

ORGAN MOUNTAIN VIEWS

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Founded in 1923, AAUW's Mission is to advance gender equity for women and girls through research, education, and advocacy.

NOTE: If reading this in email or online, click on [view entire message](#) when you get to the end, as the OMV may be "clipped."

****Also, remember that words [underlined in bright blue](#) are links to click on for additional information.****

HAPPY VALENTINE'S DAY!

Karen Dumont, Editor

General Meeting

February 1, 2023, marks the 37th annual National Girls & Women in Sports Day (NGWSD). This celebration inspires girls and women to play and be active and realize their full power. With this in mind, our presenter at our February 11 meeting, **Ms. Annamarie DeLovato**, will speak to us on **Title IX**.

Ms. DeLovato is Deputy Director for OIE (Office of Institutional Equity) at New Mexico State University. She is a 1992 graduate of New Mexico State University having earned a Bachelor's Degree in Government. She attended law school at the University of New Mexico and graduated with a Juris Doctorate in 1998. Ms. DeLovato has twenty-three years of legal service as a state prosecutor, a Children's Court Attorney, Assistant General Counsel for the Children Youth & Families Department (CYFD), and as legal counsel in private practice representing clients in a variety of legal matters.

As Deputy Director, Ms. DeLovato is able to utilize her skills and experience to carry out NMSU's commitment to providing a learning environment and workplace that addresses issues of unlawful discrimination, harassment, and retaliation on behalf of students, faculty, staff, and the University community. She is a member of the New Mexico State Bar as well as the federal bar in the U.S. District Court for the District of New Mexico.

Help welcome Ms. DeLovato to our AAUW-LC community at 9:30 on February 11th at DACC Workforce Center.

RoseAnn Hernández & Barbara Williams, Co-VP Programs

From our President Anne Chase



Our year is off to a great start! We have so many new members – new friends and new people to help in our mission! Welcome! Under the very able **Laura Bemis**, we are well underway for our first in-person Girls Can! in two years! More details are in another section of this OMV.

We had a wonderful time at our Holiday Luncheon at Sunset Grill. We were served excellent food and there were enough AAUW members that we overflowed into the main dining room. The Silent Auction was a huge success. Many people went home with paintings, jewelry, and wine, as well as other treasures. Thanks to **RoseAnn, Barbara, Kay**, and her team for putting it all together.

We are getting an early start on looking for officers for the 2023-2024 year. We will need Co-President, Secretary, Co-Treasurer, Co-Programs, and Co-Membership positions to be filled. If you want to help us in any of these positions, please contact **RoseAnn Hernandez** or **Anne Chase**.

We kicked off our Centennial Celebration at our January meeting with a Trivia Contest.

Anne Chase, President

GIRLS CAN!

AAUW-Las Cruces Hosts 27th Annual Girls Can!

GIRLS CAN! is March 4, 2023

Dona Ana Community College East Mesa Campus
7:30 a.m. – 12:00 Noon

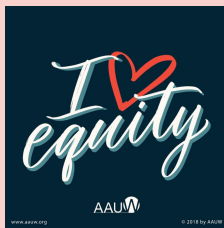
Members are encouraged to support this event in two ways.

FIRST: Volunteer! To help on the day of the event, contact **LONDA SEIFFERT**

SECOND: Donate! Girls Can! contributions help defer the costs of the event. Each girl will receive a Girls Can! tee shirt and backpack and a "sack" breakfast. Our Presenters volunteer their time. Donations help cover the costs of printing, signage, tokens of appreciation, and tee shirts for our volunteers. Because of your generosity Girls Can! registration fee is just \$5.00. Your contributions also cover this fee for any girl that cannot afford it. Contact **KAY BRILLIANT** to contribute. Remember to note "Girls Can" on your check in the memo section



Laura Bemis, Girls Can! Coordinator



PUBLIC POLICY UPDATE

High School Curriculum debate

A debate is brewing about our state's high school curriculum. On one hand, Democratic state Representative Andrés Romero, a high school teacher in Albuquerque, said last month that he would be sponsoring a bill, during the 2023 legislative session, to overhaul HS graduation requirements. [\[1\]](#) (As of January 20, he had not done so.) Among the changes he's considering are eliminating the algebra II requirement and the half-credit requirement for NM history, as well as reducing the graduation requirement from 24 to 22 credits.

