

AAUW Offers Fellowship and Grants

AAUW has a proud heritage of helping women pursue higher education, tracing back to a time when few women had that opportunity. It started after the U.S. Civil War. With a growing middle class and more women looking to go to university, AAUW founder Marion Talbot gave the call to support a fund for women's graduate education. She and Fellowships chair Christine Ladd Franklin asked all members to contribute \$1 per year. The goal was "to enable gifted women to use their intellectual powers for the good of humanity."

The **American Fellowship** program began in 1888, a time when very few women went on to become professors, administrators, deans or college presidents. It is AAUW's largest fellowship program and the oldest non-institutional source of graduate funding for women in the United States. AAUW American Fellowships support women scholars, with grants between \$8,000 and \$50,000, who are pursuing full-time study to complete dissertations, conducting postdoctoral research full time, or preparing research for publication for eight consecutive weeks. Candidates are evaluated based on scholarly excellence; quality and originality of project design; and active commitment to helping women and girls through service in their communities, professions, or fields of research. Open to applicants in all fields of study; scholars engaged in science, technology, engineering, and math fields or those researching gender issues are especially encouraged to apply.

Another grant opportunity from AAUW is a **Career Development Grant** to provide funding to women who hold a bachelor's degree and are preparing to advance or change careers or re-enter the workforce in education; health and medical sciences; science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM); or social sciences. Primary consideration is given to women of color and women pursuing their first advanced degree or credentials in nontraditional fields.

Other career funding opportunities from AAUW include Community Action Grants, International Fellowship and Project Grants and Research Project Grants.

In the 2022-23 academic year, AAUW awarded over \$6,000,000 in fellowships and grants to more than 320 women and community projects. For more details go to [Fellowships & Grants – AAUW : Empowering Women Since 1881](#)

Dr. Jessica Sims, AAUW Fellow (scholarship recipient) discusses her dissertation:

“Existential Captivation: On the (Im)Possibility of a Life Lived in Terror”

March 14, 2024

7:00 pm

IN PERSON

The Freedom Plains United Presbyterian Church
1168 Route 55, Lagrangeville, NY 12540



This talk discusses the traditional concept of Stockholm Syndrome in the context of a type of domestic violence known as “coercive control.” By framing this strange phenomenon in terms of a prevalent type of abuse, we will begin to comprehend the strong psychological attachment that victims have for their captors - an attachment that cannot be explained by the common assumption that victims refuse to leave due to fear. The discussion will touch upon the ancient Greek philosophical concepts of "possibility" and "habit" to explore how the human mind perceives opportunities for action in the environment. This philosophical approach reveals that specific patterns of abuse can reshape the mind such that a victim cannot perceive the world as a place where she can act in her own self-interest. The talk will conclude with some reflections on how enduring the effects of this psychological abuse can be for victims and what it might take to help them recover from their invisible wounds.

Dr. Jessica Sims completed her PhD in Continental Philosophy at Stony Brook University in 2017. She also holds degrees in Political Science and Philosophy from the University of Oregon. Jessica's doctoral research on Stockholm Syndrome in cases of domestic violence earned her a \$20,000 American Fellowship from the American Association of University Women (AAUW) in 2016. She has given lectures on her work to AAUW branches in NYC, Long Island, and Upstate New York. She currently serves as the Communications Director for the AAUW Empire State NYC branch. When she's not working with AAUW supporters and fellows, Jessica serves as the Development & Membership Manager for St. George's Society of New York (SGSNY) - a 254-year-old British charity - where she leads on fundraising and membership outreach. She also manages SGSNY's Scholarship Program, providing financial and professional development support to 30 undergraduate scholarship recipients annually.

