

THE APRIL MEETING HAS BEEN CANCELLED

11 Young Women Who Are About to Make History

From Reader's Digest at rd.com

The world needs help. Climate change, war, poverty, inequality, and more threaten our futures. Fortunately, these young women aren't sitting idly by. They are standing up, speaking out, organizing and fighting to provide us with a better tomorrow. Please read their complete stories at <https://www.rd.com/culture/young-women-who-are-about-to-make-history/>.

Greta Thunberg needs no introduction—after all, she's practically a household name. You can help Thunberg by making these [tiny changes to help the environment](#).

Who could forget high school senior **Emma Gonzalez's** impassioned speech advocating for gun control just days after surviving a shooting that killed 17 people and injured another 17 at Marjorie Stoneman Douglas HS in Parkland, Florida in 2018? She went on to cofound the group, [Never Again](#).

At 17, **Amika George** learned that about 10 % of girls in the UK were forced to skip school regularly as they couldn't afford period products. George founded Free Periods to advocate for free menstrual products in all U.K. schools. She also works to remove the stigma behind periods, arguing that boys should be educated about periods, too. You can help by donating to [Free Periods](#).

By the time Afghan rapper **Sonita Alizadeh** was 16, she'd narrowly avoided being sold into marriage by her family twice; the first time she was only 10. To protest this treatment, Alizadeh composed a song, "[Brides For Sale](#)" & made a video that she loaded onto Youtube. The video went viral, prompting an international conversation and empowering girls to speak out about their own experiences.

When she was 10, **Marley Dias** realized there was a problem with her education. Teachers assigned the students the same book over and over: a book about, "a white boy and his dogs," prompting Dias to

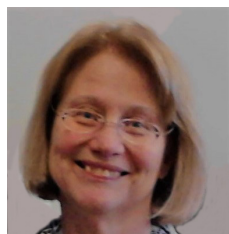
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The Current

a publication of the La Crosse, WI AAUW Branch

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APRIL 2020



PRESIDENT'S PERSPECTIVE:

So Many Cancellations

by Jan Eriksen, AAUW-La Crosse Branch President

I hope that you and your families are all well and that the pandemic will soon be over. The April 4 AAUW-La Crosse meeting is cancelled. It was also to be our election of officers so we'll accomplish that by E-mail and telephone instead. You'll still receive an E-mail message from Robert or a phone call from Sarah as usual, but instead of responding whether you plan to attend the brunch you'll be asked whether you approve or disapprove the slate of officers (the slate appears elsewhere in this newsletter) or if you have someone else you would like to nominate. We vote on only elected officers; appointed board officers are chosen by the branch president. The results of the election will appear in the May newsletter and the new officers will be installed at the next meeting.

Conventions

The AAUW-Wisconsin 2020 Convention, originally scheduled for April 17-18 at the Radisson Hotel in La Crosse, has been cancelled. Thanks to Erica Koonmen, Michele

Strange, Silvana Richardson, and JoAnne Revels from the La Crosse Branch, plus several others from around District 4, for all of their hard work in planning the convention. The Regional Conference, June 18-20 in the Quad Cities, has also been

cancelled. There is no word yet on the status of NCCWSL. AAUW national is keeping an eye on the news regarding COVID-19 and

will make a decision at a later date regarding NCCWSL. The decision will appear on the NCCWSL website.

T-shirts

The AAUW T-shirts that some of you



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NEXT BOARD MEETING

Virtual Meeting

Due to Governor Evers' "Safer-at-home" order, we will conduct an E-mail board meeting on

Monday, March 30.

Meetings are open to any member.

Contact Jan at 787-5946 or jperiksen@viterbo.edu if you would like to be added to the E-mail list for the meeting or to place items on the agenda.

So Many Cancellations... (continued from page 1)

ordered at the January meeting have arrived. They are navy blue with white lettering, short-sleeved (\$10 each). I will bring them to the next meeting. If you would like to get yours sooner, please let me know and I can drop it off on your front porch. Please also tell me the size that you ordered.

Slate of Candidates for 20-21 Board

Elected Officers AAUW-La Crosse Branch
Beginning 2020-2021 Program Year

Elections will take place at the April general meeting.