On the other hand, **Think New Mexico**, the non-partisan advocacy group, says we should make the curriculum more challenging and relevant. [\[2\]](#) Since New Mexico's statewide graduation rate (77% in 2021) is among the lowest in the nation, Think New Mexico says we should make the curriculum more relevant. They cite a survey of NM high school dropouts who said the main reason they left school was that they were bored and classes were not interesting (47%). Their top suggestion - make school more engaging and enhance the connection between the classroom and work.

While most dropouts took responsibility for not graduating, Think New Mexico found that 66% of survey respondents said they would have worked harder if more was demanded of them like higher academic standards and more homework or studying.

Money should not be a deterrent to improving our graduation rates. Governor Michelle Lujan-Grisham's 2024 budget proposes \$220.1 million [\[3\]](#) to increase in-classroom learning time, stating that "more hours spent in the classroom and other learning programs are proven solutions" to increase the quality of education as well as graduation rates.

Education advocates like AAUW are watching for legislation that reconciles changing graduation requirements with engaging students in a challenging and

relevant curriculum

[1] New Mexico Eyes Overhaul of HS Graduation Requirements. AP News <https://apnews.com/article/business-education-new-mexico-legislature-santa-fe-53070ee918622748a41d33390464a86e> Dec 6 2022

[2] Think New Mexico. Relevant and Rigorous Curriculum.

<https://www.thinknewmexico.org/relevant-rigorous-curriculum>.

[3] State of New Mexico. Executive Budget Recommendations – July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024. <https://www.nmdfa.state.nm.us/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/Fiscal-Year-2024-Executive-Budget-Recommendation.pdf>. Page 14

Ruth Jaure, Public Policy Chair

ACADEMIC OUTREACH



Much APPRECIATION is extended to the AAUW-LC members who contributed to our NMSU Foundation AAUW-LC Endowed Scholarship funds! THANKS to your generosity, our fund's principal balance has exceeded our goal of \$50,000 and now stands at over \$52,000! That means we will be able to help more women at NMSU-Las Cruces and NMSU-Dona Ana (DACC) as they pursue their dream of a post-secondary degree. Scholarships are awarded from the interest earnings of the principal fund and also from direct contributions to the earnings fund. Our AAUW-LC Endowed Scholarships recipients are selected through NMSU Scholar Dollars Program in accordance with the selection criteria written in our revised 2022 agreement with NMSU Foundation. The selection process for scholarships to be given for the 2023-2024 academic year will start in late Spring of 2023.

Did you know ???

*** Since the year 2000 our AAUW-LC Endowed Scholarship Fund has helped a total of 40 (FORTY) women at NMSU as they worked to achieve academic success!

*** And a TOTAL of \$31,516 was awarded during that time span!

We do make a difference in the lives of women in our community! If you wish to contribute to NMSU AAUW-LC Endowed Scholarship Funds directly, please contact **Kay Brilliant**, Fundraising Chair or **Londa Seiffert**, Academic Chair for more information.

♥ "Educating the mind without educating the heart is no education at all."- Aristotle

Londa Seiffert, Academic Chair

Featuring Historical AAUW-LC Women:

Frederica G. Olhausen Finkner [AAUW-LC Branch President 1962-1965]

Freddie Olhausen Finkner has been a member of AAUW for seventy (70)

years. Freddie graduated from the University of Miami with a BA in music in 1945. She worked at the Pentagon in Washington DC as a secretary where her salary was considerably higher than teachers' salaries at the time. Marrying in 1947, she soon started her family. She traveled with her husband before settling in Las Cruces in 1952. She began elementary teaching in Las Cruces in 1955 and taught in area schools until she retired in 1989.

Freddie learned about AAUW from friends at NMSU where her husband was on ROTC duty. She was honored when asked to join in 1953-54 when teas were held for new members, everyone dressed up and wore high heels to meetings, Frances Munson was President, and the Saturday meetings were held in people's homes. Most branch members were young women, as was Freddie with 4 small children. She enjoyed the other educated women and the interesting topics discussed at the meetings as a welcome change from homemaking and mothering.

