

Looking Ahead to March:

Commission on the Status of Women: March 6-17
International Women’s Day: March 8

Diane Jablonski



The 67th session of the Commission on the Status of Women will take place from March 6 to 17, 2023 at the UN and nearby venues. This will be the first in person meeting since Covid.

Also of interest is International Women’s Day on March 8. The IWD 2023 theme is “**DigitALL: Innovation and technology for gender equality,**” highlighting the need for inclusive and transformative technology and digital education.



The United Nations Observance of IWD recognizes and celebrates the women and girls who are championing the advancement of transformative technology and digital education. IWD 2023

will explore the impact of the digital gender gap on widening economic and social inequalities. The event will also spotlight the importance of protecting the rights of women and girls in digital spaces and addressing online and information and communications technology (ICT)-facilitated gender-based violence.

This theme closely aligns with the priority theme for CSW-67: “**Innovation and technological change, and education in the digital age for achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls.**” That’s quite a mouthful but the focus on innovation and technology is critical.

I will provide updates as more information is available on CSW NGO sessions in New York and as we explore partnerships with UN-USA.

Photo: UN Trust Fund/Phil

Join us on Zoom for this informative program

**Policy Decisions in our Public Schools:
The Role of the Modern School Board**



February 9, 2023

7:00 PM via ZOOM

Registration required; use this link: <https://bit.ly/3wgHOTj>

We will hear from a distinguished panel of educators and school board members both about their roles and responsibilities and how the current climate of polarization has or has not impacted their important work. Recent controversies have threatened to disrupt the course of education - preschool through graduation - by politicizing school board policies and practices with efforts to impose radical ideologies on teachers, administrators, and health care providers.

At this critical moment it's vital that communities come to understand the role of school board trustees and engage in the process of electing Boards of Education committed to ensuring all students receive a fair and full public education and are prepared for post-secondary success.

See page 5 for more about our panel.



Peggy Kelland
President of the DC School Boards Association



Kelly Lappan, Executive Director
Dutchess County School Boards Association



Jason Bing Schetelick
District Superintendent,
Dutchess County BOCES



Gully Stanford
Dutchess BOCES Trustee

FEBRUARY CALENDAR

Online Calendar: <https://poughkeepsie-ny.aauw.net>

Calendar listing: Philippa Goodman,
communications.aauw.poughkeepsie@gmail.com

To contact interest groups: interest.aauw.poughkeepsie@gmail.com

- 1 **Pins & Needles: 2:00 pm**
Upcycled beverage can earrings
Host: Pat Luczai
Coordinators: Pat Luczai and Mary Ann Williams
- 2 **Board Meeting: 7 pm on Zoom**
- 6 **Word Games: 1:30 pm**
Coordinator: Sharon Fleury
- 7 **World Travelers: 7:00 pm - 9 pm**
Presentation on Patagonia by Kathy Martin
There will be a live presentation with the location to be announced. It will also run simultaneously on Zoom.
Coordinator: Bonnie Auchincloss
- 8 **Gourmet: Out & About: 6:00 pm**
Mill House Brewing Co., Mill Street, Poughkeepsie
Coordinator: Jo Anne Abraskin
- 9 **Canasta: 1-4 pm**
Coordinator: Barbara Cohen
- 9 **Monthly Program: 7:00 on Zoom, see page 1**
- 11 **Days for Girls Poughkeepsie NY Team**
Work session: 1:30-4:30 pm
Zion Church Parish Hall, 12 Satterlee Place, Wappingers Falls, NY 12590
Coordinators: Judy Longacre and Sabashnee Govender
- 13 **All those books...: 2:30 pm**
A Prayer for Owen Meany, by John Irvin
Host/Presenter: Sally Taylor
Coordinator: Carol Loizides
- 14 **Reely Together: 2:00 pm on Zoom**
Discussion of streamed films
Film selection: *The Automat*
Coordinator: Jackie Vierno
- 15 **Bridge I: 1:00 - 4:00 pm**
Coordinator: Susan Fink
- 16 **Aventures en Soleil: details TBD**
Cooking class
Host: Linda Lurie.
Coordinator: Terry Jackrel
- 17 **Poetry & Play Readings: 1:30 pm**
Theme TBD
Coordinator: Maria DeWald
- 20 **Manderley Literary Society: 7:00 pm**
Book and reviewer to be decided
Coordinator: Shelly Friedman
- 21 **Cuisine: details TBD**
Coordinators: Jo Anne Abraskin and Blanche Bergman
- 22 **Mah Jongg: Noon - 4:00 pm**
Lunch from 12-1. Play from 1 to 3:30/4:00 pm
TGI Fridays Restaurant in the Poughkeepsie Plaza
Contact: Blanche Bergman
- 23 **Bridge II: 12:00-4:00 pm**
Red Lobster, Route 9, Poughkeepsie
Coordinator: Sandy Goldberg

