



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

In support of **Girls Can!** March 1, there will be no other General Meeting this month.

From our Co-Presidents Donna Yargosz and Lynette Schurdevin



By the time you read this, Girls Can! for 2025 may have come and gone.

Maybe we will have put our feet up and relaxed following a successful 29 th year event. Congratulations all around to Pat Johnson and her crew, and thanks to all those who volunteered before and during the event.

This all means that 2026 will be the 30 th anniversary of this most meaningful

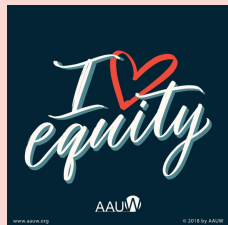
project. That sounds like cause for celebration, right? We will be asking for people who like to plan special events so we can celebrate next year. (But first, let's let Pat and her team catch their breath!)

Because of Girls Can!, we won't have a General Membership meeting in March.

Therefore we can't disseminate information about the State Convention, etc. in a timely way. Please keep your eye out for messages from State and/or us as we move along. The State Convention will be on April 25 and 26 in Mesilla (probably the Comfort Inn), so right in our backyard, so to speak. It would be great to have a group from our branch in attendance. If nothing else, the preliminary lineup of speakers looks good!

See you when we see you.

Donna Yargosz and Lynette Schurdevin, Co-Presidents



PUBLIC POLICY UPDATE

The 2025 New Mexico legislative session is in full swing, and hundreds of bills have been introduced. I want to focus in particular on six bills that support AAUW-NM's public policy priorities. [Note: the abbreviation HB refers to House Bill, and SB refers to Senate Bill.]

HB 11, Paid Family and Medical Leave Act, would allow employees to take off up to 12 weeks of paid time for parental leave and up to 9 weeks of paid time off for medical leave. Both employers and employees would pay into the PFML fund, which would be administered by the state.

HB 27, the Librarian Protection Act, would prevent book banning in New Mexico's public libraries.

HB 63, Public School Funding Formula Changes, proposes changes in the formula used to allocate funds to public schools. It would increase the amount of money allocated to low-income students and English Language Learners, and also adjust the funding formula to benefit middle and high schools.

HB 156 would increase teachers' base salaries to \$55,000 for a beginning teacher, \$65,000 for a midlevel teacher, and \$75,000 for an experienced teacher.

SB 235 would require that the Public Education Department increase its oversight of math curricula and create instructional pathways to improve math education.

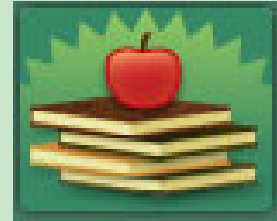
HB 417 would raise taxes on alcohol beverages in New Mexico in order to reduce alcohol-related deaths. Currently, New Mexico's alcohol-related death rate is the highest in the country.

You can track the progress of these bills by going to the New Mexico Legislature website at <https://www.nmlegis.gov>. This website will also tell you the names of your state representatives and senators. The League of Women Voters of New Mexico maintains a tracking sheet of legislative bills that can be accessed at

Two good—and free—sources of information about the legislative session are New Mexico In Depth (<https://nminddepth.com>) and Source New Mexico (<https://sourcencm.com>).

Kate Mangelsdorf, Public Policy Chair

ACADEMIC OUTREACH



GREAT NEWS!

Our NMSU AAUW-LC Endowed Scholarship funds have grown significantly thanks to members' contributions (and earned interest income)! As of 1/30/2025 our Principal Fund 987700 has grown to \$64,838! That's an increase of over \$12,000 since 2023! Our Earnings Fund 977700 stands at \$8,364 (actual 2024 earnings \$2,233). Scholarships are awarded for each new academic year based on the holdings in the Earnings Fund and half goes to students at NMSU-LC and half to DACC. Awarding will be done later in the Spring through Scholar Dollar\$.

Why Girls Can! matters:

Early gender bias exists! In elementary and secondary education, gender biases and stereotypes are a significant barrier to girls' progress in STEM. Teachers and parents often underestimate girls' math and science abilities—biases which are estimated to contribute to around half of the gender achievement gap in math. Many girls lose confidence in math by third grade and self-assess lower than boys with similar achievement levels. Teachers also grade girls harder than boys for the same work and assume girls need to work harder to achieve at the same level as boys. These messages they receive in their K-12 education years can make an impact on decisions about a life path. Girls Can! emphasizes strong and visible role models of women and women of color in a variety of fields. Being able to interact with professional women and women in college, helps girls to see what is possible for them to accomplish in their futures without gender bias and stereotypes!

(Resources: AAUW Quick Facts: STEM Education; Early Gender Bias)

Thank you always for your support of AAUW-LC education endeavors!