PresidentAnn Brice
Vice President-President ElectOpen
Vice President-FinanceMichele Strange
Vice President-Membership.....Marilyn Hempstead
Vice President-Program.....Megan Preston*
Secretary.....JoAnne Revels

**Megan, if elected, will be replacing Margaret Wood, whose two-year term is ending. Cristina Kovacs' term continues for another year.*



Ann Brice



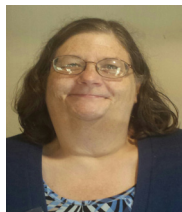
Michele Strange



Marilyn Hempstead



Megan Preston



JoAnne Revels

Name Grant Nominations

by Michele Strange, Chair



Nominations for the 2020 Name Grant are open. Nominees can be any branch member who has made significant contributions and who has not previously received the Name Grant. The list of past honorees is in the back of the branch membership directory. The deadline is **March 31, 2020.**

Please contact Michele Strange at mstrange@eagle.uwlax.edu

or (608) 781-6962 with names of nominees, along with information about why you feel the individual is deserving of the honor.

11 Young Women

(continued from Page 1)

wonder where all the books featuring black girls were. She collected 1,000 books starring black girls to send to the school her mother had attended as a girl in Jamaica. You can support her efforts by purchasing her book, **Marley Dias Gets It Done: And So Can You.**

As a 5 yr old, **Sophie Cruz** stepped on the world stage by breaking through security at a parade in Washington, D.C. to hand a letter to Pope Francis. Cruz, a U.S. citizen, expressed her fear that her parents, undocumented immigrants from Mexico would be deported. Now 10 yrs old, Cruz continues to speak out on behalf of undocumented families.

Jazz Jennings is a 19-year-old transgender advocate who uses modern platforms to spread a message of inclusion and equality. She first drew national attention after being interviewed by Barbara Walters when she was 11 years old.

At 22 years old, **Malala Yousafzai**, sometimes referred to simply as Malala, is one of the best-known advocates for female education in the world. She was honored with the Nobel Peace Prize in 2014, the youngest Nobel laureate in the history of the award.

At 7 yrs old, **Grace Callwood** was diagnosed with non-Hodgkins lymphoma . The experience left her determined to make the world a better place. In 2012 she started The We Canceve Movement, dedicated to helping children experiencing homelessness, illness, or living in foster care. Today she is 15 and has helped children all over the world. Visit the **We Canceve** website !

Khloe Thompson, as a 9 yr old girl, walked by homeless people on her way to school. Concerned about them, she was determined to help. Thompson started "Khole Kares", distributing hand made "Kare bags" with 3 months worth of socks, toiletries, and menstrual products. Today, Thompson is 13 and her organization is going strong. Visit **KhloeKares.**

7 yr old **Bana al-Abed** held the world in thrall when she tweeted about her family's struggle to stay alive during wartime in Aleppo, Syria. Her family fled to Turkey. She published **Dear World: A Syrian Girl's Story of War and Plea for Peace** and began speaking out about peace and the importance of childhood education, particularly those in wartorn countries. Today, al-Abed is ten years old, you can help amplify her voice by buying her book.

Study Group News

AAUW IN ACTION (AIA)

See this page for meeting info
Contact: Erica Koonmen, 366-1509

HEARTH & HOME

See below for meeting info
Contact: Sharon DeCicco, 788-5356

CONTEMPORARY AUTHORS

3rd Tuesday of the month at 2pm
Contact: Alice Ross, 788-4206

SCHOLARSHIP BRIDGE/CARD GAMES

Contact: Sharon DeCicco, 788-5356

AAUW IN ACTION

AAUW in Action (AIA) is a study group that serves as a springboard for community service activities for our branch that promote AAUW's mission.

Next meeting: March and April will be email meetings due to...well, you know.

The International Women's Day celebration was wonderful. Please see the article to the right for a complete recap. The Free the Girls bra collection netted 50 bras! Thank you all.

Hopefully, you've been reading and liking the Women's History month daily postings on the branch Facebook and Instagram accounts. Thanks to Sydney, our social Media intern, for keeping those up-to-date!

We won't be able to host the annual Equal Pay Day tabling at UWL so we're looking at other ways to bring awareness to this.

Here's a picture of the terrific window display at Pearl St Books. Thanks to Lois Gilbert, Carol Robertson and Karen Lange for their creative work!



Int'l Women's Day 2020

by Lois Gilbert, Chair

March 8 was a beautiful 65° day in La Crosse and about 170 people stopped by the UW-L Student Union to attend the AAUW-sponsored International Women's Day Celebration. AAUW has been sponsoring this event since 2013 and its beginnings are based on research conducted by Erica Koonmen.

This year, AAUW was joined by 13 other community sponsoring organizations who share similar missions of supporting women and fighting racism. New to the event, a free photo booth provided by UW-L offered people the chance to pose and "vogue" with the slogan for IWD: **#EachforEqual**, meaning that, separately and collectively, we can all fight for gender equity. Other signs and props were also provided and people really hammed it up posing with friends, family, sponsors, and panelists.