- 24 **Art on the Go: Details TBD**
Coordinator: Mary Coiteux
- 28 **Contemporary Literature: 7:30 pm on Zoom**
The Personal Librarian, by Victoria Christopher Murray
Coordinators: Ann Wade and Linda Freisitzer

Trekkers TBD

Coordinator: Tori Smith



Poughkeepsie Branch Officers 2021-2022

President	Celia Serotsky
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Membership Co-VPs	Mary Scalise-Annis Bonnie Auchincloss
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President: president.aauw.poughkeepsie@gmail.com

Board members: board.aauw.poughkeepsie@gmail.com

Association: www.aauw.org NY State: www.aauw-nys.org

Poughkeepsie Branch: <https://poughkeepsie-ny.aauw.net>

MISSION: To advance gender equity for women and girls through research, education, and advocacy.

VISION: Equity for all.

VALUES: Nonpartisan. Fact-based. Integrity. Inclusion and Intersectionality.

AAUW Poughkeepsie values and seeks an inclusive membership, workforce, leadership team, and board of directors. There shall be no barriers to full participation in this organization on the basis of age, disability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, geographical location, national origin, race, religious beliefs, sexual orientation, and socioeconomic status.

THE **BRANCH** is published ten times a year, September through June, by the Poughkeepsie Branch of the AAUW, Inc. Submit articles to Cyd Averill, editor.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Celia Serotsky president.aauw.poughkeepsie@gmail.com

In Governor Kathy Hochul's State of the State address, the Governor set an ambitious agenda, but most importantly, many of her proposals support women and girls and our mission statement: **To advance gender equity for women and girls through research, education, and advocacy.**

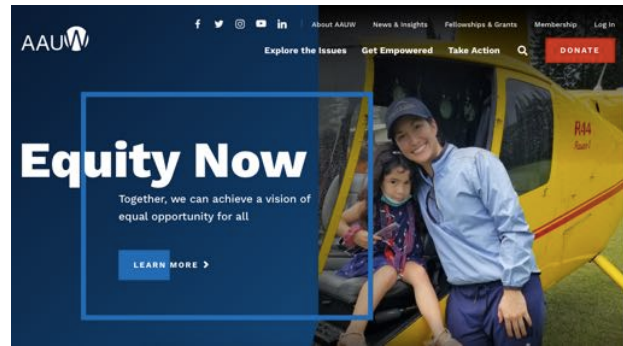
In her address, the Governor proposed:

- **To raise the minimum wage to inflation rate:** The workforce of minimum wage workers consists predominantly of women. During inflationary times, a woman who earns minimum wage would see her salary increase to meet the rate of inflation. The Governor added that guardrails would be put in place to make the increases predictable for employers.
- **To increase affordable housing in the state:** This is critical to women who are the sole wage earners in their families. Safe, affordable housing is a human right and the Governor proposed opening up areas of the state where affordable housing is not available, but should be.
- **To support childcare and childcare providers:** Women working outside the home need access to affordable, good quality childcare. This means childcare providers are respected by receiving a salary and benefits commensurate with the important job they do. Governor Hochul mentioned that she put her own career on hold because she could not find or afford childcare for her children. The long-term effect of a woman making this choice means reduced earnings and retirement income. Many women will gladly make this choice, but when it is not a choice, then women deserve to have places where they can send their children and know they are safe.
- **To support reproductive health justice for all women:** New York State has already been on the national forefront of supporting reproductive justice for all women and will continue to do so. Women have the right to make decisions about their reproductive health without outside interference.
- **To enact gun safety measures for the protection of everyone, especially our children:** We have some of the most sensible gun safety measures already in place, but this is an issue that constantly needs to be monitored and addressed.
- **To increase funding for mental health programs and support:** This is an issue that has increasingly impacted our youth since the pandemic hit in 2020. Our young people deserve to have support systems in place that allow them to seek help when needed.

