

## Staying stronger together

By Patricia DeWitt, AAUW FL President

This last year has been a most challenging time for all of us for many reasons. It is not over, but my hope is that we will remain strong together.

I am full of admiration for our state and branch leadership, who have met these challenges with flexibility and determination. If you have not watched the video made for our leadership conference, [“Amid A Pandemic.”](#) do it right away.



Patricia DeWitt  
President, AAUW FL

### The mission-membership link

Your board of directors is focusing this year on mission and membership. I believe these two things are closely related. At the recent Zoom meeting of branch presidents, two issues were mentioned: losing members because of disagreement with our policies, and losing members because we're not able to support political candidates. As you know, we are political but not partisan. As such, we may not support individual candidates, but we may and must support policies that advance equity for women and girls – and oppose the ones that set this back.

### Bridging the political gap

I believe there is a place in every community for an organization that supports policies and not candidates. If we continue to work for policies, we may be able to convince both the public and legislators. We may be able to help bridge the tremendous political gap we have in our country if we can bring people together to empower women and girls.

One good way to do this would be to conduct public forums examining key issues such as human trafficking and equal pay. These are topics with broad appeal. Perhaps a branch might say, “We don’t have the person power.” Then you need to find another organization to partner with. If you say “We don’t have the financial capability,” you need to go to our website and apply for an [AAUW Florida mini grant](#). If you say “We don’t know how to do this,” check the wealth of information and guidance in the [advocacy tool kit](#) on the AAUW National website. You can contact local institutions of higher education, legal organizations, and governmental units for expert speakers.

### Public policy priorities matter

I also believe that we must stay true to our mission and our public policy priorities. If we recruit or retain members by glossing over aspects of our public policy that we don’t think they support, eventually those members will leave us. AAUW has evolved from an organization that

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**Save the dates!**

2022  
AAUW FL  
CONVENTION

April 1, 2, 3

In Person. In Orlando  
*Details on page 3*

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AAUW Florida  
programs and projects.

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## State News

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simply promoted the idea of women getting college degrees to an organization that promotes equity for women and girls in all areas. What does this mean? It means being conscious of the intersections of gender with race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, etc. It means respecting a woman's ability to

make good choices for herself in the area of reproductive health. We may need to spend some time paying attention to the stories of women who experience discrimination and inequity, and of women who find it necessary to terminate a pregnancy. It is possible

that we may find out that our preconceptions were wrong.

My vision for AAUW Florida is that we will become an organization that speaks and stands for equity, fearlessly, with one voice, and with reason and civility. If we are such an organization, what right-thinking person wouldn't want to join us? ■

### 4 focus areas targeted in state strategic plan

The board of directors recently approved an updated 2020-22 strategic plan that will guide our activities and sets goals and accountabilities.

The plan is aligned with the four areas of focus in AAUW National's Strategic Plan 2.0, which reframed and

refocused the previous plan to achieve greater impact in a time of great changes.

The focus areas are education and training; economic security; leadership; and governance and sustainability.

The board also developed a series of specific actions and responsibilities for accomplishing the goals, along with a timeline and measurement criteria.

AAUW National's plan is available on its [website](#); ours is on our [website](#).

## 2021-22 AAUW FL Officers and Appointees

### Elected Officers

President – *Patricia DeWitt*  
 President-Elect – *Bea Holt*  
 Director for Program – *Diana Sells*  
 Director for Membership – *Rose Llanos-Almeida*  
 Director for Finance – *Linda Russell*  
 Director for Development – *Ellen Roche*  
 Co-Directors for Communications – *Patricia Ross and Carol MacDonald*  
 Director for Public Policy – *Kay Lee-Smith*  
 Secretary – *TBD*

### Appointed Officers

Bylaws, Policies, Parliamentarian – *Virginia Farace*  
 Historian – *TBD*  
 Administrative Assistant – *Susan Baird*

### Other Appointees

Web Manager – *Theresa Owen*  
*floriVision* Editor - *Carol MacDonald*  
 Tech Trek Coordinator – *Sue Slone*  
 Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Chair– *Jonnie Mae Perry*  
 Nominating Committee Chair – *Shirley Koo*



Founded in 1881, the American Association of University Women is the nation's leading voice promoting equity and education for women and girls.