MARCH 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

- 4 **Word Games: 1:30 - 4:00 pm**
Coordinator: Sharon Fleury
- 5 **World Travelers: 7-9 pm on Zoom and live**
Presentation on Guatemala by Mary Lou Davis
Coordinator: Bonnie Auchincloss
- 6 **Gourmet: Out & About: 6:00 pm**
Millbrook Cafe, 3290 Franklin Ave, Millbrook
Coordinator: Jo Anne Abraskin
- 7 **Intermediate Bridge Instruction: 1:00 - 2:00 pm on Zoom**
Coordinator: Cathy Kinn
- 7 **Board Meeting: 7:00 pm on Zoom**
- 8 **Aventures en Soleil: 2:30 pm**
Tour of the Culinary Institute of America (price \$15),
preceded by an optional lunch at 11:30 at one of the
campus restaurants.
Host: Barbara Durniak
Coordinator: Terry Jackrel
- 9 **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
- 11 **All those books...: 2:30 pm on Zoom**
The Adventures of Huck Finn, by Mark Twain
Hostess: Sally
Coordinator: Carol Loizides
- 12 **Reely Together: 2:00 pm on Zoom**
Discussion of the film *Past Lives*
Coordinator: Jackie Vierno
- 14 **Monthly Program: 7:00 pm on Zoom; see page 1**
- 15 **Poetry & Play Readings: 1:30 pm**
Theme: TBD
Coordinator: Maria DeWald
- 18 **Manderley Literary Society: 4:30 pm**
The Last Thing He Told Me, by Laura Dave
Reviewer: Marge Moran
Coordinator: Shelly Friedman
- 19 **Cuisine: details TBD**
Coordinators: Jo Anne Abraskin and Blanche Bergman
- 20 **Bridge I: 1:00 - 4:00 pm**
Coordinator: Susan Fink
- 22 **Art on the Go: Time and Place TBD**
Coordinator: Mary Coiteux
- 25 **Craft 'n' Create: 1:30 pm**
Details TBD
Coordinators: Pat Luczai and Mary Ann Williams
- 25 **Movie Mavens: details TBD**
Coordinator: Linnea Mason

- 26 **Contemporary Literature: 3:00pm**
Horse by Geraldine Brooks
Host: Betty Harrel
Coordinators: Linda Freisitzer & Betty Harrel
- 27 **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
- 28 **Bridge II: 12:00-4:00 pm**
Red Lobster, Route 9, Poughkeepsie
Coordinator: Sandy Goldberg

Pedal Pushers: See you in the spring!

Coordinator: Patricia Luczai

SAVE THE DATE! AAUW POUGHKEEPSIE ANNUAL MEETING JUNE 13, 2024

POUGHKEEPSIE BRANCH OFFICERS 2023-2024

President	Celia Serotsky
Program Co-VPs	Kay Saderholm Gail Sisti
Membership VP	Bonnie Auchincloss
Development VP	Betty Harrel
Communications VP	Barbara Durniak
Secretary	Beth DeFiglio
Treasurer	Diane Jablonski
Membership Treasurer	Kathy Friedman

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

AAUW Votes on Membership Amendment

This spring, AAUW members will be asked to vote on amendments to the national bylaws, recommended by the AAUW Board of Directors and AAUW Governance Committee, to open membership, eliminating the degree requirement.

The AAUW Board of Directors and Governance Committee recommend approval of the open membership amendment and offer the following rationale: "This change will align our membership practices with our purpose of advancing equity for women and girls and enable us to include members with the diverse backgrounds and perspectives needed to achieve our purpose in today's world. Professional certifications, on the job training, career technical experience and life experience all are alternative paths to obtaining education and the skills needed to become leaders and advocates for ending discrimination against women." From the AAUW website:

THE PROPOSED REVISION OF ARTICLE III WOULD:

- Replace the Individual Members paragraph of the Membership Qualification provision (currently Article III Section 2 a) with new language indicating **the sole requirement for membership is support of AAUW's purpose.**
- Delete the provision on Student Associates (currently Section 3) since students would be allowed to join as full members of AAUW thus eliminating the need for a Student Associate provision.
- Renumber Section 4 Dues as Section 3 and delete the reference to "categories of membership" in this section to permit the board to set different dues for student members as previously allowed when Student Associates were listed as a separate category rather than included as part of the Individual Membership category.

Our Branch will offer a Zoom meeting for our members to discuss the proposed AAUW amendment. All voting will take place online starting April 3. Members will receive emails with their unique Elector ID and Password to vote. Please be on the lookout for this email as we get closer to the date. Only members without an email will receive a paper ballot.