Freddie remembers our branch working to further education for women and girls and pushing for women's rights and equal pay. During those years, Carman Freudenthal, branch activist and President from 1947-1949, went to the legislature in Santa Fe to fight for these issues. In the era of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and the signing of the Civil Rights Act (1964), Freddie supported AAUW's anti-discrimination stand. She went to state meetings and fondly remembers one she attended with Patricia Tombaugh.

Freddie supports Girls Can! and our scholarships. She is active in our AAUW bridge group. This summer, she will celebrate her 99th birthday.

Carol Ann Council

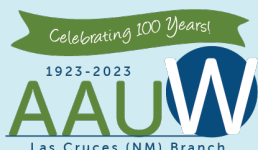


Freddie today, nearly 99

Formal picture at age 22



teaching and middle-aged



Preparing for our Centennial Celebration in 2023

The Centennial Celebration Committee had its kick-off at the January general meeting. Committee members "modeled" the new branch denim shirt with our embroidered logo. They were a hit and many members placed orders. (Watch for an announcement from **Londa Seiffert** telling you

how to order your own shirt.)

Donna Yargoz gave away a *Radical Tea towel* for our first trivia raffle. The tea towels depict women's progress and struggles during the past century. Each month, Donna will test our knowledge of history at the general meeting. Come prepared to answer questions about our branch or women's progress to win your own "radical" towel.

Shirley Armstrong and our branch's past presidents are planning fun and interesting activities, about our history. Be sure to watch the OMV for articles from our past leaders and what they learned while branch presidents.

Marsha Hokkanen has a "save the date" announcement in this month's OMV about our final event - a tea party on **October 14, 2023 at the Double Eagle**. Don't miss this fun event!

Kay Brilliant, our fundraiser, announced that we have raised over \$3,000 for centennial activities. Thanks to your generosity at the holiday silent auction, the Lynch Creek holiday wreaths, and the donation jar, we have reached our fundraising goal for celebration activities.

Join us in celebrating AAUW-LC's 100th birthday!

Some AAUW-LC Branch history.....

May 1923, the first branch of the American Association of University Women (AAUW) in New Mexico was founded at the New Mexico College of Agriculture and Mechanical Arts in Las Cruces. Shortly thereafter, on June 25, 1923, the national association of AAUW formally recognized the branch as an affiliate, incorporating it into a national structure.^[1] Mrs. Mary Lizzy Curtis Foster, a founding member, became its first president that year.^[2] Mrs. Foster had a teaching certificate from Upper Iowa University in Fayette Iowa. After teaching for one year, she enrolled in Iowa Agricultural College in Ames, receiving her B.S. in 1875.^[3]

Within ten years of the Las Cruces branch's founding, four other New Mexico branches had been established - Albuquerque, Carlsbad, Santa Fe, and Roswell - to form AAUW's New Mexico Division. Other branches followed and as of December 2019, the New Mexico Division had eight branches. Since April 25, 1959, the Las Cruces branch has been known as AAUW/LC. In 1960, the college changed its name to New Mexico State University (NMSU).

From the beginning, branch members pursued national and local recognition, striving to help the college become an AAUW college/university accredited member. As part of the initiative, AAUW/LC campaigned for a woman on the college's Board of Regents. In August 1954, the Board welcomed its first woman, Ms. Earl Corn, from Dexter NM, who replaced a deceased member.^[4] That fall, in November 1954, after more than thirty years of working toward the goal, AAUW/LC finally got the college accredited into AAUW's national membership. This meant that graduates with degrees in home economics, home economics education, and food and nutrition could become AAUW members.^[5]

However, just three years later, in 1957, the college's AAUW accreditation was

threatened after a post-accreditation inspection by the national AAUW found the women's physical education program was poor and the campus lacked decent gym facilities for women. The college took steps to address the issue, using \$150,000 from a Building and Improvement Bond. By December 1959, it dedicated the Rentfrow Gymnasium as the first women's physical education facility.^[6]

There are no written records of the branch activities between 1923 and 1938 and no known activities were planned nor were events held. However, there are indications the branch was active but very small, due to the limited number of women in the community eligible for AAUW membership. Membership appears to have fluctuated with at least one document showing that during the 1932-33 branch year, it had 38 members but by December 1933, eleven members had resigned because they moved away for various reasons.^[7]

[1] Founded in 1881, the national association of AAUW was dedicated to grassroots organizations, like the one in Las Cruces, empowering women as individuals and as a community.

