

MAY MEETING

Scholarship Reception

When: Saturday, May 13

Where: Viterbo University—
School of Nursing
(on the corner of Jackson & 10th Streets)

Times:

- AAUW Member Registration: 9:30am
- Scholarship Recipient Check-in: 10:00am
- Continental Breakfast (\$9/person) in the Foyer: 9:50am-10:30am
- Recipient Photograph at the Fireplace: 10:25am
- Move to the Auditorium (Room 196): 10:25am
- Members sit in rows 3-6 (counting from the front); bring refreshments with you. Use the elevator to avoid stairs.
- Announcement of Recipients and Introduction by Each Recipient: 10:35am-11:45am

Donations are welcomed to cover the cost of our recipients and their guests. We ask AAUW members to consider "sponsoring" a recipient (and/or the recipient's guest). This helps the branch budget! You may mail a sponsorship check to our branch treasurer, Ann; or you may pay at the event.

Members and guests are welcome to attend the reception or just come for the program. Please indicate such when you RSVP. Either way, please join us in celebrating exceptional, barrier-breaking students.

Plan to arrive by 10:00am to enjoy breakfast and talk with our recipients and their guests. You will recognize the recipients by white banner with the word "Recipient" on their name tags. As any of the scholarship application readers can attest, our recipients deserve this celebration! And, it provides proof that we expend valuable efforts in presenting AAUW's Art Fair on the Green.

Note: You will find restrooms on both the first floor and the lower level.

AAUW

LA CROSSE (WI)

The Current

a publication of the La Crosse, WI AAUW Branch

VOLUME 62, ISSUE 9

MAY 2023



PRESIDENT'S PERSPECTIVE:

Regenerating

by Andrea Hansen, Branch President

How are you doing in the spring of this year? Despite the 14 inches of snow and cold mornings this April, the persistence of spring was also evident. The green of tender leaves breaking through the heavy snow-lined branches offered needed assurance that spring wasn't broken. Birdsong carried a reminder that this spring wouldn't be a silent one. Although the climate crisis is the alarming context we can't ignore, a recent article of policy wins since the Earth Day 2022 heartens me. We know what is required and what is possible to prevent damage and help heal the planet.

<https://www.vox.com/science/23691377/earth-day-2023-facts-wins-climate-biodiversity>

This spring underscores the complexity of nature's processes. Something more is in play than "living and dying," "beginnings and endings," or "growth and decay." That more is captured by the concept of **regeneration** pointing to "the ability and tendency to regrow, to be renewed or restored, especially after being damaged or lost."

Regeneration is so much easier to see in spring and summer, right? And yet, **regenerative** processes are continuous. What looks to be dead

is full of life. The fallen leaves feed the smallest of creatures. The stillness of a frozen lake obscures the activity below.



Clearly, **regenerative** processes are integral to our bodies. Bodies heal. Cuts close. Bones grow back together. Damaged brains repair. I am

grateful when our members share their healing stories. Recognizing the **regenerative** processes present in human communities and social systems is a challenge, though. The onslaught of still and video images of conflict, violence, and disasters overwhelm. Narratives reflect, reinforce, and, even create, the destructive processes of othering, scapegoating, exploitation, and the

Continued on Page 2 »

NEXT BOARD MEETING

Monday, May 8

5:00pm

Zoom link available from Andrea

Meetings are open to any member who is interested in attending.

To place items on the agenda or confirm your attendance, contact

Andrea at 608-487-5571 or
ahansen@uwlax.edu

Get all the CURRENT news at our website: www.aauwlacrosse.org

Regenerating ... (continued from page 1)

the systems of oppression and violence. We can lose our vision and discount the potency of our efforts. We overlook the **regenerative** processes at work.

Which leads me to our April 20 presentation by Dr. Sona Kazemi, PhD on the current Iranian feminist revolution. Mass protests began last September when young women (average age of 15) took to the streets at the killing of Zhina Mahsa Amini, 22, by the "morality police." Even as theocratic state repression escalates, women and school girls continue to lead the revolution against patriarchy and its imposed system of gender apartheid. Men and boys are joining them, as they put their lives on the line.

