



Branch

Banter

JANUARY 2025

THERE IS NO BRANCH MEETING FOR JANUARY

**We will get together again on February 11 at the Glatfelter Center for
*History of Indian Steps Museum and Native Americans***

FROM THE PODIUM

AAUW has a Five Star Program that is designed to honor branches that align their work with AAUW's strategic priorities in the areas of Advancement, Public Policy & Advocacy, Governance & Sustainability, Programing, and Communications & External Relations. To achieve a "5 Star" rating a branch must actively participate and demonstrate excellence across these five key areas.

I am excited to announce that our York Branch has achieved two stars! According to AAUW, we attained the **Advancement** and **Communications & External Relations** stars "as a testament to the dedication, hard work, and commitment of your branch members to advancing AAUW's mission of gender equity for women and girls." The **Advancement Star** recognizes our branch for increasing membership recruitment and retention, actively engaging new members, and encouraging participation in fundraising activities. The **Communications & External Relations Star** recognizes our branch for effectively communicating branch activities through various channels like social media, website updates, and media outreach.

This award is the result of the AAUW survey that Betty Hooker and I completed in the fall. We reported on our activities from July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024. The survey highlighted the good work that our branch has accomplished.

As we begin the New Year, let us celebrate our two-star recognition and continue our work to achieve equity for all.

2025 is off to a good start! Happy New Year!

Barbara Woodmansee, President

BOARD MEETING

The January 7 Board meeting will be conducted virtually using Zoom. Barbara will email the agenda prior to the meeting, which will begin at 7:00 p.m. Branch members are welcome.

BRANCH AWARDS

York Branch is given the opportunity to present three awards annually through the sponsorship of our state organization, AAUW-PA. The honorees are recognized by AAUW-PA, and members receive a certificate recognizing their accomplishments.

The **Gateway to Equity Award** is given to individuals or organizations that have shown by action and philosophy that they advance equity for women and girls through advocacy, education, philanthropy, or research. This award is selected by the Branch Board members.

The **Member Making a Difference Award** is given to a member who has made a big difference in something important to the branch within the last year. This person need not be an officer or a committee chair.

Outstanding Woman Award

- She has provided meritorious service to the branch and the community over multiple years.
- She may not be the current president.
- The state allows two nominees.

Other Optional Awards

York Branch Special Honoree – may be given to someone who has been active for many years who deserves recognition but does not qualify for the other awards.

AAUW-PA Special Honoree – This award is given by the State Board to someone who has been active at both the State and Branch levels or has given extraordinary service to the local branch.

Check our *Yearbook* for past honorees. Please submit your nominations **in writing by January 15**, and **please give examples of the person's accomplishments in a brief statement**. You may send an email or a note via mail to Lois Conaway. Thank you for your suggestions. A committee of past recipients will select the 2025 honorees. Please understand that the Branch is under no obligation to submit all of these awards, but wants to recognize those women who have served our Branch in a significant way.

Lois Conaway, Awards Chair

HIGHER EDUCATION SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE

ATTENTION: The next meeting of the Higher Education Scholarship Committee will be on Thursday, January 16, 2025, at 1:00 PM. We will meet at my house. In case of inclement weather, our meeting will be conducted via Zoom.

Rita Meisenhelter, HESC Chair

DIVERSITY, EQUITY, & INCLUSION COMMITTEE

As we begin the New Year, the DEI Committee is continuing its commitment to share resources regarding diversity, equity, and inclusion issues.

The committee recommends that our members take advantage of outreach opportunities as they become available. Participating in organizations that share in our vision of equity for all, enables us to advance our mission of gender equity for women and girls as well as learn what resources are available. Examples of those organizations include Confronting Racism Coalition (CRC), the YWCA York, and AAUW PA.

The DEI Committee also recommends participating in our Branch's Book Groups when the group is discussing books related to DEI issues. An example is that the April Book Group will be discussing "The Heaven and Earth Grocery Store" by James McBride. This is a story that follows the lives of Black and Jewish residents in Pottstown, PA and the struggles they face. Other recommended books include "The Color of Water" by James McBride, "The Movement: How Women's Liberation Transformed America 1963-1973", and "Middlesex" by Jeffery Eugenides.

The DEI Committee always welcomes suggestions and feedback from our members.

Rita Meisenhelder & Barbara Woodmansee, DEI Co-Chairs

PUBLIC POLICY

The week of December 9, the American Sunlight Project released a report showing that at least 25 Congresswomen were the subject of nonconsensual intimate imagery – also known as deepfake porn. While the report makes headlines, hundreds of thousands of women around the country are suffering in silence. Nonconsensual deepfake images are used to embarrass and humiliate people, and currently there is no federal law to address this digital sexual violence. The Disrupt Explicit Forged Images and Non-Consensual Edits, or DEFIANCE, Act would empower victims to seek justice by amending the Violence Against Women Act to include civil action against individuals who produced, distributed, or received digital forgeries. The bill passed the U.S. Senate unanimously in July. The U.S. House needed to pass the bill by the end of December. This did not occur since the House recessed the week of December 9. The process will start over in the new Congress, which re-convenes in January of 2025.

(Note: Lancaster Country Day School is dealing with a situation in which 2 male students posted 50+ photos of female classmates who were the subject of nonconsensual intimate imagery. PA is in the midst of addressing this issue: the State House has passed a bill, but the State Senate has not.)

On another topic – ABC News reported "No women will lead House committees for the first time in 2 decades."

Carol Heintzelman, Public Policy Chair

BOOK GROUP

The Book Group will meet on Wednesday, January 15, at 1:00 p.m. at Olive Garden to discuss *My Grandmother Asked Me to Tell You She's Sorry* by Frederick Backman.

Please RSVP to Linda Palmer if you plan to attend.

If you are interested in joining a discussion, you can request a list of discussion questions.

GAMES AND LUNCH GROUP

Game and Lunch Group will be held on Friday, January 24, from 12 noon till 3 or 4 PM at Lois Kulp's home. Lunch is a potluck. Couples and singles are welcome. Please RSVP to Lois.

BANTER DEADLINE

January 26 is the deadline for articles for the February *Banter*.

SUNSHINE

If you know of an AAUW member who deserves a card due to illness, death in family, or thinking of you, please notify Linda Rupert.

Mission

To advance gender equity for women and girls through research, education, and advocacy.

Vision

Equity for all.

Diversity Statement

AAUW values and seeks a diverse membership. There shall be no barriers to full participation in this organization on the basis of gender, race, creed, age, sexual orientation, national origin, disability, or class.