[2] Written records for 1924-1938 do not exist so it is unknown how long Ms. Foster served or who else served as president.

[3] She was also married to Luther Foster, who was president of the college from 1901-1908. In addition, she was a poet and an author, writing her autobiography, *Pioneer Girl*. Mary Lizzy "Lou" Curtis Foster. <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/67970105/mary-lizzy-foster>

[4] [NMSU Library Digital Collection](#). Minutes of the meeting of the Regents of the New Mexico College of Agriculture and Mechanic Arts, August 1954.
<http://contentdm.nmsu.edu/cdm/ref/collection/BORM/id/8496>

[5] [NMSU Library Digital Collection](#). Minutes of the meeting of the Regents of the New Mexico College of Agriculture and Mechanic Arts, November 1954.
<http://contentdm.nmsu.edu/cdm/ref/collection/BORM/id/8508>

[6] [NMSU Library Digital Collection](#). Minutes of the meeting of the Regents of the New Mexico College of Agriculture and Mechanic Arts, Dec 1959.
<http://contentdm.nmsu.edu/cdm/compoundobject/collection/BORM/id/2654/rec/1>

[7] Administrative Records – 1937 – 1987. AAUW Archives and Special Collections Department. Rio Grande Historical Collection. Ms0290 Box 2:1

.....To be continued in next month's Organ Mountain Views

Ruth Jaure, Historian

Membership Matters

Please welcome returning members:

Rosalind Richman

3618 Arroyo Verde Street

Las Cruces 88011-4241

575-652-3375

215-514-5778 cell

rcrichman@gmail.com

MA English Literature

Temple University

Philadelphia, PA

Fran Plec has re-joined our Branch.

4047 Beck Ave

Studio City, CA 91604

fplec@comcast.net

Please consider bringing a guest to general meetings and Interest Group meetings (with an OK from the host). Our Branch is the largest Branch in NM.

Click here for a pdf of the [2022-2023 Membership Brochure](#) that you can give to prospective members. Note: Anyone joining after March is joining for the rest of this year and all of next year (through June 30, 2023)

Lynne Lord & Lori LaPlanche, Membership Co-VPs

"Bits of News"

Rise, Explore, Persevere: Women in STEM is the focus of an exhibit at the Las Cruces Museum of Nature and Science. Visitors are introduced to "women whose work addresses engineering and design problems, socio-environmental issues and social justice." The exhibit will continue through June.

The project is supported by the Lyda Hill Philanthropies and the IF/THEN Initiative and the Association of Science and Technology Centers (ASTC), a nonprofit dedicated to increasing the understanding of and engagement with science and technology among all people.

Karen Dumont

AAUW-LC PROGRAM CALENDAR

Here is our (tentative) program calendar for the **2023** year. Meetings are held on the second Saturday at the DACC Workforce Center, 2345 Nevada Ave. The program begins at **10:00 am** preceded by a "social time" from 9:30 - 10:00 am.

February 11th

Title IX and Office of Institutional Equity

March 4th - Girls Can

No General Meeting

April 8th

Equal Pay or Gender & Sexuality Studies

May 13th

Election of Officers for 2023-2024

Lynn Gallagher - Mental Health and Self Care

June 10th

Year-end Luncheon TBA

RoseAnn Hernández & Barbara Williams, Program Co-VP

SAVE THE DATE

The 2023 National Women's History Month event, "Unfinished Business: Women's Power of Persistence," in Las Cruces will be held March 8, 2023 at the Doña Ana Arts Council, 230 South Water Street, 5PM-7PM

5PM-5:30PM - Meet and Greet Social

5:30PM-6:30PM - Storytellers "Celebrating Women Who Tell Their Stories"

6:30PM-7PM - Wrap up

Area women will share stories that tell about their journey and the courage it takes to improve their own lives and the lives of others.

