



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.****

*Karen Dumont, Editor
Judy McGuire, Photo Editor*

General Meeting

Happy Holidays to our sister AAUW-LC members. Enjoy and be thankful.

Thank you for participating in the General Meetings. Thank you also for giving us the opportunity to bring in a variety of interesting speakers who enlightened us with their presentations.

We look forward to seeing you at our **Holiday Luncheon and Silent Auction** on December 14th. Please remember to RSVP and get your checks (\$20) in by December 6th. Checks are to be made out to AAUW-LC, PO Box 1081 88004.

We look forward to seeing you and providing interesting programs in 2025.

RoseAnn Hernández & Tricia Brainard, Programs Chairs

From our Co-Presidents
Donna Yargosz and Lynette
Schurdevin



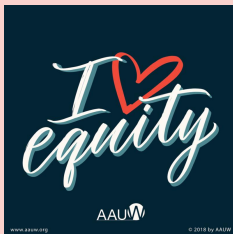
After the November General Meeting, many people commented about how inspirational the women engineers were. We noted how many had at least one side job, and how many came from difficult circumstances. We think that their presentation made us want to redouble our efforts to support girls and women. We are a generous group (note the donation jar results!). As we move into the new year, let us keep all this in mind as we fund our scholarships, Girls Can!, and Tech Trek. Girls and young women are counting on us!

Donna Yargosz and Lynette Schurdevin, Co-Presidents

Toni Terrell – New Special Projects Chair

Toni Terrell has kindly agreed to serve as Special Projects Chair on the Board. She will use her extensive organizational background to assist Girls Can! coordinator Pat Johnson with organizing what she needs. Toni will report to the Board to spare Pat from having to attend Board meetings on top of the constant and hard job of running Girls Can! We are very happy to have Toni in that position.

PUBLIC POLICY UPDATE



The Las Cruces branch of the AAUW will be a co-host of the 2024 Legislative Conversation and Social sponsored by the League of Women Voters of Southern New Mexico. All of our local NM House and Senate legislators have been invited. This is our chance to let our legislators know our priorities before the start of the NM 2025 Legislative Session that begins in mid-January. We can also enjoy a complimentary lunch donated from local restaurants and test our luck with a raffle for a variety of gifts and prizes.

Date: Saturday, Dec. 7

Time: 11:30 Social

12:00 Complimentary Lunch

12:30 Legislative Conversation

Place: DACC Workforce Center, 2345 Nevada Ave.

RSVP: LWVSNM@gmail.com

What are AAUW's legislative priorities for the 2025 session? According to Meredith Machen, AAUW-New Mexico's Public Policy Chair, we will be advocating for Paid Family Medical and Family Leave (PFML) and stricter gun legislation, among other issues.



PUBLIC POLICY PRIORITIES 2023-25

Strengthen Education at All Levels

- Ensure quality programs through funding, professional training, and student support.
- Promote gender equity in academic programs and athletics.
- Increase career opportunities through training, scholarships, fellowships, internships, and work experiences.

Advance Economic Security and Healthy Lifestyles

- Support funding for affordable housing, social services, quality childcare, and nutritious food.
- Advocate for accessible healthcare, reproductive rights, gender equality, and behavioral health.
- Promote fair economic policies including student debt relief, tax credits, pay equity & transparency, and improved compensation.
- Address income challenges; protect social security, aging and eldercare services, and anti-poverty programs.

Foster Quality Work Experiences

- Promote inclusive & diverse workplaces and professional development and advancement opportunities.
- Advocate for Paid Family and Medical Leave and flexible, family-friendly work conditions.

Promote Safe, Just, Sustainable Communities

- Advance gender equity policies; address gun violence, domestic abuse, trauma, and intimidation; improve access to behavioral health services; prevent and treat substance abuse.
- Advocate for social justice, civil rights, and equality and respect for differing viewpoints.
- Protect our natural resources and promote environmentally sustainable practices.

Improve Government Effectiveness and Access

- Modernize legislative practices; advocate for compensation to ensure diverse representation & reduce corporate influence.
- Promote collaborative problem solving to address partisanship.
- Provide opportunities for respectful debates on critical issues; promote civil discourse and open policy discussions.
- Protect voting rights and accessible elections; promote citizen involvement in redistricting decision-making.

For more information, please contact

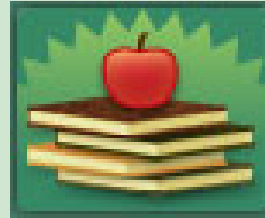
Meredith Machen, AAUW-NM Public Policy Chair,
meredith.machen@gmail.com, 505 577-6337,
or Lynn Heffron, AAUW-NM Co-President,
lghffron@gmail.com

Explore Legislative Issues; Public Policy; Other Resources.

