

President's 2022-2023 Annual Report

This past year brought us some relief from the COVID pandemic restrictions, allowing us to have an in person Open House in September, 2022. Our Membership Chairs, Mary Scalise-Annis and Bonnie Auchincloss did a fantastic job in organizing and implementing the event. We had several attendees register as new members or as returning members that evening. It was a celebratory event giving us hope that we could continue with in-person events throughout the year. And, we did!

In November we had a fund-raising event held at the Beekman Arms that was both entertaining and educational, and in April we honored Jewel Ratzlaff as our Woman of the Year. I am proud to say that you, the members of Poughkeepsie AAUW, attended and supported both these events.

By the time this report is published on our website, we will have had our Annual Meeting at the Poughkeepsie Grand Hotel on June 8, 2023. We will have come together to honor our Cornerstone Awardee, our long-time members, and hear our guest speaker Malaine Rottcamp, CEO and President of Dutchess County Tourism. Our previous required business meeting was held in November at one of our program meetings. Minutes of that meeting as well as the Annual Meeting are archived on our website.

Using Zoom, I presided over nine Board meetings this year, exceeding the Working Rules requirement of seven. The Board worked diligently on members' behalf carrying on the business of our branch. I am grateful for the Board's support as I began my first term as President. It is a steep learning curve, but with the help and information I received in response to my many questions, I have ascended that curve and hope that I will continue the accomplishments made by previous presidents.

On June 23 and 24, there will be a virtual New York State Annual Meeting with the first night being a social event and the second day a business meeting. We are actively seeking delegates to attend and asking for seven of our delegates to be voting delegates.

We continue to bring ourselves further into the 21st Century by using current technology such as Zoom meetings, an online payment and registration system for membership, and the creation of two QR codes. One code takes a person directly to our website and the other takes one to the Leading to Reading community service initiative. Everything we do to demonstrate that we are fully in this century is a valuable attribute. A task force will be established to see how these codes can be used to further our goals and mission.

As your President, I have attended many virtual webinars and meetings including, but not exclusively: New York State President Branch meetings called by NYS President Carol Griffith; PowHer NY webinars; the UN NGO CSW (United Nations Non-Governmental Organizations Conference on the Status of Women) held virtually and in person in March; webinars conducted by AAUW National; a virtual event honoring several women college presidents conducted by

NYS AAUW. I also attended the in person Open House and all monthly program meetings and attended and volunteered at several of our Community Service Initiatives. As exhausting as that may sound, it was not. I was energized by the information I gleaned from these events. I look forward to my second term as your President.

During the summer some of us will work on reviewing our Strategic Plan, clarifying language in our Working Rules regarding Development and the Honors and Awards Chair, and either continuing the Girls Conference or initiating an event that will involve middle or high school girls that will enhance their skills in achieving equity for themselves.

Volunteerism is the bedrock of our organization. We need your active support. Please consider giving a little of your time by participating on a committee or a community service initiative, and using your skills in one of the leadership positions. In 2025 we will celebrate our 100th anniversary as a branch. Help us to continue our mission of “Advancing gender equity for women and girls through research, education, and advocacy.”

Respectfully submitted,
Celia Serotsky
She/her
President Poughkeepsie AAUW
May, 2023