Seating will be limited. More about RSVPs to come.

Marsha Hokkanen

Interest Groups

Please use your Yearbook for member addresses, phone numbers, and email addresses.



Anything Goes Book Group will meet on February 13 at 1:30 pm at the home of Anne Chase to discuss *The Last Bookshop in London* by Madeline Martin. Contact: **Anne Chase**.

Anything Goes Fiction Book Group will meet on February 27 at 1:30 pm at the home of Rita Worrell to discuss *Wish You Were Here* by Jodi Picoult. Contact: **Kay Williams**

Daytime & Evening Bridge Daytime bridge group will meet at 1:15 pm on February 9. A second Bridge group will meet on February 28 at 1:15 pm. Contact: **Carol Ann Council**

Great Decisions will meet February 28 at 7:00 PM via ZOOM to discuss the most thought-provoking foreign policy challenges facing Americans today. Contact: **Susan Hychka** for a briefing book and further details.

Going Places

Contact: (this Coordinator position is open, contact Anne if interested). This is a fun group that visits interesting local places!

Chinese Mahjong Hong Kong Style, or Chinese Mahjong, meets on Wednesday afternoons at 1:00 pm at Rita Worrell's home. Instruction is available for beginners. Contact: **Rita Worrell**

International Dining meets periodically at member homes to enjoy a home-cooked meal and good conversation and will resume soon. Contact **Suzie Ostrem** to volunteer your home and cooking talent.

Want to know more about an Interest Group?

Contact the named "**contact**" for each Interest Group described above. Interest groups offer an opportunity to get to know other AAUW LC members in a more relaxed and informal environment. All are welcome.

Thinking of you.....

When you learn of a member who has medical issues, personal loss, or a reason for celebration or recognition, please contact **Judy McGuire** by phone or text at 575-932-9905 or email judymcguire2@gmail.com so she can show our support with a personalized card. *(click **on the** email address as a direct link to your email provider)*



All Above Board



Click here for your copy of the 2022-2024 elected and appointed leadership team.

[2022-2024 Officers](#)

Your elected and appointed **Board of Directors** meets monthly on the 1st Monday from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. Once the Board approves meeting minutes, they are made available to you by clicking on the [link](#) in the following month's OMV.

Click here for the latest [Board approved minutes](#):



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Other AAUW Membership Benefits

Access to member benefits at AAUW.org with your membership number assigned by AAUW and located inside the cover of your Yearbook. Benefits include discounts at UPS, Office Max, Travel companies (Hertz, Avis, Budget, Dollar, Thrifty car insurance, Colette Tours, Cruises Only, TNT Vacations), and Insurance (Geico, Pet insurance, LTC Insurance, Identity Insurance, and others).

The AAUW website is also chocked full of helpful information for girls and women including access to numerous scholarships and grants. For details, see AAUW.org. (click the link)

Communications

In addition to the *Organ Mountain Views* (OMV), we maintain a Website and Facebook page. All Branch emails will be sent by **Anne Chase**, President, and/or **Kathy Cooke**, Email Coordinator.

[AAUW-LC Website](#) is maintained by **Judy McGuire**. Contact her with comments, additions, or questions.. (click on the link above: "AAUW-LC Website")

A [Facebook](#) Page for AAUW LC is maintained by **Laura Bemis**. Each of us may contact Laura with suggested additions, photos, etc. Be sure to "like" our page so you will get updates. (click on the link above: "Facebook")

*NOTE: There are three **green tabs** at the end of this newsletter that will take you directly to our website, AAUW NM website, and/or National AAUW's website.*

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Comments and questions

If you have suggestions or comments about the OMV or wish to advertise here (cost is \$50/year), please contact **Karen Dumont**, the editor.

dumontkm@gmail.com

Thank you for reading



Las Cruces (NM) Branch

AAUW-LC, PO Box 1081, Las Cruces, NM 88004

Las Cruces Website

New Mexico Website

National Website