appointed to the King County District Court, then elected to a 4-year term. In May, 2020, he was selected as the South Division Presiding Judge. He was appointed by Governor Inslee to his current position as a King County Superior Court judge in July 2021.

In addition to his JD from Seattle University, Judge Poydras is a graduate of the Washington Leadership Institute Fellowship, the Judicial Institute Fellowship and the Washington State Judicial College. A long-term community mentor, Judge Poydras currently serves on the Judicial Institute Advisory Board and the Judicial Assistance Service Program.

There will be a branch business meeting after the presentation.

If you wish to join us, please contact the branch at programs@aauw-issaquah.org to receive the Zoom meeting information.

General Information

Publishing Schedule

The next issue will be published on Tuesday, February 15, 2022. Articles submitted for publications are due by Tuesday, February 8, 2022. 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.