

POUGHKEEPSIE AAUW, INC. HISTORY July, 2022 - JUNE, 2023

History of our branch as taken from the pages of our newsletter, "The Branch," Cyd Averill, Editor
2022-23 newsletters are available at <https://poughkeepsie-ny.aauw.net>

Please find the President's Report at <https://poughkeepsie-ny.aauw.net/Leadership/Annual Reports>.

This document compiled by Margaret Nijhuis

POUGHKEEPSIE AAUW LEADERSHIP TEAM

June 30, 2022- June 30, 2023

Elected Positions

President Celia Serotsky
Program Co-VP Marcine Humphrey & Maria DeWald
Membership VP Mary Scalise-Annis & Bonnie Auchincloss
Educational Opportunities Fund VP Mary Lou Davis
Communications VP Barbara Durniak
Secretary/Bylaws Beth DeFiglio
Treasurer Diane Jablonski
Membership Treasurer Sue Doyle

Appointed Positions

Community Initiative Liaison Mary Ann Boylan
Historian Marge Barton
Honor and Awards Margaret Nijhuis
Interest Group Liaison Linnea Masson
Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Gwen Higgins
Newsletter Editor Cyd Averill
Nominating Committee Betty Harrel
Public Policy Pat Deleo

Off Board Positions

Assistant Newsletter Ed. Philippa Goodman
Assistant Secretary Kay Saderholm
Communications Assist. Joanne Scolaro
Database Manager Claudette Hennessy & Darlene Yerdon
Facebook Manager Mary Coiteux
Keys Fund/ NCCWSL Marcine Humphrey
Photography Comm. Chair Bonnie Auchincloss
Public Relations Betty Harrel
State & National Liaison Barbara Van Itallie
Technical Support Bonnie Auchincloss
Web Site Editors Margaret Nijhuis & Joanne Scolaro
Cyd Averill & Barbara Durniak

Interest Groups 2022-2023

All those books... Carol Loizides
Art on the Go Mary Coiteux
Aventures en Soleil Terry Jackrel
Bridge I Susan Fink
Bridge II Sandy Goldberg
Canasta Barbara Cohen
Contemporary Literature Linda Freisitzer & Ann Wade
Cuisine Group JoAnne Abraskin & Blanche Bergman

Gourmet: Out & About JoAnne Abraskin & Mary Ann Boylan
Mah Jongg Blanche Bergman
Manderley Literary Society Rochelle Friedman
Movie Mavens Linnea Masson
Pedal Pushers Pat Luczai
Pins & Needles Pat Luczai & Mary Ann Williams
Poetry & Play Reading Maria DeWald & Jackie Sweeney
Reely Together Jackie Vierno
Trekking Tori Smith
Word Games Sharon Fleury
World Travelers Bonnie Auchincloss

Community Service Initiatives 2022-2023

Court Watch Ann Pinna
Days for Girls Sabashnee Govender & Judy Longacre
Extending Girls' Horizons Peggy Kelland
Leading to Reading Betty Harrel
Live Your Dream Girls' Conference On Hold
Math Buddies Barbara Van Itallie

EVENTS 2022-2023

A few events remained on Zoom and some will continue, such as board meetings, as it has proved more convenient. The January and February membership programs were on Zoom but others in person.



Chairs: Mary Scalise-Annis & Bonnie Auchincloss
September 8, Freedom Plains United Presbyterian Church

Back in person!

Welcome prospective and new members, enjoy a slide show, taste good food and catch up with AAUW friends.



Chairs: Judy Longacre & Sabashnee Govender
The Days for Girls Initiative donated 25 feminine hygiene kits to be distributed to young people in Haiti.
In early July, we learned *Touching Lives Around the World* was taking

their annual mission trip to Haiti to deliver a medical ministry to the people in the Cap Haitien area. Our contributions have continued during



the pandemic, primarily going to crisis situations in Lebanon, Chad, Jordan, and Ukraine but this is the first donation that we have been able to make personally.