- **Our mission:** Advancing gender equity through research, education and advocacy.
- **Our vision:** Equity for all.
- **Our values:** Nonpartisan. Fact-based. Principled. Inclusive and Intersectional.

# April 2022 Convention & Annual Meeting

## Magic Happens: In Person. In Orlando. In April.

By Diana Sells, AAUW FL Director for Program

What offers you a breakfast, lunch, and dinner; learning and sharing opportunities; and a chance to “do Disney”?

It’s the 2022 AAUW Florida State Conference and Annual Meeting – “The Power of Story.” Friday, April 1, to Sunday, April 3, is when the magic happens.



Join us in Orlando beginning Friday with an opening dinner and keynote speaker, and continuing on Saturday with workshops including lunch. Our Sunday breakfast and

annual general meeting, April 3, tie it all up and promise to send you home with a wealth of ideas for your branch’s future, centered around:

- How stories shape our lives and beliefs, and those of others.
- How to tell a true from a false story.
- AAUW’s story – and how it has changed.
- How to tell our story.

### Disney discounts

You’ll have an opportunity to absorb everything you’ve learned and shared as you take advantage of reduced-cost Disney passes. You’ll be able to get exclusive after-1 pm and after-5 pm Twilight Tickets as well as special discounted multi-day tickets that are not available at ticket windows.

Disney tickets will be valid during the convention and seven days before and after. You can purchase the specially priced tickets now. [Click here](#) or call 407-566-5600. The cut-off date for

advance purchase savings is March 31, 2022.

### Great room rates



Rosen Inn Lake Buena Vista, Orlando

We have secured great rates at the [Rosen Inn Lake Buena Vista](#) in Orlando – just \$89 per night, including all taxes. You can extend the rate for three days before and after our conference and make it a real vacation.

Reserve your room now by calling the hotel at 800-999-7300 and ask for the group rate for AAUW 2022 Convention Room Block.

See you in April! ■

## Candidate vita forms for 4 openings needed by Nov. 15

By Shirley Koo, AAUW FL Nominating Committee Chair

We’ll elect directors for Development, Communications, and Membership as well as a Secretary during the annual meeting part of our 2022 convention, April 1-3 in Orlando.

They’ll serve a two-year term starting July 2022. Anyone interested in running must submit a candidate vita form by Nov. 15, 2021, to [Shirley Koo](#), nominating committee chair.

Full descriptions of each position and candidate vita forms are on the [Re-](#)

[sources and Tools](#) tab on our website. Also, check the information in our [bylaws](#), also on the website. Following are highlights of the responsibilities of each post:

- **Director for Development:** Implements fundraising programs of AAUW and AAUW Florida.
- **Director for Communications:** Promotes visibility for Florida AAUW’s mission and programs among AAUW members and residents in Florida.
- **Director for Membership:** Oversees ef-

orts to recruit and sustain a diverse, active Florida AAUW membership.

- **Secretary:** Records, distributes, and retains minutes of all membership and board meetings.

If you have questions, feel free to contact Koo or any committee member: [Kamala Anandam](#), [Kay Lee-Smith](#), [Julie Olander](#), [Ellen Roche](#), [Kathy VanderVliet](#) (alternate) or [Patricia Ross](#) (past state president consultant/advisor.) ■

## Public Policy

### Get up-to-date on state, national initiatives

By Kay Lee-Smith, AAUW FL Director for Public Policy

AAUW has influenced legislative debate on critical issues affecting women and girls, and our state and branch public policy officers form the backbone of its grassroots advocacy.

State and branch public policy officers help to advance [AAUW's Public Policy Priorities](#) while organizing and encouraging other AAUW members and supporters to do the same. We represent the part of our mission statement which advances gender equity through advocacy.

As we kickoff the 2021-22 program year, read on to learn more about AAUW national and state public policy initiatives and updates.

#### AAUW National initiatives

• **Paycheck Fairness Act.** Failure was very disappointing. AAUW drafted a letter to the White House, met with Sen. Chuck Schumer's office this summer and worked behind the scenes to push for congressional movement.

• **Crisis recovery toolkit.** Comprising four bills and the national budget, the ongoing development of AAUW's [toolkit](#) is designed to help women not only survive but thrive as we build back from the devastation of the COVID-19 crisis. The toolkit aims to help rebuild for a stronger tomorrow by providing resources and robust actions.

