

## Upcoming AAUW Events

### Book Club

Monday, February 3; 1 pm  
*James*; Percival Everett

Pat Markowski;

88 Presidents Drive; Mechanicsburg

RSVP to Wendy Armour Dickinson [here](#)

Preview remaining Book Selections on page 4

### Topic Talk: Revive, Regroup, Refresh

Thursday, February 6; 7-8:30 pm

Dickinson HUB Side Rooms 204&205

More information on page 3

### Breakfast Club

Saturday, February 8; 9 am

Cracked Pot (36 N. Hanover St., Carlisle)

RSVP to Wendy Armour Dickinson [here](#)

### Submit to the March Branching Out Before

Thursday, February 20

Submit to Peggy Jennings [here](#)

### Coldest Night of the Year Community Walk

Saturday, February 22

Join the Carlisle AAUW team!

More information on Page 3

### February Membership Meeting

*Life & Redemption*

Lisa Kessler-Peters

Tuesday, February 25; 7 pm

HUB Side Rooms 204 & 205

More Information HERE

Preview future Membership Meetings on page 6

### Deadline for Sending Contributions to the Scholarship Fund

Tuesday, February 25

See page 2 for more information and look for the Scholarship Appeal letter coming to your home mailbox!

## Life and Redemption after Experience in the Justice System

Lisa Kessler-Peters

Tuesday, February 25; 7:00 pm

Dickinson College HUB; Side Rooms 204&205

**Please note that the time (7:00 pm) is different from what was published in the Yearbook!**



Lisa Kessler-Peters, is a beacon of hope and a source of inspiration for women everywhere. She will courageously share her personal journey of trauma in a way that is sure to uplift and inspire you.

Lisa's mission is to empower others to realize that they, too, can experience the freedom she has found. With boldness and courage, she remains deeply grounded in her journey, never losing sight of where she came from or the challenges she has faced. She firmly believes that nothing is without purpose and that every experience can contribute to our growth and benefit others.

We are incredibly fortunate to have such a dynamic speaker joining us. It's a meeting you won't want to miss!

You'll find more about Lisa on her website:

<https://lisaredeemed.com/>

### March Event

#### Trailblazer Girls' Recognition Event

Wednesday, March 12; 1:00 pm

Carlisle High School Fowler Building

RSVP by March 7 to [Gail D'Urso](#).

More information on Page 3

## ***Letter from the President***

As I sit here watching the snow gently fall and brace myself for the bitter cold coming the next few days, I am warmed by the generosity and dedication of our AAUW Carlisle Board members who give so much of their time and energy to ensure that our branch is the success that it is. Every board member plays an essential role in our programs, advocacy, and support for women and girls.

This month, for example, the Scholarship appeal letters have gone out and the committee is reviewing applications. The Trailblazer Committee is busy planning our awards ceremony in March. Both of these exemplify our mission to support young women pursuing higher education **and** alternate careers.

Our Public Policy Committee has planned an insightful Topic Talk, **Revive, Regroup, Refresh**, in light of the changing — and challenging — landscape we now face. (see PPC article)

Our website is getting some much-needed updates in order to provide clear and consistent messaging. Thank you, Sharon Heller!

And SO much more is happening thanks to this amazing, brilliant, and collaborative group of women who serve on our board. Thank them when you see them. I know I am immensely grateful to serve with them!

If you are interested in joining this outstanding Board, please reach out to Nancy Sigrist or to me. Both elected and appointed positions are available.

P.S. We're also a lot of fun to hang out with. 😊

Kate Elkins



## ***AAUW Carlisle Branch Higher Education Scholarship***

This is the exciting part of the year where the Branch has the opportunity to enhance the educational endeavors of women and girls. Thanks to membership participation at the Holiday Brunch, the Scholarship Fund received a boost toward our financial goals. As of the deadline, over 20 applications were received! The committee has work to do as we approach our interview date. Each student is qualified and worthy of financial assistance.

Soon, there will be a letter in the mail describing last year's recipients as they are moving forward in their educational journey. It will make you proud!

Please answer the appeal with a thoughtful and generous donation as we continue the mission of our Branch.

Lillian Wong and Gail D'Urso  
Co-chairs of Scholarship



## ***AAUW Funds Update***

### ***Holiday Brunch Fund Opportunities began the 2025 Scholarship Appeal***

Our branch continues to support our fundraisers!! When the tally was added up, the scholarship opportunities totaled \$680, just \$93 shy of last year's record of \$773. Thanks to everyone who supported our first fundraiser for the AAUW Carlisle Branch Scholarship Fund for 2025.

### ***2025 Scholarship Appeal Letter***

This is a great beginning for this year's scholarship fund. Our Scholarship appeal letter went out on January 25, so please look for your letter and give the scholarship fund what you can afford for 2025. Please make your payments through PayPal as noted in the letter or send in your check by February 25.