In November we began participation in a new Days for Girls program, Period Poverty. The program focuses on period poverty at local levels and requires donating modified kits to local groups/organizations that have clients in need of menstrual supplies



CORNERSTONE AWARD 2022:

Diane Jablonski

Margaret Nijhuis, chair Honors & Awards Annual Meeting on June 9th.

The **Cornerstone Award** recognizes a Poughkeepsie branch member who represents the “foundation” of AAUW. Since joining AAUW Poughkeepsie in 2010, Diane has contributed her energy and effort over an extended period to ensure that the Branch fulfills its mission. Notably, Diane served as Poughkeepsie Branch President from 2018- 2020, as Branch treasurer for 2 terms and AAUW New York State Treasurer for 3 years as well as being a member of the AAUW-NYS Board. She has also participated many interest groups and events. In February 2020 when Covid swept the country and all in person Branch activities were canceled, Diane obtained a Zoom membership for Poughkeepsie AAUW and held the first membership meeting by Zoom in March. By June the monthly meetings were regularly held on Zoom and most interest groups were meeting virtually as well.

LEADING TO READING

Chair: **Betty Harrel**

Leading to Reading Heroes



A BIG thank you goes to **Daniel Clark**, owner of **Prime Printing** in Red Oaks Mill. He has consistently supported the project. Through the efforts of Boy Scout **Richie LaGuardia** and his father **Richard**, four Little Libraries have been built and installed. Our newest Fixers-in-Residence are Carole and Jerry Peterson. They recently refurbished a Little Library at the Astor Early Learning Center on Delafield Street.

Community Readers Back in Classrooms: Great news! After a long pause due to COVID restrictions, pre-schools once again are allowing community readers into their classrooms.

One of the long-time supporters is the **Wappingers Congress of Retired Teachers (WCRT)**. A number of our devoted workers belong to the WCRT and the organization has consistently donated money to the project.

The Nora Roberts Foundation provided a grant to the Leading to Reading project! The Foundation, implemented by the popular author, supports literacy programs run by non-profit agencies. Some pre-school books have already been

ordered, and other purchases will be made throughout the coming year.

Holiday Gift Wrapping

One of the ways we serve our community is to wrap gifts at Hudson River Lodging, a shelter on Route 55 run by Hudson River Housing. Gifts are purchased with funds from Holiday Helping Hand. In addition, Leading to Reading donates two new books for every child living in the residence.

Stewart’s Holiday Match Grant

Stewart’s Shops has provided support to local organizations since 1996 through its Holiday Match Program and continued this year.

A special thank you goes to **Adams Fairacre Farms** for once again supplying us with their brown paper bags.

2022 DCC SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

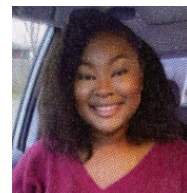


Ann Jessica Hudson

My major at John Jay is Forensic Psychology and I hope to make it into their combined Bachelor's/Master's Forensic Psychology program so I can graduate with both degrees. Once I've graduated with my bachelor's, I will be working towards a career in law enforcement.

Salimata Traore

This scholarship reiterates the significance of passing opportunities along and holding the door open for the millions of strong, enduring women coming behind us. It will not be taken for granted. As a token of my gratitude, I will ensure that these funds are put to good use and will begin the first steps to further success.



Gabrielle Coghlan

The Trudy Hankinson Briggs AAUW Scholarship

Your generosity will help me fund my fall semester to complete my general studies associate degree, so that I may proceed with my education goal of entering the

nursing program.

INTEREST GROUP NEWS

Movie Mavens- Linnea Masson

Our AAUW Movie Group has not met for some time due to the pandemic. The group is starting up again and details will follow.



Reely Together, Jackie Vierno, our popular online movie group will continue. When the world locked down during the spring of 2020 our branch’s online film discussion group was

born! Although life is returning to a new normal, we are still going strong!