For more information:

<https://www.aauw.org/resources/member/governance-tools/national-election/2024-aauw-proposed-bylaws-changes/>



New Yorkers Vote on NYS Equal Rights Amendment

November brings an opportunity to protect the rights of all New Yorkers in our state constitution. The amendment to the New York State Constitution (S108) will make clear that **"no person shall be subjected to**

discrimination on account of their race, color, ethnicity, national origin, disability, creed, religion, or sex, including sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, pregnancy, pregnancy outcomes, reproductive healthcare and reproductive autonomy." Hopefully, you will have attended the informational session on February 29, via Zoom given by Erika Smitka, Deputy Director, League of Women Voters New York State. There will be many opportunities over the next several months to read and hear about the pros and cons of this piece of legislation.

Your vote is your voice!

MEMBERSHIP COUNTS

Bonnie Auchincloss and Linda Eagleton
membership.aauw.poughkeepsie@gmail.com

The big news for now is that as of the end of January, we have a total of 23 new members, many of whom have already enthusiastically embraced our Branch and have participated in many of our activities. Welcome to all of you.

New Member Glimpses - Meet some new members here:

Susan Hansen - Susan is a retired Art Education Specialist. She enjoys reading groups and the practice of Still Life and Landscape oil painting.

Ruth McKeever - Ruth is a retired 5th grade teacher and mother of 5. She enjoys traveling in her camper, particularly wintering in the Florida Keys. She also enjoys music, theater and ballroom dancing.

Maura Kristofik - Maura is a retiree, starting her career in computer programming and finishing her work life as a teaching assistant. She enjoys reading, sewing, biking, hiking and kayaking.

Vivien Simpson - Vivien is a retired elementary school teacher and was, until recently, the Director of an after-school program in the City of Poughkeepsie. She enjoys reading, Pilates and Barre and is passionate about promoting and strengthening math skills in elementary age girls.

Please keep an eye out for these new members and help us to welcome them to our Poughkeepsie Branch.



March Birthdays: Gail Barrack, Alice Bunnell, Roni Cavalla, Ellie Charwat, Beth DeFiglio, Cindy Emmer, Maggie Flynn, Vivian Garber, Mia Henry, Sally Kemink, Judy Longacre, Ruth McKeever, Florence Mondanaro, Amy Penner-Walker, Stephanie Pyrek, Maureen Tremblay, Ellen Zelig

PUBLIC POLICY

Patricia DeLeo board.aauw.poughkeepsie@gmail.com

Choose a new ERA

Currently, our state constitution only protects against racial and religious discrimination. In the absence of a federal ERA, while NYS statutes attempt to address various forms of discrimination (age, employment, equal pay, retaliation, education, etc), our NY Constitution does not forbid discrimination on an assortment of discriminatory actions where loopholes are disguised as sinkholes. Both the Federal and NYS governments currently fail to clearly prohibit discrimination against groups that have been historically targeted: women, pregnant people, those with disabilities, LGBTQ+ individuals, the aged. A NY ERA would prohibit discrimination by any person, firm, corporation, or institution, as well as by the state or any agency or subdivision of the state.

This November's ballot will include an amendment to the NY Constitution. The ERA (S.108-A Kreuger/A.1283 Seawright) would prohibit discrimination by the government based on a person's ethnicity, national origin, age, disability, and sex — including their sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, pregnancy and pregnancy outcomes. It would also protect against any government actions that would curtail a person's reproductive autonomy or their access to reproductive health care— an essential clarification given the national trend of criminalizing people for various pregnancy outcomes, as well as the Supreme Court's overturning of *Roe v. Wade*.

Anti-rights groups have actively started campaigning to vote against the passage of the NY/ERA. Had I not been personally handed a flyer at a church service, I would not have believed the early and aggressive campaign based on denying “reproductive autonomy and access to reproductive health care.” Increasingly across the country and **in New York**, women face criminal and civil consequences for their pregnancy outcomes, including miscarriage and stillbirth, as well as access to birth control. Are the impregnators held accountable? Those who help, treat or assist women (or men

seeking help on behalf of a woman) with medical help may be held equally liable.