Becky Morgenthal, AAUW Funds Chair

## Public Policy



The Public Policy Committee is excited to invite you to our inaugural **Topic Talk of 2025**, taking place on Thursday, February 6, from 7-8:30 pm at the Dickinson College HUB- side rooms 204-205.

Our theme, "**Revive, Regroup, Refresh**," will focus on fostering resilience and well-being as we navigate the challenges and opportunities of the upcoming political climate.

We are delighted to be joined by our guest speakers Patrick Hughes, LPC and Linda Chalk, PhD.

Together, we'll explore strategies for **self-care** to enhance physical and mental health; **working productively** with others in a supportive community, and **processing our feelings** to move forward with clarity and confidence.

We look forward to an engaging discussion on these timely and meaningful issues. Join us as we share ideas and chart a course for the future.

If you haven't registered yet, please consider signing up for the Two-Minute Activist through AAUW <https://www.aauw.org/act/two-minute-activ>

It is easy to receive regular alerts about when and how to engage, including sending letters to legislators, writing letters to the editor, and making other timely calls to action.

Kelly Spasic and Theresa Rice  
Public Policy Co-Chairs



## Coldest Night of the Year Walk

Pull on your boots and don your earmuffs, and join our AAUW Carlisle team for the 2025 Coldest Night of the Year Walk on February 22, benefitting our partner, Community Cares! Whether you walk with us, or donate from the warmth of your fireside, please help us meet our goal of \$400! Click the link to join the walk and donate!

[JOIN OR DONATE HERE](#)

## You're Invited: National AAUW Member Gathering via Zoom

Wednesday, February 5, 4 pm

At this special event, we will:

- Recognize outstanding supporters and branches
- Share updates on our work in Policy, Fellowships & Grants, and Membership
- Connect with fellow AAUW members

Don't miss this opportunity to celebrate our achievements and learn about our latest initiatives. Register [here](#):

## Trailblazer Girls' Recognition Event



Catherine Myers

Join us on Wednesday, March 12 at 1:00 for our seventh annual Trailblazer Girls' Recognition Event. Plan to arrive a little early to allow time to park and to get to the Large Group Instruction room in the Fowler Building at Carlisle High School. RSVP to [Gail D'Urso](#) by March 7 to be sure your badge will be waiting for you at the security desk.

Our panel for the event will include: **Amber Clark**, Catering Manager at

Dickinson College Dining Services. Amber plans and organizes all of our meal meetings at the HUB.

**Brittany Kennedy**, a Carlisle High School CTE student, 2012 graduate, and current Specialty Beauty Advisor for Ulta Beauty Hanover.

**Catherine Myers**, 2021 Trailblazer honoree and current Assistant Service Manager at Fred Beans Auto Group.

Chef Ehly, Chef Seras, and the Culinary students will be providing light refreshments in the Courtyard Café following the event. We hope you can attend this joyful celebration!

The Trailblazer Committee

**Book Group**



Date	Time	Hostess	Book
Monday, Mar 3	1:00 pm	Panera	<i>Dinners with Ruth</i> ; Nina Totenberg
Monday, Apr 7	7:00 pm	Janet	<i>Lives of Girls and Women</i> ; Alice Munro
Monday, May 5	7:00 pm	Darlis	<i>Within Arm's Reach</i> ; Ann Napolitano
Monday, June 9	6:00 pm	DINNER	1794 Whiskey Rebellion

**What's Up in Pennsylvania?  
News from AAUW Pennsylvania**

The 2024-2025 AAUW Pennsylvania Student Impact Mini-Grants application process launched in October. This is one of the most rewarding state programs, and I am thrilled to manage it this year. Go [here](#) for all the information you need to share with a student organization on a Pennsylvania college or university campus.

Don't miss the January 2025 AAUW Pennsylvania *Keystoner*. Go here to [read](#).

I know you would like to plan and mark your calendar--the **AAUW Pennsylvania 2025 Summer Retreat on June 27-28, 2025, in the State College area**. You don't want to inadvertently schedule a vacation and have to miss this event! 😊 Details will be shared as they are finalized.

If you missed the AAUW Pennsylvania 2024 Virtual Events—which means you missed Kate Elkins presenting on September 17—go [here](#) to catch up.

Ann Pehle  
AAUW Pennsylvania College/University Liaison

**News from National AAUW**

November 2024, AAUW celebrated its 143rd anniversary. We wouldn't be able to stay in the fight for women and girls without you, so please accept Gloria Blackwell's deepest gratitude for your support.

2025 starts with hope and renewed passion for the challenges that may lie ahead. AAUW is prepared to fight and start the year strong with an agenda presented to the 119th Congress based on AAUW's values.

Our strength comes from our collective voice, and together we will continue the work to support women's education and economic empowerment. Let's keep fighting for women's and girls' equity in 2025 — together.