You've seen the images. Young women, college and high school students, in the streets, taking off their headscarves and waving them as flags, dancing and laughing, defying all that stands in the way of **Women, Life, Freedom**.

This is what **regeneration** looks like in the human community, I think. People tapping into a collective "ability to regrow, to be renewed or restore" what has been "damaged or lost." Families, friends, and communities finding ways to restore bodies, renew spirits, and build and re-build communities of care in the midst of dysfunction and undoing.

Sona helped us understand the present moment more fully, breaking through the dominant narrative of passive veiled women, a country "stuck in time," and people so very different than "us". She presented a timeline of past protests and revolutions in Iran. The images from 1911 stood out, showing a group of smiling women soldiers who fought against the English and Russian colonizers, monarchy, and clergy. She showed family photos from the 50-60's with familiar styles. Sona's school pictures, taken after the 1979 revolution, showed a charming school girl in her mandatory headscarf as the present system of gender apartheid was fully installed by then. The video-selfie of Zhina Mahsa Amini in all her exuberant youthful energy closed the presentation and brought us to this current moment. Grief and silence followed.

Regenerative processes exist together in nature and the human community. If we pay attention, we will see the ways we, as individuals and collectives, have always sought and worked toward restoration and wholeness. I heard this in the stories of Zhina, the young people in the streets of Tehran, in the brief history lesson of Iran, and in the passionate words of a generous scholar named Sona. I see it in the on-going work of AAUW, too. Isn't this powerful evidence of **regeneration** at work?

Scholarships & Grants

by Robert Richardson, Co-Chair



The Scholarships and Grants Committee welcomes other AAUW members to join us in our work. We seek, we research, we determine, and we celebrate. Please contact any of the following to express your appreciation and/or your interest to join the committee.

Francie Ball, Ann Brice, Sharon De Cicco, Jan Eriksen, Andrea Hansen, Betty Kruck, Mary O'Sullivan, Robert Richardson, Silvana Richardson, Carol Robertson, Sandy Sechrest.

2023 Name Grant Awarded

By Jan Eriksen, Chair

At the April 15 Annual Meeting, held via Zoom, **Barb Fischer** was honored with the 2023 AAUW-La Crosse Name Grant. One nominator said: "Barb has stepped up to contribute to the La Crosse branch ever since she joined. She started out by taking on the branch website (www.aauwlacrosse.org) updating and maintenance. She has spent a lot of time re-imagining what needs to be on the website and making it attractive to members. Recently, in an effort to increase traffic to it, she created a quiz with the answers being found only on the website!"

In 2020, when we were unable to hold our annual fundraising Art Fair on the Green in person, Barb undertook the huge project of creating the Art Fair website (www.artfaironthegreen.org). She posted information about all of the artists and photos of their pieces. The site can be searched in three ways: by artist's name, by booth number, and by medium. She continues to update the website, even though we are back to holding the physical Art Fair.

Another of Barb's nominators indicated, "Barb also just fills in and helps wherever needed. She appears at the Art Fair with items that she knows will be needed at the concession area. She is constantly aware of people and places that need attention."

In 2022, Barb was elected Vice President, Membership. She writes articles for each issue of The Current and notifies us all about new members. Barb has created a membership committee to assist with fresh ideas regarding recruitment and retention.

The AAUW-La Crosse Branch has awarded the Name Grant each year since 1960 to a member who has provided exemplary service to the association. A donation is sent to AAUW national in the honoree's name.



President Andrea Hansen (L) presents Barb Fischer with the 2023 Name Grant Award

Membership News

by Barb Fischer, VP Membership

CORRECTION

Monica Foster's correct address is: W5374 Boma Road, La Crosse, WI 54601. I apologize for the error in the last newsletter.