Feeling confrontationally empowered with a desire to attack, I quietly regrouped my emotions and unloaded rapid fire questions: Is access to over-the-counter and prescription sexual performance products considered reproductive autonomy? Condoms? Viagra? Erectile implants? Chews? Male Spermicides? Vasectomy? Are miscarriages, premature deaths, untreated or ectopic pregnancy considered autonomous choice behaviors or outcomes? Is financial abandonment for mother and child considered a reproductive outcome? Is loss of employment due to pregnancy an accepted outcome? What about the life of the mother?

“With a Supreme Court empowered to roll back fundamental rights and protections that advance equality, it's crucial that New York enshrines protections against all forms of discrimination in our state Constitution.”

AAUW firmly and unequivocally supports passage of the NY/ERA.

The choice is yours...at least for now.



INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Jackie Vierno

March 8, 2024

International Women's Day Theme: Inspire Inclusion

The aim of the IWD 2024 **#InspireInclusion** campaign is to collectively forge a more inclusive world for women.

Further information can be found at www.internationalwomensday.com



March 10-22, 2024

United Nations Commission on the Status of Women

The UN CSW Forum 68 (March 10-22, 2024) is fast approaching! If you haven't already signed up to attend the forum it is easy to do at www.ngocsw68forum.vfairs.com. CSW68 Priority Theme: Accelerating the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls by addressing poverty and strengthening institutions and financing with a gender perspective.

Once you're registered, you'll be able to:

- ✓ **ATTEND PARALLEL EVENTS:** One of the key components and the most popular aspect of the NGO CSW Forum is the Parallel Events. These events are totally organized by the host organization and address the CSW priority theme in some way.
- ✓ **NETWORK:** The NGO CSW Forum is the perfect place to network with other organizations and advocates in the global gender equality and women's rights movement.
- ✓ **JOIN CONVERSION CIRCLES:** Conversation Circles provide a place to raise issues and exchange ideas on different topics in a semi-structured space during the NGO CSW Forum. Each conversation addresses a specific topic related to gender equality and are facilitated by experts in the theme.
- ✓ **VISIT VIRTUAL EXHIBIT BOOTHS:** New this year, visit Exhibit Booths on the virtual portal to learn more about exhibiting organizations, groups, and campaigns.

As soon as you register, you'll be able to explore the conference's virtual portal. I recently logged in and was pleased to discover that meetings are already listed, so you'll be able to make a plan ahead of time to attend those meetings that interest you. For those of you who attended last year, the virtual portal has been updated and is *so much* easier to navigate.

When you click the "Forum Agenda/Parallel Events" tab you'll be able to search by date, time, type, and topic to find those meetings you'd like to attend. Choosing "virtual" as your "type" eliminates a lot of clutter since there may be more than 50 meetings taking place each day. Since this is a global event, meetings will be happening in various time zones; you can be sure to find something that interests you at a time that fits your schedule. It's easy to add the event to "My Schedule" which can keep you organized throughout the forum.

After the forum members will have an opportunity to reflect on the experience by joining a zoom discussion. Stay tuned for details as they develop.

LOOKING AHEAD TO APRIL

Why US Birth Outcomes Are So Bad:
The Role of Race and Racism
Presenter: Dr. Richard David



April 11, 2024
7:00 pm, in person

The Freedom Plains United Presbyterian Church, 1168 Route 55, Lagrangeville

- Despite spending more money per capita on health care than any other country, the United States has the highest infant mortality rate in the developed world.
- Our maternal mortality rate is not only high, but has actually risen in recent years.
- What explains this seeming paradox in health outcomes?

The analyses discussed in this presentation go beyond individual "risk factors." Research over the past 40 years leads to a change in focus to social mechanisms. In the US context, "race" and racism are an essential area for study and offer insights into the health of both minority and majority populations.

Dr. Richard David is a professor of pediatrics at University of Illinois at Chicago. He is retired from his clinical work as a neonatologist at Stroger Hospital where he was the co-director of the neonatal intensive care unit. His research for over 40 years has focused on perinatal epidemiology and more specifically on the relation between social inequality – especially racism in its various forms – and birth outcomes. He currently teaches a course on racism and health at the UIC School of Public Health.