Ann Pehle  
AAUW Pennsylvania College/University Liaison  
AAUW Pennsylvania Nomination & Elections Co-Chair

**AAUW Economic Empowerment Initiative**

These webinars are designed to provide you with the tools and knowledge needed to negotiate better salaries, enhance your career, and achieve financial independence. Whether you're a student stepping into the professional world or a seasoned professional aiming to advance, these webinars offer valuable insights for every stage of your career. **Check out this schedule and secure your spot** to start transforming your future today.

<https://www.aauw.org/resources/programs/womens-economic-empowerment-initiative/>



## Scenes from the Annual Holiday Brunch!



A Mountain of TP for Community Cares!



Lillian Wong and Molly Shane



Cantate Carlisle members Sarah Billman, Alyanna Montgomery and Artistic Director Michelle D. Trefren who shared some Holiday cheer!



Maria Bartoli, Nila Grove, and Norma Grider

### **MEMBERSHIP MATTERS**

AAUW Carlisle Branch is pleased to welcome two new members: Jami Mirandou and Beth Miller. Jami joined with encouragement from Kate Elkins, and Beth joined after accompanying Mary Berwick to the December brunch. We look forward to getting to know these women and hope they will become active members of the branch.

As a reminder to those whose membership is due to renew, please do so when you receive a notice from AAUW national. Memberships may be renewed online or by sending a check to the branch's post office box: PO Box 815, Carlisle, PA 17015.

If you are unsure about your renewal date, please contact Cindy Sutton or Janet Kacsur, Membership Co-Vice Presidents.

## **2025-2026 Nomination Committee Convenes**

Looking to become more involved in the coming year? Have you thought about stepping up for a Board position? It's a great way to get to know more AAUW members and to gain a deeper understanding of what we do. And even better, you will be in a position to really make a difference for our branch and our mission!

The following Executive Board positions have terms that expire at the end of this fiscal year:

1. President, currently held by Kate Elkins
2. Co-Finance Officer, currently held by Cherry France
3. Co-Membership Vice President, currently held by Cindy Sutton
4. Co-Program Vice President, currently held by Deb Sweaney
5. Secretary, currently held by Marina Young

I would like to thank members Cherry France, Pat Markowski and Cindy Sutton for volunteering to work with me on the Nomination Committee this year. Our work is kicking off now and we plan to have our slate of recommended nominees ready for the March Board Meeting.

So, if you have an interest in, or know someone you think would be a great choice for any of these positions, please contact me or any of the committee members as soon as possible.



Nancy Sigrist  
Vice President and  
Nomination Committee Chair

## **AAUW Carlisle 2024-2025 Board Members**

### **Elected Officers**

**President: Kate Elkins**

**Vice President: Nancy Sigrist**

**Membership VPs: Cindy Sutton, Janet Kacsur**

**Program VPs: Deborah Sweaney, Jeanna Som**

**Finance Officers: Cherry France, Molly Shane**

**Secretary: Marina Young**

### **Appointed Committee Chairs**

**AAUW Funds: Becky Morgenthal**

**Communications: Pat Markowski**

**Community Activities:**

**Interest Groups: Wendy Armour Dickinson**

**Public Policy: Theresa Rice, Kathy Spasic**

**Scholarship: Lillian Wong, Gail D’Urso**

**STEM: Barb Attivo, Lilian Wong**

### **Appointed Off Board Committee Chairs**

**College Liaison: Katie Schweighofer**

**Historian: Mary Bloser Berwick**

### **Appointed Coordinators**

**Newsletter Editor: Peggy Jennings**

**Social Media: Kate Elkins**

**Trailblazers: Gail D’Urso, Barb Attivo**

**Webpages: Sharon Heller**

**Yearbook: Virginia Mauk**

**Branching Out is published August to June by  
the AAUW Carlisle (PA) Branch**

**Branch website is:**

**<http://carlisle-pa.aauw.net/>**

**Like us on Facebook: @AAUWCarlisle**

**The Board welcomes questions:**

**[aauwcarlisleinfo@gmail.com](mailto:aauwcarlisleinfo@gmail.com)**

### **Not receiving branch information?**

Make sure emails from  
[aauwcarlisleinfo@gmail.com](mailto:aauwcarlisleinfo@gmail.com)  
aren’t going into your junk or spam folder.

## ***Preview this year’s Membership Meetings!***

Tuesday, March 25, 7 pm, HUB Side Rooms  
Marcia Drozdowski, CEO of Carlisle YMCA  
*Trailblazing the World of Female Executive Leadership*

Tuesday, April 29, 6 pm HUB Social Hall  
*Scholarship Banquet*

Tuesday, May 27, 7 pm, HUB Side Rooms  
Emily Schmidt  
*Cracked Pot—Aging Out of the Foster Care System*

### ***A Note About Member Contact Information***

Because our newsletter is posted to our public website, for privacy reasons, we will no longer include personal email addresses or phone numbers as text in the newsletter. We will include only a “clickable” link with the embedded email address. If that function doesn’t work on your computer, please consult the branch Yearbook for member emails and phone numbers.



**Like us @AAUWCarlisle**

**Like us @AAUW Pennsylvania**