I have mentioned only those proposals that relate to our mission statement. We will closely watch as the year progresses, listen to the debates over these proposals, and note which ones are enacted. Our Public Policy Chair, Pat DeLeo, will also keep us informed, so be sure to read her monthly column.

MEMBERSHIP COUNTS

Mary Scalise-Annis and Bonnie Auchincloss:
membership.aauw.poughkeepsie@gmail.com



Here's hoping for a wonderful 2023 for all of our members! Let's take a moment to visit the National AAUW website: <https://www.aauw.org> to see all the great work that is being done on behalf of women, such as Education and Economic Equity, and many other important issues! Let's lift our voices to be heard!

Membership directories have been mailed. Please check to be sure your information is accurate and let us know if there are any changes during the year.

Please **welcome** our newest members

Mary Therese Yamamoto and Laura Chasin.

Keep an eye out for new members and make them feel part of our vibrant Poughkeepsie Branch!

FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS:

Carol Barmann, Diane Closs,
Linda Eagleton, Claudette
Hennessy, Susan Holland, Muriel
Horowitz, Janet Houston, Ruth
Kava, Kathleen Kurosman, Sandy
Lash, Leslie Leventhal, Linda
Lurie, Linnea Masson, Marta
Newkirk, Eileen Nye, Gail
Sisti, Sharon Wiener.



In Sympathy

We offer our sincere sympathy to Poughkeepsie branch members:

Sherre Wesley, on the death of her husband, Leonard Davis, Jr., on December 17, 2022 Link to obituary:
<https://www.poughkeepsiejournal.com/obituaries/pjo073391>

Ruth Sheets on the death of her husband, Mike, on Jan 8, 2023. Link to obituary:
<https://www.poughkeepsiejournal.com/obituaries/pjo073707>
(Contact branch secretary Beth DeFiglio for Ruth's new address)

PUBLIC POLICY

Patricia DeLeo
board.aauw.poughkeepsie@gmail.com

“Mom, Are You Busy? I Need You To Cover.”

There are women who often find themselves in childcare dilemmas. The phone rings. “Mom, can you take the baby two or three days a week to help me lower my childcare expenses?” “Will you go pick up your granddaughter at school because the nurse called and she doesn’t feel well?” “Can you meet the bus after school today?” “Will you come put the kids on the bus tomorrow?” “Your grandson needs a ride to karate and I’m busy at work, can you cover?” “The kids have off this off week. Can I drop them off or will you come over?” “Will you go to the championship game today, I can’t.”

What do you say? What do you do? Change your plans? Cancel your volunteer work? Notify your friends you can’t meet them for your weekly meeting? Skip the class you have been taking? Cancel an appointment you have scheduled? Drop everything? Call in to your own job to make an adjustment in your schedule? Just say, “No can do?” The answer is personal and all choices are correct.

What is not personal is that working men and women with children find little recourse offered from employers. Some businesses, corporations and work situations prioritize family emergencies and needs by offering flex hours and work from home opportunities, while others financially jeopardize any missed work time without opportunity to compensate for lost time. The current status of American childcare remains one of the prime obstacles to economic stability for working women, especially women in the lower economic strata.

Several studies are being conducted to assess the impact of increased grandparent participation in the childcare process. One widespread belief supports that increased interaction results in healthier, happier seniors, while current areas of research are focusing on the impact of increased demands resulting in Grandparent Alienation, the impact of Grandma Syndrome, Grandparent Babysitting Burnout, and the need for women to leave the workforce.

The solution? Balance. Personal choices for those babysitting services and emergency situations remain within an equalized supportive family dynamic, but legislation guaranteeing parental leave/time for child health emergencies, support for work site daycare services, adequate tax compensation/eligibility for daycare and long term investments in the childcare workforce would help balance work, family life and economics.