Londa Seiffert, Academic Chair



Diversity Equity and Inclusion

MARCH

National Women's History Month

Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month

Irish American Heritage Month

Greek American Heritage Month

Gender Equality Month

Mar 4: **Mardi Gras (Shrove Tuesday, Christian)**

Mar 5: **Equal Pay Day**

Mar 8: **International Women's Day**

Mar 13: **Faster of Esther (Jewish)**

Mar 14: **Holi (Hindu)**

Mar 17-23: **Neurodiversity Celebration Week**

Mar 21: **World Down Syndrome Day**

Mar 21: **Eid al-Fitr (Islam)**

Mar 21: **International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (United Nations)**

Mar 20: **Shunbun No Hi (Vernal Equinox Day)**

Mar 25: **International Day of Remembrance of the Victims of Slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade**

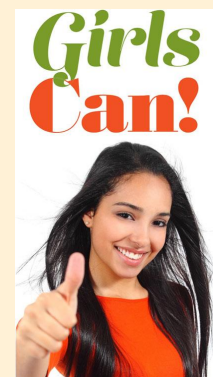
Mar 27: **Laylat al-Qadr (Islam)**

Mar 31: **Transgender Day of Visibility**

Tricia Brainard, Diversity Coordinator

Girls Can!

Thank you to all who are helping **Girls Can!!** 2025 a successful event.



DACC Hosts Scholarship Riches, and We Attend

Again this year, DACC East invited our branch and many other groups to have a table at their event to promote their school and/or NMSU, but mostly for financial information. Londa Seiffert and Donna Yargosz represented the branch and offered information on True Grit and our endowed scholarships. Last year there were many high school attendees, so this year we went prepared with lots of True Grit award information. However, not many high school students were there. But we couldn't know that in advance, so we were grateful to have the handouts. This year's event seemed to be well organized with lots of DACC students in attendance.

It is also a good opportunity for us to network with other groups. Londa talked at length with the young women from Catholic Charities to give them ideas about projects they could do. We've invited them to visit Girls Can! so they can see what we do.

We gave out quite a lot of information to DACC students, so we consider it time well spent.

Donna Yargosz, Co-President

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 with over 100 members!

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!

WELCOME NEW MEMBER: Grace Doan, who searched and found AAUW online, visited our chapter meeting, and **JOINED** at the February 8, 2025 AAUW regular monthly meeting with the STF discount.

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

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

Click here for a pdf of the [2025 Membership Brochure](#) that you can print or email and give to prospective members.

GOING PLACES

Mark your calendars for our March Going Places Adventure.

Thursday, March 13 we will travel to the War Eagles Museum in Santa Teresa and lunch, after our tour of the museum, at the State Line Restaurant in El Paso.

We will meet at the parking lot of the Mesilla Visitors Center at 9:45am and leave for Santa Teresa by 10:00am for our 11am tour. The Tour is 1 hour to 1.5 hours long.

Wear comfortable shoes and bring water.

Email me to reserve your spot. We are limited to 20 people. Include in your email your phone number and if you are willing to drive or would like to ride with someone.

Please reserve your spot by March 7.

Looking forward to sharing this adventure with you all.

Michele Rasch
Rasch@sbcc.edu
805 452 2789

Mission Statement for the War Eagles Air Museum: committed to educating and inspiring the next generation by preserving and showcasing the history of aviation, with a focus on the aircraft and artifacts used by the United States during defining times of conflict. Our mission is to provide a dynamic learning environment that engages visitors of all ages, fostering a deeper understanding and appreciation of the sacrifices and achievements made to maintain our freedoms.

There is an admission fee of \$12.95

The State Line Restaurant is known for its Bar B Que and generous proportions. The restaurant is letting us order and pay individually

Michele Rasch, Going Places Coordinator

AAUW-LC PROGRAM CALENDAR

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 March 10 at 1:30 pm to discuss *A Mighty Long Way: My Journey to Justice at Little Rock Central HS* by Carlotta Walls LaNier. Contact: **Anne Chase**.

Anything Goes Fiction Book Group will meet on March 24 at 1:30 pm to discuss *The Chancellor* by Kati Martin. 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 2025 Discussion Group will begin in March of 2025. We welcome new members! Email **Susan Hychka** saying that you are interested, and we'll order a \$35 briefing book for you from the Foreign Policy Association. You can pay for that when the books are delivered. Our monthly discussions are thought-provoking and fun. Topics for 2025 include 1) American Foreign Policy at a Crossroads, 2) US Changing Leadership of the World Economy, 3) US-China Relations, 4) China, the West, and the Global South, 5) International Cooperation on Climate Change, 6) The Future of NATO and European Security, 7) AI and American National Security, and 8) American Foreign Policy in the Middle East: Taking Stock and Looking Ahead.

Going Places See article above.

Contact: **Michele Rasch**

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**

Playing and Singing for Fun meets on the 2nd and 4th Thursday mornings at 10 am. The group has chosen ukuleles as our main instrument but other instruments are welcome.

Contact: **Reba McGear**.

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



All Above Board

You can click here for your copy of the 2024-2026 elected and appointed leadership team.

[2024-2026 Board of Directors](#)

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

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.*



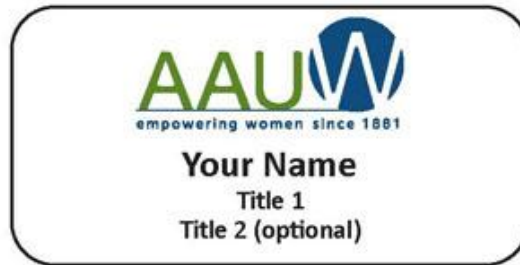
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dumontkm@gmail.com

Thank you for reading



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