The panelists this year were La Crosse residents who have left their first country and adopted the U.S. They represented the nations of Kosovo (AAUW member Lema Kabashi, Ph.D.), Myanmar, Pakistan, and Poland. Each of the panelists described their journey and what they have learned along the way. Their resilience and bravery through hardships were readily apparent. It was very impressive to learn how the panelists are contributing to our shared community. The audience survey comments were heartening to the planning committee and included remarks like, "very inspiring speakers," and "It is interesting to hear speakers that have different roots and came from different countries but they have come to the same consciousness. I understand that education is an important role to secure women's rights."

If you were unable to attend this event, you can see and hear the entire program by using this link: <https://mymedia.uwlax.edu/Mediasite/Play/acfe236d70ab4ddcb8f204322d9cf06e1d>



L-R: Lema Kabashi, Dr. Wah Wah Htun, Maira Sarfraz and Ania Meier

Public Policy

by Ann Brice, Chair

AAUW Response To Covid-19

On March 24, 2020, I had the pleasure of attending a talk given by AAUW director Kim Churches. There were over 300 AAUW members in attendance. You may think it was crazy to get that many people together in an enclosed space, and you would be right! But by using Zoom, Kim and the AAUW staff were able to create a sense of community while reassuring us about AAUW's role in helping us navigate these difficult times.

Kim began by addressing the seriousness of the COVID-19 crisis and how important it is for all of us to take care of ourselves, our families, and our communities. She is thinking about us, and is extremely concerned about how we can take action and be a voice in this crisis. Kim talked about the power of AAUW membership and that we all share a common mission. We can all connect virtually and keep AAUW moving forward. Kim then shared what AAUW has been doing since the crisis.

AAUW's response to the coronavirus so far:

- We are remaining calm, focused, compassionate, and flexible. We prepared to go to mandatory telework so we can work safely for ourselves and family. Focus on safety of staff and well-being of members.
- The AAUW National office moved to mandatory telework March 16th – extended to April 24th.
- Every day the numbers of coronavirus have compounded. We must maintain social distancing in order to flatten the curve. We need to look more to South Korea for a model.
- Zoom has been a lifesaver for AAUW as is Microsoft Teams. For example, tomorrow they are hosting a brown bag lunch over Zoom to go over their agenda.
- AAUW connect (for branch websites) is available and working. Everyone is working in unique situations.
- March 11 – all member leaders got an email. We've had a lot of personal communication with branch and state leaders. We have helped state groups postpone or cancel their large events. All of the states have been incredibly responsive to these postponements.
- Strongly recommend that if you have any additional branch programming, please do things virtually at least through April and probably through May.
- Are we canceling NCCWSL? We are in daily contact with U of Maryland and we are following what Governor Hogan is doing. We haven't yet canceled or postponed NCCWSL which is at the end of May. This is a health consideration and a financial consideration.
- This is the first of many online gatherings for us. We are hoping to provide many virtual meetings that focus on different topics.
- Equal Pay Day is right around the corner. We have many coalitions working together working to change equal pay, fair paid leave, etc.
- Creating new content for working people who are non-binary. There are many people who are 21-45 and now in the workforce who are looking for more ways to network and move the American workforce to be more inclusive. These webinars have to be relevant to their interests.

- All state conventions have been postponed or canceled; we'll have a presentation on the State of AAUW.
- Equity for women and girls – what are women in healthcare and hospitality facing in terms of pay and unemployment? The importance of paid and sick leave. Child care issues. Fair scheduling for child care or elder care. Health and safety issues. Equal pay continues to be a massive issue that we can continue to work on.
- We will continue to work on student debt.
- Voting rights and census rights – many of you have received your census in the mail. How do we make sure everyone can vote?
- Shout out to the branches who are telling National what we're already doing.
- Other ways we can help: use Zoom to communicate.
- You can work as a branch to collect resources for community. Also can set up a phone tree. We need human contact.

How can members support AAUW and our mission?

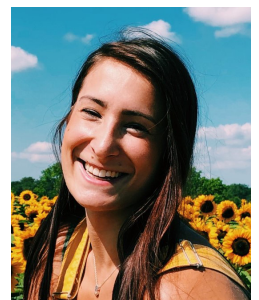
- WorkSmart online – negotiation tool salary at www.aauw.org. We can offer this as a free resource to the community.
- Voter education.
- Online platforms.
- Telephone or Zoom town halls
- Encourage people to get absentee ballots.
- Do advocacy without having to go to legislature. We can call and email our elected officials.
- We can advocate with our voices to local and regional media what coronavirus and economic security means for women. The AAUW team can help us write letters or articles.
- Advocate for voting rights.
- Donate to AAUW's Greatest Needs fund. <https://www.aauw.org/resource/the-aauw-fund-faq/>

Kim wrapped up her talk by stating: "We are calm, we are focused, and we are working hard. We are committed to getting more done with your help. The team is here ready to help you. We will be sending out more information on upcoming webinars. Please stay positive and keep your spirits up. Do something every day that will make you happy. Take care of your soul as well as we are taking care of our nation."