<https://aauw-nm.aauw.net/>

AAUW-NM Public Policy Priorities 2023-2025, rev.11/21/23

ACADEMIC OUTREACH



'Tis the season to be jolly and to announce the recipients of our NMSU AAUW-LC Endowed Scholarships! Six scholarships in the amount of \$671 each were awarded for the 2024-2025 academic year.

NMSU-Main Campus recipients are:

- *Kylie Braunhardt, Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering
- *Nika Mansouri Rad, Communication Disorders
- *Daniela Padilla, Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering

DACC recipients are:

- *Carolina Sanchez, Dental Hygiene
- *Alayna Tornabene, Medical Assistance program and pre-Nursing
- *Melissa Wallace, Radiology Technology

Thank you letters were received from the scholarship recipients. These will be shared with all AAUW-LC members in a holiday booklet either at the luncheon or in the mail if unable to attend.

Just a reminder that "Giving Tuesday" is December 3, 2024. Watch for an e-blast with instructions on how to donate directly to our NMSU AAUW-LC Endowed Scholarship Funds. A QCD (Qualified Charitable Distribution) might be something to consider.

I think that everyone who attended the November meeting was very impressed with the NMSU student women engineers who presented our program! Thank you again to the presenters Kylie (one of our Endowed Scholarship recipients), Summer, Caroline, and Neyda, Danissa (Dani), and Danielle (our three 2024 NCCWSL Scholarship recipients). They all had a unique, inspiring “story” to tell and I hope left everyone feeling appreciated for your support of our scholarship programs! You are making a difference in young women’s lives!♥ (Neyda, Danielle and Dani have joined AAUW-LC as student members!)

“Remember this December, that love weighs more than gold.”-Josephine Daskam Bacon

Happy Holidays!

Londa Seiffert, Academic Chair



Month Long Celebrations

December marks the end of the year and an assortment of powerful annual observances and holidays.

- Universal Human Rights Month

Daily Celebrations

- December 1 — World AIDS Day
- December 3 — Giving Tuesday
- December 3 — International Day of Persons with Disabilities
- December 6 — St. Nicholas Day
- December 9 — Feast of the Immaculate Conception
- December 10 — International Human Rights Day – adopted by the UN in 1948
- December 12 — Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe
- December 16-24 — Las Posadas
- December 22 – Winter Solstice/Yule - Celebrated by both Pagan and Wiccan faiths, this holiday celebrates the newborn solstice sun.
- December 25 — Christmas – marks the birth of Jesus Christ.
- December 25-January 2 — Hanukkah – also known as Channukah is a Jewish festival which celebrates the rededication of the Holy Temple in Jerusalem in the 2nd century BC, after a small group of Jewish fighters liberated it from occupying foreign forces. Hanukkah may also be known as the “Festival of Lights”. These oppressors had outlawed Judaism. The hero Judah Maccabee ordered the rededication of the temple and the lighting of the menorah. Although the Jewish people only had enough oil to keep the flame burning for a single day, miraculously, the flames lasted for eight nights.
- December 26-January 1 — Kwanzaa - Created in 1966 by Maulana Ron Karenga, Kwanzaa is an African American and Pan-African holiday that celebrates history, values, family, community and culture. The ideas and concepts of Kwanzaa are expressed in the Swahili language, one of the most widely spoken languages in Africa. This seven-day holiday was inspired by African harvest celebrations and honors the seven principles, one celebrated each day. These principles are:

1. Umoja (Unity) To strive for and maintain unity in the family, community, nation, and race. ...
2. Kujichagulia (Self-Determination) ...
3. Ujima (Collective Work and Responsibility) ...
4. Ujamaa (Cooperative Economics) ...
5. Nia (Purpose) ...
6. Kuumba (Creativity) ...
7. Imani (Faith)

Girls Can!



It's probably old news that the next *Girls Can!* will be held on Saturday, March 1, 2025 at the Dona Ana Community College (DACC) East Mesa Campus. What is *new news* is that we now have professional women from our community committed to doing 26 different workshops in 2025; this compares to 20 offerings in 2024. Seventeen workshops from 2024 will be repeated in 2025. New workshops include four new areas in the Arts, massage therapy, speech therapy, the military, and the Dona Ana County sheriff's department.

Volunteers are needed to make this day a success. Several AAUW members already have signed up as volunteers at the October and November meetings, but we still need more. Even if you can work only a couple of hours, we need your help. For example, if you have commitments after ten a.m., we could use your help to get the event started. We will need facilitators for workshops that begin at 9:00 and end at noon. Mona Trempe, a new AAUW member, is coordinating volunteers. If you want to volunteer and have not yet signed up, please email Mona at mona.trempe@gmail.com

As I said last month, although I admit to being prejudiced, I believe that *Girls Can!* is AAUW-LC's most important work. I felt this even more strongly as I listened to the NMSU women engineering students at our November meeting. Several of these college women mentioned that the turning point in their lives when they knew they wanted a career in engineering was in late elementary or early middle school. They specifically cited individuals like our presenters who inspired them. I hope you can experience for yourself *Girls Can!* on March 1, 2025.