The NYS Budget has \$7 billion in childcare funding to address our childcare crisis. Let your local representatives know of your support for this piece of the budget.



NEW PROTECTIONS FOR PREGNANT AND NURSING WORKERS

The **Pregnant Workers Fairness Act (“PWFA”)** and the **Providing Urgent Maternal Protections for Nursing Mothers Act (“PUMP Act”)** were added to the federal government’s \$1.7 billion government funding bill and signed into law by President Biden in late December 2022.

The **PWFA** requires that employers with 15 or more employees must provide reasonable accommodations for pregnant employees — such as schedule changes or a break from heavy lifting — that would enable them to stay in the workforce while maintaining a healthy pregnancy. The **PUMP Act** would provide protections to the 9 million women who were excluded from the Break Time for Nursing Mothers law passed in 2010 and require employers to provide workers who are nursing with reasonable time and private space to pump breast milk.

Employers are not allowed to require that pregnant employees take leave, whether paid or unpaid if another reasonable accommodation can be provided which would keep the employee actively employed and performing the essential job functions. The **PWFA** becomes effective June 27, 2023.

The **PUMP Act** extends the same lactation break rights that were previously offered to non-exempt employees, to all employees. Employers have an obligation to provide a place to express milk shielded from view and intrusion. The **PUMP Act** extends that requirement from one-year post-childbirth to two years. The **PUMP Act** became effective immediately.

Women make up nearly 60% of the workforce and the majority work during their pregnancies and many want to continue breastfeeding when they return to work. Yet, today, pregnant workers, especially women in low-wage and physically demanding jobs, are still being punished for being pregnant. And when they do return to work, many are forced to stop breastfeeding.

JANUARY PROGRAM FOLLOW-UP

If anyone has questions or would like to receive more information from our January program presenters, Minny Hunt and Ann Li, you can do so at Minny.Hunt.USB@gmail.com.

POUGHKEEPSIE AAUW IN THE NEWS

2 books for every child; holiday gift program stimulates the minds of those in need
Geoffrey Wilson for the Poughkeepsie Journal

Read the article here: <https://bit.ly/3iN2oN4>

PROGRAM NOTES: Speaker Bios

Questions? Contact Marcine Humphrey or Maria DeWald at program.aauw.poughkeepsie@gmail.com



Peggy Kelland

A graduate of Smith College and Teachers College Columbia U., Peggy Kelland went in the Peace Corps training teachers in Honduras, before returning to New York, where she taught high school social studies and elementary school.

After serving on several local boards, including AAUW, League of Women Voters, Junior League, DC Child Care Council, DC Interfaith Council, Town of Poughkeepsie Zoning Board, DC Planning Federation, and DC Environmental Management Council, she was elected to the Wappingers School Board. During the past 9 years she was president for 4 years and vice president for another 4. Currently she is also president of the DC School Boards Association. Peggy is a long time active member of Poughkeepsie AAUW.



Kelly Lappan

A graduate of Middlebury College, Kelly Lappan has worked as a systems analyst at IBM, as a computer consultant and also as a financial planning assistant at a financial services firm. Additionally she teaches piano lessons, which is what she really

loves to do. Kelly served on the Arlington school board from 2001 through 2016, 9 of those years as president and 2 of those years as Vice President. She currently serves as the Executive Director of the Dutchess County School Boards Association as well as the chair of the Steering Committee of the Lower Hudson Education Coalition. Kelly is involved in advocating for local districts' concerns with both state and federal legislators. She has been the presenter at the DCSBA Prospective Board Members Workshop for the last 10 years, helping those considering board service to understand what it really means to serve.



Jason Bing Schetelick

Jason Schetelick, District Superintendent Dutchess County BOCES, is a graduate of the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, has two master's degrees from Kean University and is completing his doctorate in Education at Walden University. Jason

is the first NJ Administrator to graduate Rutgers University's Master Teacher Institute for Holocaust/Genocide program and is a Sister Rose Thering Fellowship awardee via Seton Hall University. Before moving to administrative ranks, he was an elementary teacher.