• **Title IX.** We are working to continue efforts to roll back the harmful regulations and guidance from the previous administration. AAUW is working with coalitions to reintroduce the Gender Equity in Education Act.

• **Freedom to vote.** AAUW joined a coalition for action on voter rights that included Rock the Vote and many leaders; failure of the For the People Act was a disappointment, but AAUW is not giving up, since anti-voter legislation continues to sweep the nation with congressional protection.

• **Pregnant Workers Fairness Act.** This has a positive outlook since it passed the House with huge bipartisan support and is bipartisan in the Senate as well.

#### AAUW Florida initiatives

COVID-19 has caused us to change the conversation and re-evaluate our public policy direction and methods, and to reimagine how to advocate for our priorities during times of lock down and uncertainty.

We see the road forward as coordinating our efforts with other like-minded organizations, coalitions, and advocacy groups throughout the state that support AAUW Public Policy Priorities.

Our state public policy efforts will continue to focus on advancing gender equity for women and girls through advocacy efforts during the 2022 Florida legislative session, January 11, 2022, to March 11, 2022 in the following areas:

• **Women's economic security.** Advocate/support equal pay; prevention of sexual harassment in the workplace; and paid leave.

• **Education.** Advocate for STEM programs for women and girls; bias-free public education; and strengthen Title IX.

• **Fundamental Rights/Civil Rights.** Advocate for legislation for

### Make a difference! Get involved!



Join us in advocating for our public policy priorities and legislative agenda during Lobby Days 2022 when we'll contact state legislators to ensure they understand AAUW issues.

Mark your calendar for Jan. 18-19, 2022, and watch for details about how this annual event will be conducted this year.

The regular session of the legislature is set for Jan. 11, 2022, to March 11, 2022. Interim committees will meet in October and November.

Also, be sure to take advantage of AAUW resources that make it easy to help advance gender equity and create a more economically secure world for women and girls. Go to [Take Action](#) for a host of ideas and sign up for the [Two-Minute Activist](#) and receive action alerts. ■

the protection of reproductive rights; Medicaid expansion; diversity, equity and inclusion programs; prevention of human trafficking; and hate crime reform.

AAUW FL recently joined the Florida Hate Crime Coalition, an organization advocating for the reform of Florida's hate crime statute which, as it currently stands, does not include gender. ■



## Diversity, Equity, Inclusion

### Use toolkit, Zoom dialogues to set DEI goals

By Jonnie Mae Perry, AAUW FL Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee Chair

We each bring our differences with us when we join AAUW – differences in experience, style, perspective, values and education.

Understanding and sharing our differences helps create an inclusive environment where members feel valued and can contribute fully to our mission.

That's why we encourage all branches to have a diversity, equity and inclusion committee and to use the [DEI toolkit](#) that AAUW National has developed.

**Guidance to get started.** The toolkit identifies best practices and guidance for branches to incorporate and promote diversity, equity and inclusion within AAUW.

The components of the toolkit can help your branch start the inclusion conversation and demonstrate an understanding of AAUW's mis-



sion, values, goals and strategic plan. Components include:

- Statement of AAUW's commitment to inclusion and equity.
- Getting started with difficult conversations.
- Key terms and concepts.
- Dimensions of diversity and identity.
- Diversity structure and planning
- Plug-and-play DEI programming.

**Difficult conversations.** One of the toolkit's aims is to help members become more comfortable

sharing their perspectives – or starting “difficult conversations,” as the toolkit expresses it.

With that goal in mind, the state DEI committee will host monthly dialogues of difficult conversations on the second Saturday of the month from 10 a.m. to 11 a.m. via Zoom.

The first discussion will be Saturday, October 9, and will deal with implicit bias – the attitudes and stereotypes that we have but are not aware of. These biases may influence our thinking in ways we're not even aware of and can't totally control.

The dialogue will focus on identifying our implicit biases and ways of addressing them.

Dialogues are open to all members and guests. [Click here](#) for the Zoom link or contact [Jonnie Perry](#). ■

## Philanthropy

### Incentives offered to increase contributions to National

By Ellen Roche, AAUW FL Director for Development



AAUW Florida members are generous contributors to AAUW National. We know that our contributions support

women's economic security through training in salary negotiation, support of Title IX, fighting workplace discrimination, and more.