POUGHKEEPSIE AAUW LUNCHEON AT THE BEEKMAN ARMS WITH "THEATRE ON THE ROAD"



Chair: Mary Lou Davis
November 5, 2022

Dine with friends in an historic setting and savor a dramatic depiction of the rich history of Rhinebeck and The Beekman Arms.

This very special event will raise funds for Poughkeepsie Branch community initiatives and scholarships.

The Future of Sexual & Reproductive Health



Chairs: Marcine Humphrey or Maria DeWald

November 10, 2022



Aura Lopez Zarate (*right*) and Leanna Zilles. from **Planned Parenthood of Greater New York (PPGNY) Action Fund** will speak on the federal and state-level landscapes following the Supreme Court's decision, discuss New York's role as an Abortion Access State, and explore how everyone can support the ongoing fight for sexual and reproductive health rights and justice.



NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Pat Luczai, Chair

The following committee has been formed and tasked with developing a slate of officers for the 2023- 2024 term:

Pat Luczai, Chair, Blanche Bergman, Mary Lou Davis, Maria DeWald and Mary Ann Williams. Their election took place at the business meeting prior to the November program, November 10, 2022.

COMMUNICATIONS

Barbara Durniak

Zoom News:
Updating Required



HATS OFF!

Mary Coiteux



"Hats off" to member **Maria DeWald** and her husband **Fred**. They were honored by New Horizon Resources for their efforts to make life better for all Hudson Valley residents.



COURT WATCH UPDATE

Ann Pinna, Chair

Court Watch is back to monitoring once again after a long 2-year hiatus due to COVID. Some of our team members have been attending Family Court on a limited basis for months now, and we are, indeed, still actively pursuing cases of domestic violence in an effort to determine where improvements might be made in court proceedings and in the justice system. **Court Watch Team:** Mary Lou Davis, Mara



Current Challenges to Ensuring Clean Air & Water in the Hudson Valley

Chairs: Marcine Humphrey & Maria DeWald



October 13, 2022
Location: Freedom Plains United Presbyterian Church

Peter Lopez, Executive Director of Policy, Advocacy and Science for Scenic Hudson,

will join us to present the organization's current campaigns and the upcoming ballot initiative, the Bond Act.

EXTENDING GIRLS' HORIZONS

Peggy Kelland, Chair



Our first events will be "Maps and Compasses" at Bowdoin Park on September 27, 28, 29, and October 4, from 5:00-6:30 P.M. If you would like to join us on any of those dates, please contact me for directions. The instruction will be by Dave Beck, and AAUW members will be helping Girl Scout Leaders in assisting the girls.

Other events (all at Zion Church 6:30 – 8:00 pm)
November 18 event was International Games, featuring cooperative games such as board games and card games.
"Woodworking" -December 9 (We'll make string art plaques.)
"Special Agent" - January 6 (forensic science experiments and crafts). "A-Maze," a Journey in a Day on social relationships on Saturdays January 21 and February 4. Our March 10th program is "New Cuisines" and April's program is "Animal Helpers."



MAKE SOMEONE FEEL SPECIAL

Chair: Sue Doyle

Since 2015, Poughkeepsie AAUW has provided holiday gifts to the mothers at Grace Smith House. We are asking members

who attend the December 8th membership meeting at Freedom Plains United Presbyterian Church to bring along a donated gift for a mother at Grace Smith House again this year.

AN EVENING OF SHARING THROUGH STORY CIRCLES

Chairs: Marcine Humphrey or Maria DeWald



December 8, 2022, Freedom Plains United Presbyterian

A special night of friendship, family and celebration where we will have the opportunity to share our own memories through stories of our heritage, traditions and celebrations.



DAY ONE EARLY LEARNING COMMUNITIES

Celia Serotsky & Betty Harrel

In early November, Geraldine Laybourne, Co-Founder of DAY ONE Early Learning Communities, contacted AAUW to express her appreciation for our efforts so far

When the request came in September, our members got busy knitting, crocheting, and quilting. Thanks to the efforts of Sue Davis, Diane Jablonski, Pat Luczai, Mari Pangia and Pat Reilly, we delivered a bag of fidgets, doll blankets and hats to their newly-opened center on Hooker Avenue. Mary Ann Williams created "Foot Books" with creative activities for young children and donated those to the program.