NEW ADDRESS

Joan Koonmen has *another* new address:
Liberty Village
200 Liberty Place, Apt 204
Tomah WI 54660
Phone: 608-372-6262

INTERVIEWS WITH NEW MEMBERS AND OTHERS

The membership committee is looking forward to interviewing new members and our present membership to welcome new members, deepen relationships, recognize our amazing members, and encourage others to join. Next month we will feature an interview with Monica Foster who is our newest member.

Renewing Your Membership

by Barb Fischer, VP Membership

Dues for 2023-24 are \$93.00 (new members pay \$88 until July 1st) and includes:

National \$72.00 (\$69.00 is tax-deductible);
State \$13.00; and Branch \$8.00.

1. Online payment is the easiest.

Go to: <https://www.aauw.org/membership/>.

If you are renewing, go to the LOG-IN choice above, instead of the Membership choice.

At the bottom of the first page, select RENEW.

This takes you to a page where you can update your info.
When ok, click NEXT.

Next page takes care of National.

At next page you select BRANCH.

Ours will be towards the bottom: **WI - La Crosse, #4016**.

Next you will be taken to the State page to select WI
(again towards the bottom of the page).

The next page asks if you want to donate to the
Greatest Needs Fund.

You will be able to edit anything on the next page.

When okay, click NEXT.

At the end you will be able to select an option to print your
renewal information.

2. If paying by check, please make your check payable

to: **AAUW – La Crosse Branch**. The form you need can be
found at: <https://www.aauw.org/membership/>.

Send the form and payment to:

Ann Brice, 211 29th Street South, La Crosse, WI 54601-4312.

Note: AAUW National Life Membership is \$1,440 and is fully
tax deductible. When you sign up before June 30,
there is a \$100 savings because you can upgrade to
lifetime membership for \$1,340.

Study Group News

AAUW IN ACTION (AIA)

See this page for meeting info

Contact: Erica Koonmen, moogs56@hotmail.com

HEARTH & HOME

Contact: Sharon DeCicco, 788-5356

CONTEMPORARY AUTHORS

3rd Tuesday of the month at 2pm

Contact: Alice Ross, 788-4206

SCHOLARSHIP BRIDGE/CARD GAMES

TBA; Contact: Sharon DeCicco, 788-5356

AAUW IN ACTION (AIA)

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

If you're interested in joining us for a meeting, or just knowing what we're planning, please ask to be on our email list: Erica at moogs56@hotmail.com

Next meeting: Wed, May 17, potluck at Erica's, 5:00pm

Join us for the annual review of the year where we
celebrate our successful events, look to the future and
enjoy companionship while sharing a delicious potluck
meal! RSVP by May 14 to Erica, moogs56@hotmail.com.

NEW! Branch STEM Committee

by Annie Allen-Wyman, Chair. (608) 514-2871 therosyorb@gmail.com

Thank you for the opportunity to help AAUW reach more women
in careers (or college) related to science, technology, engineering,
and mathematics. STEM is a huge umbrella that affects all of us in
all parts of our lives: aero-dynamic cars and EVs, computers and
social media data, security systems on our houses, vaccinations
and pandemic research, calculating "fair pay" and reparations for
formerly enslaved peoples, and climate change mitigation.



AAUW has a strong national program called
STEM Ed that includes summer camps.

Learn more: [STEMEd for Girls](#). Watch this
space for more information about local and

nearby STEM Ed events! Please contact me to join the committee.

Shared on our branch's Facebook page is a press release from
Lt. Gov. Sara Rodriguez about the annual K-12 scholarship
awarding up to \$1,000 to 12 schools nationally to support
STEM-related activities for youth. Applications are accepted
until May 1, 2023. The application is available at
[NLGA \(National Lieutenant Governors Association\)](#)

AAUW La Crosse will make more connections with UW-L,
Viterbo, and WesternTech through courses related to STEM
topics – and the STEM committee will intersect with our
Membership and DEI committees.

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

by June Reinert, DEI Chair

More on Inclusive Spaces

What does belonging look and feel like in an organizational setting?