WHAT'S ON OUR WEBSITE HOMEPAGE?

Poughkeepsie AAUW's website <https://poughkeepsie-ny.aauw.net> is filled with information about our organization. From the homepage, you can make reservations with your credit card for any AAUW event (such as Woman of the Year in April) and register for a Zoom meeting. You will see brief descriptions of upcoming and past programs and events. Our newsletter is easily accessed from the homepage (link on right side). The menu at the top will take you to all other sections of the website and even more information.

The text of Peter Buntzen's presentation at our recent event: *Slavery, Antislavery and the Underground Railroad: A Dutchess County Introduction*, can be found on the homepage under [Recent Events & Information](#). If you would like the accompanying slides, contact Margaret Nijhuis at MargaretNijhuis@gmail.com

MAKE SOMEONE FEEL SPECIAL THIS MOTHER'S DAY



Since 2015, Poughkeepsie AAUW has provided holiday gifts to the mothers at Grace Smith House, a home for survivors of domestic violence.

This year, we'd like to share the spirit of Mother's Day with the residents of Grace Smith House at our May meeting. The women there need to feel that the community cares about them and remembers them on the special day honoring mothers.

We are asking members who attend the May 9th program meeting at Freedom Plains United Presbyterian Church to bring along a donated gift for a woman at Grace Smith House once again. Just bring your gift to the meeting and we will be sure it gets transported to the residents! Gifts will be distributed by the staff. Please send a gift even if you cannot attend.

If you wish to donate, please follow the staff's guidelines:

- Gifts must be newly purchased, unused and unwrapped.
- Gifts must be something usable and personal that is uplifting.
- Favorite gifts include: Pajamas, robes, slippers, fuzzy socks, lotions & bath items, perfume, pocketbooks, and cosmetic sets.

If you cannot attend and wish to send a check to Grace Smith House, their address is: 1 Brookside Avenue, Poughkeepsie, NY 12601. Donations can also be made through their web site. Call Mary Ann Boylan if you have questions.

DEVELOPMENT

Betty Harrel, board.aauw.poughkeepsie@gmail.com

AAUW Donations

At the February board meeting, funds were approved to send to AAUW national. Including donations from individual branch members, a total of \$3,000 will be donated for 2023. The funds are sent annually to honor some of our branch members, who will be highlighted at the annual dinner in June. Our Branch raises money through our branch development programs, which also support local scholarships and our community initiatives. These include fund drives when dues are collected and our recent "History of Women and Wine" event.

National AAUW is one of the largest funders of women's graduate education. Funding is available for career development, community action, international projects, and research grants as well as American, International, and Selected Professions fellowships.

2024 NCCWSL Registration Now Open!

AAUW's **National Conference for Collegiate Women Leaders** (NCCWSL) will be held at the University of Maryland, College Park, May 30 through June 1, 2024. Registration is now open!

Our branch is once again searching for a college woman to apply for a **scholarship** to attend this year's conference. The **Irene Keyes Memorial Scholarship** was established to honor our past president, long time member, and good friend. How wonderful to honor her in this way. This fund has enabled 9 young women to attend this powerful conference. We fund the tuition (which covers all expenses) and offer a travel stipend. Women are required to fill out an application, provide letters of recommendation and agree to write about their experience.

This year's theme is **"Dare to Be"** — NCCWSL is challenging young women to be bold, be engaged, and be a leader! The conference begins Thursday afternoon with a welcome address and networking event. Workshops and panels begin Friday, May 31, ending with the Women of Distinction Awards Ceremony and reception that evening. NCCWSL closes with a Saturday morning session guaranteed to delight! New for 2024, NCCWSL features a STEM track of sessions, designed to engage young women interested in STEM throughout the conference.

The conference is an inspiring, transformative experience. Our website has the application form and testimonials from previous attendees. <https://poughkeepsie-ny.aauw.net> Please share this information!

Questions? Contact committee chair
Marcine.humphrey@gmail.com, or call 914-474-1392.