Since then he has been a K-8 Supervisor, Director of Curriculum/Special Education, Deputy Superintendent of the 2nd largest school district in NJ serving over 30,000 students, and Superintendent of Schools in several districts before accepting the Superintendent position in DCBOCES. He has had a plethora of experience as a district leader in regards to managing day-to-day operations and long term planning. He is a strong advocate for Workforce Readiness Skills, has collaborated with industry and secondary institutions to develop pre-apprenticeship programming for high school students, has been part of the NJ Department of Education CAPA Team process and for ten years has lead Education Advantage, Inc, a professional development firm, supporting districts throughout the state with quality professional development. He also works closely with Girls Who Code, expanding that program every year since 2016.



Gully Stanford

Born and raised in Ireland, Gully Stanford has lived in the United States since 1974. Retired from 35 years in the regional theatre movement and a decade in public education, he served on the Colorado State Board of Education and Commission on Higher Education. A

Salt Point resident, he currently serves as a Dutchess BOCES Trustee, and volunteers for Arts Mid-Hudson, the Poughkeepsie City School District, and the *Path to Promise* implementation committee.





**BLACK HISTORY MONTH 2023 THEME:
BLACK RESISTANCE**

The following excerpt is from *The Association for the Study of African American Life and History*
<https://asalh.org/black-history-themes/>

During these uncertain times in which the very nature of what the Association does—the teaching of areas of Black History which has been legally banned in seven U.S. states as “history that makes people uncomfortable,” ASALH presents it’s annual month-long Black History Month Festival.

African Americans have resisted historic and ongoing oppression, in all forms, especially the racial terrorism of lynching, racial pogroms, and police killings since our arrival upon these shores. These efforts have been to advocate for a dignified self-determined life in a just democratic society in the United States and beyond the United States political jurisdiction.

The 1950s and 1970s in the United States was defined by actions such as sit-ins, boycotts, walk outs, strikes by Black people and white allies in the fight for justice against discrimination in all sectors of society from employment to education to housing. **Black people have had to consistently push the United States to live up to its ideals of freedom, liberty, and justice for all.**

Historically and today in the 21st century, Black people have worked the political angle to seek their rightful space in the country. Where race is concerned, legislative or judicial action to deal with controversial issues has often come late. The historic Executive Orders 8802 and 9346 were responses to A. Phillip Randolph and the all-Black March on Washington Movement’s threat to lead a 50,000-strong Black worker’s march into Washington, D.C.

And all three of the Civil Rights Act, the Voting Rights Act and the Fair Housing Act were concessions to the Civil Rights and Black Power movements. Every advance, improvement in our quality of life and access to the levers of power to determine our destiny has been achieved through struggle.

For the full article and information about the virtual festival, click the link above.

Status of Wage Transparency in New York

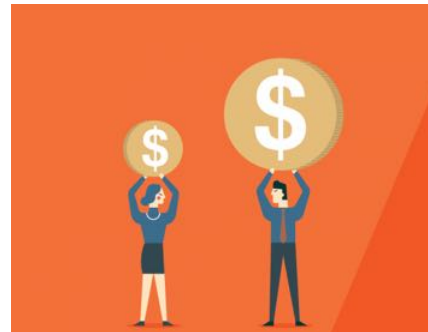
From PowHer NY

As reported at the end of 2022, Governor Hochul signed the NYS Salary Transparency bill into law, following the model of the NYC law, which went into effect November 1, 2022.

The good news: As of December 4, 64% of NYC ads on Indeed included salary information, up from 27% in October. With California and Washington State laws now in effect, by the end of the year almost 1 in 4 workers in the country will have the benefit of salary range information!

The bad news: While most companies are complying, some large employers are skirting the law by posting jobs with huge salary ranges. One website is tracking and publishing postings daily. It uncovered that Tesla listed a job with a salary of \$83K to \$413K and Netflix was \$90K to \$900K. PowHerNY, with our local and national partners, will work to promote all employers to post “good faith” salary ranges.

You can help by joining the Equal Pay Brigade! Many stepped up and contacted NY leaders about our recent legislation. We are putting together a new group of advocates who can jump into action. Sign up by emailing info@powhermy.org and you will receive occasional email updates and calls to action. Help keep the momentum going!



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