To feel you belong does not mean you fit in because you are just like everyone else. It means you fit in because your uniqueness is part of what makes your group, your team, your organization, more effective.

When people are allowed to feel like they belong in an organization, they will feel more confident in their abilities to represent themselves authentically. People who "belong" feel comfortable expressing their ideas, sharing experiences, and contributing to a group when they know their input is valued.

For someone seen as "different" than the rest of their team or organization, the work of belonging can be onerous. This is especially true for people from groups that are marginalized based on race, gender, sexuality disabilities, and other identities.

We all need psychological safety: the ability to make a valuable contribution without fear of being ridiculed or rejected. We also need our colleagues to be more aware of the subtle, and often unintentional ways they create exclusion through their words and actions.

A sense of belonging can be jeopardized by acts of exclusion from co-workers/colleagues through micro-or macro-aggressions such as talking over or shutting colleagues down when they try to contribute and devaluing their contributions. This is often done unknowingly through unconscious bias.

We are all subject to unconscious biases, underlying attitudes, thoughts, and beliefs, and even fears about other people or groups that impact our behavior. **Affinity bias is the unconscious tendency we each have that pulls us toward people who are like us.** It's easier to spend time with people who have similar interests, experiences, and backgrounds. As a result, our professional networks -- the people we turn to for advice, professional development, and new opportunities -- tend to be very homogeneous. It takes more effort to build relationships with people who are different from us. But that is the only way to build a culture of belonging and to create sustainable change.

In a culture where people feel psychologically safe, they feel like the **belong**, they will feel confident enough to put an idea on the table, and know that if it isn't accepted, it was not because of anything innately to do with them. When people feel psychologically safe, they believe others will give them the benefit of the doubt, that they can ask questions and raise issues without fear. They can be vulnerable with others and be authentic. **Belonging** creates the trust that is needed for people to share their best thinking and put their craziest, and perhaps, least popular ideas on the table. **In psychologically safe spaces, people learn and grow together, push back against the status quo and innovate.**

<https://www.aauw.org/resources/member/governance-tools/dei-toolkit/key-terms-concepts/>

Historian's Corner

by Marilyn Hempstead (32 yr member), Branch Historian

Making History

This year as the branch celebrated and honored our past 100 years, we remembered and honored the myriad accomplishments which stretch back to 1922. We recognized the diligent women (and later men) who kept alive and thriving our mission of promoting education and opportunities for women and girls to develop and use their talents and abilities and serve society.

All of this is documented in our newsletters, scrapbooks, secretary's minutes, committee reports and other resources stored at the Area Research Center of UW-L and the La Crosse Public Library. (More current materials are still in my basement or in the hands of officers, but will find their way to those repositories.) Now we have the added advantage of online resources: our own website and using search engines to find specific topics.

Our history is safe, valuable and accessible.

There have been many changes and refinements along the way which continue to happen as we develop. What hasn't changed and won't are the respect for one another and the cooperation that has been evident throughout our history. These are key ingredients as we learn and discover new directions such as an emphasis on diversity and inclusiveness while continuing the traditions of the giving of scholarships, fundraising to do so and more that began in the earliest years. Together we keep making history.



*The Centennial Program Players representing the branch through the decades.
L-R: Betty Kruck, Carol Roberston, Ann Brice, Marilyn Hempstead, Silvana Richardson, Robert Richardson, Karen Lange, Erica Koonmen, Sharon DeCicco, Lois Gilbert, Jan Eriksen*



Diversity



Inclusion



Belonging

FROM THE TREASURER

Ann Brice

Financial Report as of
April 24, 2023

Checking Account.....\$7,002.46

Scholarship Bridge.....\$321.00

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Reminder - YOUR EMAIL
BALLOT HAS ARRIVED!
VOTE!!

Sometime around April 5th you should have received your AAUW ballot. **Look for the email titled "AAUW Election 2023."**

The email contains your Elector ID and your password. By clicking on the link directly following the ID and Password, you go straight to the ballot. Merely put in your personal Elector ID and password. That takes you straight to the ballot. Vote, then hit "continue". That will give you a final chance to confirm. Hit "confirm" and you have voted. It is that quick and easy! Do not delay, just vote now.