Pat Johnson, Girls Can! Coordinator

TWO REMINDERS

1) LYNCH CREEK FARMS FUNDRAISER:

Hello AAUW-Las Cruces members! Our 'easy as pie' fundraiser is now available to you! Just go to: lynchcreekwreaths.com.

There, you will find a variety of holiday items. Because we have access early this year, you might find items for Thanksgiving holiday as well as Winter celebrations. So, shop to your heart's content. AAUW-LC receives 15% of purchases that are marked for fundraising. Please note: not all items qualify for our fundraising efforts.

Once in the website and you have made your selections (being mindful of items that qualify for our fundraiser) then go to check-out and enter the following CAMPAIGN ID [#9647911](#)

This company allows you to select your preferred delivery date, has standard shipping costs and allows you to send these lovely items directly to friends and family.

Order online, pay online and your purchase ships directly to the address(es) you provide. It could not be easier. We know that with your support, we will meet our goal in no time. The deadline for this online fundraiser is December 15. There are wonderful items that sell out early, so Ready, Set, Go!!!!

The staff at Lynch Creek Farms are wonderful and friendly, so if you have questions, please do not hesitate to call them. The number is available on their website.

2) SILENT AUCTION AT THE DECEMBER MEMBERSHIP LUNCHEON:

Each year, we all enjoy a social event in December in lieu of our regular membership meeting. And each year, we set out a variety of lovely items to purchase during our silent auction. This event nets us a couple of thousand dollars annually, so some holiday shopping is being done there.

I will begin collecting items in December in the first week, and with the assistance of my AAUW-LC Elves, we will set up the silent auction. I will collect the items at my home (please call before you come by) and/or I would be glad to come by and pick your item up if that is easier for you. My information is in the Yearbook. Gift baskets, gift cards, nice jewelry, scarves, artwork, are all items that usually go quickly. Many thanks for your support of the wonderful AAUW-LC events and projects.

Kay Brilliant, Fundraising Coordinator

TRAILS WEST BAZAAR RESULTS

Saturday, November 16, four hearty branch members (Lynne Lord, RoseAnn Hernández, Rosella Vialpando, and Donna Yargosz) ran a table at the Trails West Holiday Bazaar, which Lynette Schurdevin helped to organize. We sold our beaded items (name tag lanyards, purse pulls, "icicles," etc.), artist Kay Gross' glass work and jewelry, and Amy Yargosz's ice-dyed t-shirts.

We are still counting up all the proceeds, which will go to the Scholarship Fund. Preliminary figures show that between this bazaar and the sales at the General Meetings, we have taken in about \$500. Thank you to members who stopped by to say hello and browse the goodies. Thanks also to Lani Davis, who has to wrangle all the cash, checks, and Square (credit card) payments.

Donna Yargosz, Co-President

Donating ideas

In keeping with our mission of Advocacy, every month we will post one or two non-profit programs that would benefit from your monetary donations. This month Laura Bemis tells us about

Home - Chances For Children Carolinas

Dear AAUW friends. I want to let you know about a group in Asheville, NC that continues to help their communities in western North Carolina. I know from a dear friend who lives there that the need is great.

Thank you, Laura Bemis

<https://chancesforchildrenCarolinas.com/>
Chances for Children

Membership Matters

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

Guests will be offered the opportunity to join at any official AAUW general meeting or event to receive a one-time 50% discount on NATIONAL Dues through the AAUW National "Shape the Future" (STF) campaign. Since this **STF discounted \$74 total annual dues payment** must be received at the event/meeting, please suggest that your guests bring a CHECK or CASH with high hopes they will want to join!

NEW MEMBERS: All 4 guests at the Nov AAUW LC meeting **JOINED** with the STF discount: **Leslie Fisher** and **Judy Gilbert**, guests of Karen Dumont; **Susan Bagby**, guest of Pat Johnson; and **Judy Hill**, guest of Kay Williams. Also, we have a new NMSU Student Member, **Neyda Moreno**, who was sponsored by Londa Seiffert.

Renewal Reminder! Annual Dues are \$110: National (\$72)+State (\$18)+ Las Cruces Branch (\$20). If you renew online, you must select New Mexico for State and Las Cruces for Branch to be a member of our Branch. If you prefer, you can renew by check for \$110 made payable to AAUW-LC in person at our meetings or by mail to: P.O. Box 1081, Las Cruces, NM 88004

Click here for a pdf of the [2024 Membership Brochure](#) that you can give to prospective members.