POUGHKEEPSIE BRANCH CENTENNIAL: 1925 to 2025

We are organizing a committee to celebrate our Branch Centennial. If you would like to be a part of this committee, please email Celia Serotsky at president.aauw.poughkeepsie@gmail.com.

SUPPORTERS OF THE BRANCH

Many thanks to our newsletter Patrons (\$25 or more) and Sponsors (\$10 or more). Their annual contributions help defray the expense of publishing **THE BRANCH** and other communication expenses. To add your name, send a check, payable to: **"Poughkeepsie Branch AAUW, Inc."** to Cyd Averill, editor.

Patrons: Ruth Aldrich Gau, Sandra Goldberg, Shaileen Kopec, Margaret Nijhuis

Please join the Poughkeepsie Branch of the
American Association of University Women,
Inc. to:

Honor our Woman of the Year 2024

CARA MIA BACCHIOCHI

Founder of Hope on a Mission, Inc.

Mill Creek Caterers

17 NY-376, Hopewell Junction, NY 12533

Sunday, April 14, 2024

12-3 pm



Cash Bar & Hot Luncheon

Name _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Entrée Choice: _____

If you are making reservations for more than one person,
please list all additional **names and choices** on back.

Entrée Choices:

Sliced London Broil with Burgundy Sauce

Honey Garlic Glazed Salmon

Chicken Francese

Vegetarian option

Accompanied by Butternut Squash soup and cake.

**If you have any dietary concerns, please let us know.

Price: \$58 (includes gratuity)/

\$60 if using PayPal or Credit Card.

Reservations and checks due: April 1, 2024

Make checks payable to:

“Poughkeepsie Branch AAUW, Inc.”

Mail to:

Maria DeWald, 127 Willow Brook Road

Clinton Corners, NY 12514

Questions: Call Maria DeWald 845-266-4960 or

mfdewald@yahoo.com

To make reservations using PayPal or Credit Card
go to <https://poughkeepsie-ny.aauw.net>

If you would like to make a contribution in Cara Mia
Bacchiochi's honor, please send it to Maria DeWald at
the address above. Poughkeepsie Branch AAUW is a
501(c)3 organization.

“To restore dignity with love and grace to homeless, addicted women and men, who are surviving on the streets of Poughkeepsie New York” is the mission statement of **Hope on a Mission**. This non-profit organization was initiated in 2015 by AAUW's 2024 Woman of the Year, Cara Mia Bacchiochi.

Every Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday evening, as well as Saturday mornings, volunteers bring hot food, beverages, personal hygiene items and seasonally appropriate clothing to Poughkeepsie's city streets. Last year, Hope on a Mission served nearly 8,000 meals and provided over 1,000 “blessing bags” with socks, underwear, shoes, and winter clothes.

In addition to providing food and clothing, volunteers become advocates who listen, assist, and make referrals to community organizations, upon request. They help those struggling with addiction to get treatment and assure them that Hope on a Mission will be there when they finish treatment. They spend hours in emergency rooms waiting with clients for rehabilitation services, hold cookouts for holidays, and advocate for appropriate treatment. All this is made possible with support from individuals, community and civic organizations, as well as student organizations.

Cara Mia Bacchiochi, AAUW's 2024 Woman of the Year, founded Hope on a Mission at a time when she was at her lowest point in life. She dealt with alcoholism, step-families and multiple moves in her childhood and started using marijuana and alcohol in middle school. By high school, she was using cocaine and, in subsequent jobs, was surrounded by substance abuse, alcoholism and addiction. She made several attempts to continue her education and beat her addictions but had several relapses. In 2013, after years of drug addiction, rehabilitation, jail, homelessness, hopelessness, and alcohol addiction, Cara Mia found herself in jail again. Her children had been taken from her by CPS, and she was being evicted for non-payment of rent. It was then she realized it takes a community of support and encouragement to help those with addiction problems. The idea for Hope on a Mission started in a jail cell and grew into the amazing non-profit ministry it is today. Cara Mia has become the woman she needed when she was homeless and addicted, and she has ambitious plans for the future of the organization should she obtain the funds to grow.