HATS OFF!

Congratulations to Leah Feldman on being named the new CEO of Family Services. Leah is the daughter of branch member Joanne Scolaro.

In his announcement, Board Chair Freddimir Garcia acknowledged the extensive and rigorous search process that led to her selection. "There was no one quite so passionate and intimately connected to our mission, vision, and community here in Poughkeepsie and the greater Hudson Valley, than Leah. Leah was instrumental in the formation of our Court Watch project.

Commission on the Status of Women: March 6-17 "Innovation and technological change, and education in the digital age for achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls."

Organizer: Diane Jablonski

Members attended virtual sessions and met by Zoom on March 16th to discuss the sessions they attended with emphasis on the AAUW session presented by Gloria Blackwell.

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 theme of the two events are closely coordinated.



Minny Hunt



Ann Li

Your Health and Wealth: Safeguarding Your Financial Future

Chairs: Marcine Humphrey & Maria DeWald

January 12, 2023 on Zoom

- The financial importance and impact of your health
- Strategies to transfer and preserve your wealth
- Ensuring that your last wishes are carried out
- Understand the impact of medical expenses

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

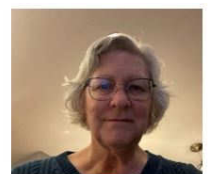
Chairs: Marcine Humphrey & Maria DeWald

February 9, 2023 via ZOOM

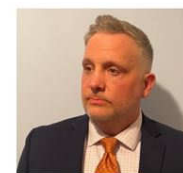
We will hear from a distinguished panel of educators and school board members both about their roles and responsibilities and how the current climate of polarization has or has not impacted their important work.



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



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



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Topics covered each month

Celia Serotsky, President

- Sept** – Thank you to those that have preceded her and look forward to working with her leadership team.
- Oct** – AAUW's beginnings, importance and making connections. An explanation of PowHer Equity Summit.
- Nov** – The important of fundraising and filling the position of International Chair.
- Dec** – Pay Equity and PowHerNY
- Jan** – Our many initiatives and their accomplishments plus the program and special events offered by our branch.
- Feb** – Gov Hochul's State of the State address and the relation to the priorities of AAUW
- Mar** – PowHerNY webinar concerning Home Health Care, Child care and Reproductive Rights
- Apr** – Cyber-bullying
- May** –Get more involved in the many programs of Poughkeepsie AAUW
- Jun** – Wrap up for the year

PUBLIC POLICY

Many topics of interest throughout the year.

Chair: Pat Deleo

- Sept**- The trials of the summer and fall and a look to November elections
- Oct** – Questions on AAUW priorities presented to the two NY Gubernatorial Candidates Hochul and Zeldin.
- Nov** – Reminder to Vote with times for early voting
- Dec** – The NYC Transparency Act – 50 Shades of Transparency
- Jan** – Child care in America- AAUW and paid leave
- Feb** – Child care and support of mothers
- Mar** – Books by Black writers that are disappearing from libraries in schools and public
- Apr** – The color you wear has meaning.
- May** – Women experiencing intimate partner violence
- Jun** – Out of court settlements for women's working issues.



**Arts, Access, and Excellence
Creation and Community**

Chairs: Marcine Humphrey & Maria DeWald

March 9, 2023

How can the arts empower and uplift communities struggling with poverty? In this presentation, The Art Effect's Director of Programs, **Mary Ellen Iatropoulos**, discusses how arts-based workforce development programs can provide a pathway out of poverty.



**NATIONAL CONFERENCE FOR COLLEGE WOMEN
STUDENT LEADERS (NCCWSL)**

Chair: Marcine Humphrey

Applications are now being accepted for the 2023 [National Conference for College Women Student Leaders](#) (NCCWSL) conference to be held May 31 to June 3, 2023 at the University of Maryland. Two scholarships were awarded this year.