While our contributions to AAUW National were down somewhat last year, we are hopeful that 2021 will be a re-building year and

we will be able to increase our total contributions. In particular, we hope every branch will contribute to AAUW National.

AAUW Florida is offering an added incentive to branches that contribute \$750 or more to AAUW National, counting both branch and member contributions. You are eligible to honor one member for a Branch Named Gift Award for each \$750 in contributions. The more your branch and your members contribute, the more members you can honor.

In addition, all branches that

meet the \$750 threshold are eligible to nominate one member to be considered for the AAUW Florida Named Gift Award. This is the highest award given by AAUW Florida.

There is plenty of time left to contribute to AAUW National before December 31, 2021. We will announce the honorees of the Branch Named Gift Awards and the AAUW Florida Named Gift Award at the AAUW Florida Convention, April 1-3, 2022.

For more information, contact [Ellen Roche](#). ■

# Membership

## Let community know about Latina Equal Pay Day

By Rose Llanos-Almeida, AAUW FL Director for Membership

National Hispanic Heritage Month begins September 15 and ends October 15, and has been celebrated since 1988. It’s a good time for us to honor the Hispanic women who are part of our organization and dedicated to improving equal opportunities for all.

The date of September 15 marks the anniversary of independence for Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua. Mexico and Chile celebrate their independence on September 16 and September 18, respectively.

Hispanic Heritage Month not only recognizes the importance of this independence, but also highlights how vital it is to continue to



*Credit: Daniel Valdez. HispanicHeritageMonth.gov*

advocate for such rights.

October also provides an opportunity to highlight AAUW’s advocacy for equity and our research on the pay disparity faced by Hispanic women: [“Florida’s Hispanic Women – Striving But Not Economically Thriving.”](#)

Latina Equal Pay Day is October 21 this year – the day when Latina

pay catches up to that of White, non-Hispanic men from the previous year. Latinas earn only 55 cents for every dollar earned by White, non-Hispanic men, and must work nearly 23 months to earn what White men earn in 12 months.

If you publicize Latina Equal Pay Day along with the research, it will not only make others aware of the problem, it will let them know about AAUW – and that’s a plus for membership recruitment. The [research](#) is on our website, along with [infographics](#) you can download in English and Spanish to get the word out on social media, in traditional media outlets, and your branch website and newsletter. ■

## How Florida branches voted for open membership proposal

A proposal to eliminate the degree requirement for AAUW membership and open membership to anyone supporting AAUW’s mission was defeated this spring.

Nationally, 63 percent of voters said

Yes, just missing the two-thirds majority approval needed to make the bylaws change. Just 23 percent of the total members nationwide voted.

In Florida, just 27 percent of branch

members voted, with 40 percent approving. Check the tables, below, to see how the proposal fared in your branch.

Read more about the [national election on the AAUW website](#). ■

Branch	Members eligible to vote	Branch participation*	Percent voting for open membership*
Venice	177	35 %	16 %
Orlando-Winter Park	141	16 %	68 %
Lake Sumter	123	35 %	30 %
Vero Beach	99	18 %	24 %
Greater Naples	87	29 %	72 %
Sarasota	73	37 %	44 %
Ft. Myers/Lee County	73	36 %	50 %
Saint Augustine	61	28 %	71 %
New Smyrna Beach	55	33 %	50 %
Marco Island	53	4 %	50 %
Tampa	51	22 %	9 %
Northern Palm Beach County	49	41 %	30 %
Sun City Center	46	26 %	17 %
Stuart Area	44	18 %	0 %
Lake Wales, Inc.	43	16 %	50 %
Manatee County	39	28 %	45 %

Branch	Members eligible to vote	Branch participation*	Percent voting for open membership*
Punta Gorda-Port Charlotte	34	21 %	57 %
Weston	33	27 %	71 %
Melbourne	33	15 %	0
Flagler County	32	53 %	18 %
Bradenton	32	22 %	83 %
Gainesville	32	28 %	78 %
Pompano	30	40 %	8 %
Palm Beach County	22	27 %	40 %
Jacksonville	22	32 %	71 %
Daytona Beach	22	23 %	40 %
West Pasco	15	13 %	50 %
Fort Lauderdale	12	25 %	100 %
Miami	10	10 %	100 %
NOVA Southeastern University	8	13 %	100 %
Stetson University	7	43 %	67 %
Clearwater	6	17 %	100 %

\*All percentages rounded.