If there are any questions, feel free to contact:
Barbara McGuffey & Michele Rasch, Membership Co-VPs

Mark your calendars on *January 17, 2025* for **Going Places**

2025's first adventure for our **Going Places** group is Friday, January 17.

We will board a [Final Frontier Tours](#) bus to depart from Visit Las Cruces, the

visitor center in Las Cruces, New Mexico to Spaceport America. The tour starts at 336 S Main Street at 9:00am and will take us to tour the world's first purpose-built commercial spaceport, experience the G-Shock simulator, and see the runway to space—all in the beautiful high desert of southern New Mexico.

The tour will be approximately 4 hours long including drive time. Actual tour time is 2 hours. Tours are about 70 percent standing and walking. There will be coffee and pastries for our trip to the Spaceport. On the way home there will be water, soda and snacks.

Here are some important points to remember:

1. The cost of the tour is **\$55.24**. To reserve your space, we must have your check made payable to AAUW Las Cruces by Jan 11. The cost is not refundable. You can
 - a. Mail your check to AAUW, PO Box 1081, Las Cruces, NM 88004, or
 - b. Bring your check to the Holiday Luncheon on December 14, or
 - c. Bring your check to the general meeting on Jan 11.
2. Please email me to let me know that you want to be placed on the reservation list and will be sending or bringing a check. (*See the Yearbook for my email address*)
3. The tour is limited to 10 persons. If the spaces are filled, I will ask you if you want to be placed on a waitlist.
4. You need to be at the Visit Las Cruces site at 8:40 am on January 17.
5. At the Spaceport, we will be asked to provide identification. So, remember to bring a driver's license or some similar form of identification.

If you have any questions, please call or email me. I look forward to sharing this adventure with you.

Michele Rasch

We Need a Little Help

The organizers of our events work hard to provide a good experience for events like luncheons and the rejuvenated *Going Places* trips. However, they have run into a problem that we all can solve easily. When people sign up and then cancel right before the event and don't notify the organizer in a timely way, that puts us in a bad spot. (We're not talking about true emergencies.) Your understanding and courtesy can take care of the problem.

Going forward, we will be asked to pay in advance. Such payments will be non-refundable. If you are signed up and paid, but then life intervenes and you can't attend, please let the organizer know. Aside from courtesy, sometimes we have a wait list, so maybe someone else could take your spot in an emergency.

Thank you for your understanding.

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.

RoseAnn Hernández & Tricia Brainard Program Chair

Interest Groups

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



Anything Goes Book Group will meet on December 9 at 11:00 pm to celebrate the holidays and make next year's book selections. Contact: **Anne Chase**.

Anything Goes Fiction Book Group will meet on December 9 for the Holiday Luncheon and to decide the 2025 book selections. Contact: **Judy McGuire**

Bridge Our bridge group will meet at 1:15 pm on the 2nd and 4th Thursday of each month. Contact: **Carol Ann Council**

Great Decisions will meet on at 7:00 pm via ZOOM to discuss Contact: **Susan Hychka** for a briefing book and further details.

Going Places - See separate announcement above.

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.

Members of AAUW-LC are forming a new Interest Group: Music Playing and Singing

Several met on November 7 and decided on the following: This will be a group for fun and learning. Those present want to play the Ukulele as our primary instrument, although other instruments can be included if they complement the ukulele. This will be Beginning Ukulele with help from Intermediate players.

We did not decide on any particular genre but will start with easier songs.

We will meet on Thursday mornings twice a month, starting December 5 at 11 AM and December 19 at 10 AM at the Tayvis Estates Clubhouse.

If you have any other questions and/or would like to join us, Call Reba McGear. Her phone number can be found in the yearbook.

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** so she can show our support with a personalized card.



All Above Board



Click here for your copy of the 2024-2026 elected and appointed leadership team.

[2024-2026](#)

Your elected and appointed **Board of Directors** meets monthly on the 1st Monday from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m.



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Your Name

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Title 2 (optional)

Other AAUW Membership Benefits

Access benefits at AAUW.org. Member benefits include discounts at UPS, Travel Savings Center companies, Avis and Budget rentals, LTC Insurance, Identity Insurance, and other perks, including a one-year free subscription to *Ms Magazine*.

The AAUW website is also chock full of helpful information for girls and women, including access to numerous scholarships and grants. For details, see AAUW.org.

Communications

In addition to the *Organ Mountain Views* (OMV), we maintain a Website and Facebook page. All Branch emails will be sent by **Donna Yargosz** or **Lynette Schurdevin**, Co-Presidents, and/or **Kathy Cooke**, Email Coordinator.

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

A [Facebook](#) Page for AAUW LC is maintained by **Sonia Walterbos**. 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

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