Honor our Woman of the Year 2023

Jewel Ratzlaff

Innovator and Activist

Chair: Mary Lou Davis

April 23, 2023
Mill Creek Caterers

Jewel worked with Mid-Hudson Love, INC and as the Public Information Officer for the Poughkeepsie Public Library District, Jewel spearheaded the community-wide Big Read project. In her efforts to engage as many as possible in enjoying literature together, she coordinated with anyone who could enrich the multiple activities of the Big Read.



How One Local Not-for-Profit Approaches Social Service Issues

Chairs: Marcine Humphrey & Maria DeWald

April 13, 2023 IN PERSON!



Leah Feldman: CEO, Family Services Poughkeepsie
Dennis A. Woodbine: Family Partnership Steward
Renee Fillette: Partner-Dutchess Outreach
Megan Gomes, Vera Wisniewski, Sherry Wyckoff: Partners-Sun River Health

Our presenters will be providing an overview of the work of Family Services Poughkeepsie, as well as an in depth look at one of their many programs, the Family Partnership Center.

**Art as Life:
Becoming an Artist**

Chairs: Marcine Humphrey, Maria DeWald and Sandy Lash

May 11, 2023



Katherine Duke and members of the **Erick Hawkins Dance Company** will share the history and creativity of dancer and choreographer Erick Hawkins and composer Lucia Dlugoszewski. Their innovative process, technique and music will come alive as they dance for us.

**Poughkeepsie Branch AAUW STEM Award
Dutchess County Regional Science Fair**



On March 25, 2023, Bonnie Auchincloss, Kay Saderholm, and Claudette Hennessy participated on behalf of AAUW Poughkeepsie in judging the Dutchess County Regional Science Fair held at Dutchess Community College. \$50 gift certificates were awarded to one 7th and one 8th grade girl.

AAUW FUNDS HONOREES

Margaret Nijhuis, Honors and Awards Chair

AAUW Funds Honoree 2023



JoAnne Abraskin



Susan Doyle



Elizabeth Harrel



Claudette Hennessy



Gwendolyn Higgins



Marticia Madory

Poughkeepsie Branch AAUW Annual Meeting

June 8, 2023

Dinner, Election & Installation of Officers, Awards, and Guest Speaker

Chair: Celia Serotsky



Our annual meeting is always a joyful celebration of our branch. This year, our speaker is Melaine Rottkamp, President and CEO of Dutchess Tourism, Inc.

Slate of Officers Nominated for 2023-24



Kay Saderholm
Program VP



Gail Sisti
Program VP



Bonnie Auchincloss
Membership VP



Betty Harrel
Development VP



Kathy Friedman
Membership Treasurer

Program Planning

It is time to start program planning for October through May of 2023-24! Please join the Program Planning Committee for a brainstorming session on **Thursday, May 25th at 7:00 PM**, by Zoom.. We look forward to hearing all your ideas!

THOSE WE WILL MISS...



We note with sadness the passing of Poughkeepsie Branch member **F. Eleanor "Lee" Swartz** on Wednesday, December 7, 2022.

Born on August 9, 1927, in Honolulu, Hawaii, Lee had a long career with IBM and was a member of AAUW for more than 40 years.



Sarah Shouse passed away on June 10, 2022 in Maryland. She was first and foremost a teacher. As a long-time member of our branch, she was active in the Manderley Literary Society and

Leading to Reading project.

A FINAL WORD...

*Our branch has been enriched throughout the year by the articles written in our newsletter. Our thanks to **Celia Serotsky**, PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE; **Maria DeWald and Marcine Humphrey**, program announcements; **Mary Scalise-Annis and Bonnie Auchincloss**, MEMBERSHIP MATTERS; and **Pat Deleo**, PUBLIC POLICY*

A special thank you to "The Branch" editor **Cyd Averill!**