Meet Our New Public Policy Intern

Marissa Tatro

I am a Political Science and Philosophy Major. As a public policy intern I hope to gain experience and insight while promoting a beneficial organization and its primary causes and follow the relationship it has with the political sphere.



FROM THE TREASURER

Financial Report as of
March 21, 2020

Checking Account..... \$12,747.34

Scholarship Bridge..... \$757.00

Renewal Time

by Michele Strange, Treasurer



It's time for AAUW membership renewals again. Boy, it comes around faster each year! This time you will have a choice of renewing directly online with a credit/debit card through AAUW National's database or sending me a check. The total dues are the same as last year: \$80.

For those who want to renew online, I will need to send you an email from AAUW National. Just email me a request and I will send you the form. You will be renewing for national, state and local. Your state and local dues will be paid automatically into the Wisconsin and La Crosse branch bank accounts. I will receive a notice from national when your renewal is processed.

For those who want to renew with a check, there is an email attachment with the 2020/21 renewal form included with this month's Current. This includes all the information you need to renew. Please mail the form and your check to me.

If anyone has any questions about this process, please contact me at mstrange@eagle.uwlax.edu

Art Fair on the Green

by Carol Robertson, Chair

In these days of uncertainty, we are still planning for Art Fair on the Green on the weekend of July 25 & 26. With UW-L being on hiatus, it's difficult to know exactly what's happening but applications and registrations are coming in. We will hold some sort of jury day, most likely via email with our judges.

Committee members: if you have questions regarding how to proceed, let me know, but you can continue planning as you have in the past.

I am optimistic that we will be able to enjoy hosting the art fair and look forward to seeing everyone.

Membership News

by Marilyn Hempstead, Chair



CONDOLENCES

It is with sadness we note the passing of Patricia Boge's husband Jerome on March 21st. Sincere sympathy to Patricia, their children and grandchildren.

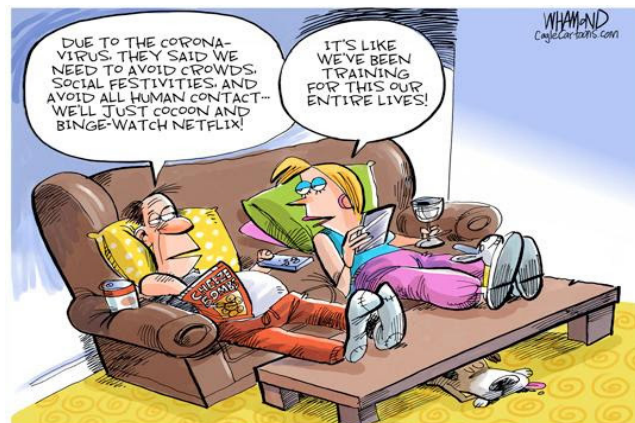
MEMBERS RECEIVE HONORS

Diana Moran Thundercloud was selected as the 2019/2020 Community Fellow for the Graduate Social Innovation and Sustainability Leadership Program at Edgewood College. Diana is a doctoral student at Edgewood in Madison and is active in Native Indigenous rights and issues.

Margaret Wood, our program co-chair, was honored with the Volunteer of the Year award at the March 2 meeting of the local retired teachers organization. It is well deserved. Margaret's generous volunteerism benefits AAUW and many organizations in the wider community.



Congratulations to two stellar members of our branch! In these difficult times it is important to recognize contributions of these two and all of us as we continue to carry out the mission of AAUW.





American Association of University Women
La Crosse Branch
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THE CURRENT

a publication of the La Crosse, WI AAUW Branch

AAUW’s Mission

AAUW advances equity for women and girls through advocacy, education, philanthropy, and research.

For 130 years, AAUW members have examined and taken positions on the fundamental issues of the day: educational, social, economic, and political. Our commitment to our mission is reflected in all aspects of our work.

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Newsletter content submission deadline:
Please send all content for *The Current* to Erica by the 20th of the month.

Problems receiving the CURRENT? Let us know at:
aauwlacrosse@hotmail.com