Source: Patricia DeWitt, AAUW FL President

## Tech Trek

# Virtual camp gave action-packed week to 93 girls

By Sue Slone, AAUW Florida Tech Trek Coordinator

The pandemic canceled in-person Florida Tech Trek camps in 2020. But this July, 93 girls participated in a one-week virtual Tech Trek – Zooming from home and using materials mailed to them that made hands-on classes possible.

The campers represented 20 branches and spent an action-packed week engaged in STEM activities. Forty-five had been selected in 2020 to attend the camp that had to be canceled due to the pandemic. Another 49 rising eighth-graders were selected for the 2021 camp, held from July 19 to 23.

Branches represented were: Gainesville with 5 girls; Weston, 3; Greater Naples, 8; Marco Island, 2; Flagler County, 9; Lake/Sumter/The Villages, 4; Manatee County, 3;

Melbourne, 2; Northern Palm Beach County, 1; Orlando/Winter Park, 5; Palm Beach County, 6; Punta Gorda/Port Charlotte, 1; Sarasota, 7; St. Augustine, 26; Sun City, 2; Tampa, 2; Venice, 1; New Smyrna Beach, 3; Daytona, 2; West Pasco, 1.

All campers received \$750 sponsorships to attend; families paid

\$25. Fifty-five percent of the campers were White; 11 percent, Black; 16 percent, Asian; 13 percent, Hispanic; and 6 percent, other.



Here's a peek at what they experienced at camp:

**Core classes:** Campers attended one of these core class for two hours each day:

- Computer science.
- Wearable tech.
- Marine mysteries
- Structural engineering.
- Neuroscience.

**Workshops:** A total of 16 lab workshops, each 90 minutes long, were offered, with each camper selecting one workshop every day.

Campers could:

- Learn how to create videos of their Tech Trek experience.
- Discover their own DNA.
- Learn how each brain is unique.
- Find out about and apply exercise science.
- Discover more about the solar system.
- Learn organizational techniques.
- Perform chemistry experiments.

- Make a Rube Goldberg machine.
- Create an animated movie.
- Design a barrier to fend off storm surges.
- Learn what it takes to build a satellite.

**Virtual field trips.** Six trips were offered:

- Palm Beach County Environmental Resource Management – GPS and mapping.
- South Florida Science Center – Brain in Action and Chemistry Concoctions.
- Toyota Teen Drive 365 On Demand – The Engineering Behind Safety.
- Loggerhead MarineLife Center.
- NextEra Energy – Solar and wind power.
- Brookhaven Lab – Accelerator science exploring charged particles and nuclear acceleration.

### Professional women's panels:

Girls could hear from STEM professionals in virtual panels Monday through Thursday. Zooming meant women from across the country could participate. They represented STEM professions from biology to astrophysics, and robotic surgery to civil engineering and included a statistician from NASA Langley and a researcher at the Massachusetts of Technology, among others.

*Read more on the [AAUW Tech Trek Florida website](#). Find out how to donate to the AAUW Florida Supporting Foundation to help fund the 2022 camps, which we hope will be in person. ■*

## Foundation fundraising supports Tech Trek

The AAUW FL Supporting Foundation, Inc., has raised the funds to provide Tech Trek camps each year since 2013.

Funds have come from branches, individuals (members and non-members), businesses and corporations, community and family foundations.

For the 2021 camp, the foundation received a \$2,000 grant from AAUW National to assist with technical support and a \$5,000 grant from AAUW Florida.

Major contributors also included Stetson University which provided \$10,000 used to pay for supplies. NextEra Energy provided the field trip

and the solar energy rover constructed by the campers free of charge. Qualcomm provided their Thinkabit Lab training and some supplies for the wearable tech workshop.

For information on donating, go to the [AAUW Tech Trek Florida website](#). ■



## Stay Connected with AAUW

Check us out online

**Website**

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

**Facebook**

<https://www.facebook.com/FloridaAauw/>

**Instagram**

<https://www.instagram.com/aauwflorida/>

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Do we have your current contact information?

Are your dues up-to-date?

Check National's [Membership Services Database](#) to make sure.

### **What's new in your branch?**

Don't be shy! Let everyone know. Send articles (100 to 300 words) and photos (jpegs) to [Carol MacDonald](#), Editor, *floriVision*. ■

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