Three reasons you should vote:

1) It is one of the easier duties that AAUW asks of its members. Elections are necessary under AAUW Bylaws. Voting ensures it continues to function smoothly and appropriately.

2) A certain percentage of the membership must vote for there to be a valid election. We are always asking people to vote in support of our policies. This is your turn to vote.

3) It is easy.

If anyone has any problems or did not receive the "AAUW Election 2023" email, or has any other questions, please contact me.

Thank you.

Sara Ramaker

AAUW-WI Scholarship Chair

920-366-0910

ramaker.sara@gmail.com

On The Web

by Barb Fischer, Branch Web Manager &
Art Fair on the Green Web Designer



<https://aauwlacrosse.org> or <https://lacrosse-wi.aauw.net>

To renew dues online go to: <https://www.aauw.org/membership/>
or the renewal form can be found at:

https://lacrosse-wi.aauw.net/files/2023/04/aauw2023mem_dues_renewal-2.pdf

See the Membership section for full instructions.

Don't forget to visit: www.artfaironthegreen.org Soon I will be creating the new 2023 Art Fair on the Green website. While I do this, the majority of the pages will be disconnected. However, for the next few weeks you can still place orders from last year's artfaironthegreen.org. **Check it out!**

Two NCCWSL Scholarship Recipients Announced

by Jan Eriksen, NCCWSL Chair

Two Viterbo University students will be attending the National Conference for College Women Student Leaders (NCCWSL) this year, courtesy of AAUW.



One of the scholarship winners is sponsored by the La Crosse Branch with finances provided by the Dobrunz Fund, administered by the La Crosse Community Foundation. **Zoe de Boer** is a graduate student in the Servant Leadership program. Zoe is also Director of Youth, Young Adult, and Mercy Ministries at Onalaska United Methodist Church, where she oversees ministry for grades 5-12, all young adult programming, and social justice related ministry. This includes organizing community dinners, involvement with La Crosse Pride and working with the Jail Ministry. Her volunteer service is extensive, including directing Abilities in Harmony Show Choir Camps and participating in a mission trip to McAllen, TX to work with immigrants and immigration law. She became Miss La Crosse-Oktoberfest in 2022, which resulted in over 50 volunteer appearances at nursing homes, schools, churches, and local businesses.

The other NCCWSL scholarship recipient is **Sabrina Darden**, studying for a BS in Biology with the goal of enrolling in a Physician's Assistant program. Sabrina is receiving the NCCWSL scholarship from AAUW-Wisconsin. She is a student leader who has provided volunteer service for the Salvation Army, Catholic Charities of La Crosse, and Fired Up for Science. Sabrina's awards include the Janice Bahr Biology Scholarship, the Exel Energy Scholarship for Women in Science, and the Academic Excellence Award. She is a part of the Honors Program at Viterbo and serves on the Honors Leadership Board.



NCCWSL is hosted by AAUW and held at the University of Maryland—College Park on May 31-June 3, 2023. AAUW describes NCCWSL as "three days of leadership training, inspiration, and networking." The primary topics addressed at the convention are leadership development, professional development, activism, women's issues, and identity and diversity. Keynote speaker is Minda Harts, assistant professor of public service at NYU's Robert F. Wagner Graduate School of Public Service, and award-winning author of *The Memo: What Women of Color Need to Know to Secure a Seat at the Table*.

Thank you to June Reinert and Pam Thiel, who served on the La Crosse Branch's NCCWSL Scholarship Committee.

AAUW La Crosse Board Meeting Minutes

by JoAnne Revels, Secretary

AAUW La Crosse Branch
General Meeting & Installation of Officers (Zoom)
April 15, 2023

Members present: Andrea Hansen, Robert Richardson, Silvana Richardson, Ann Brice, Sharon De Cicco, Karen Lange, Erica Koonmen, Arthus Cleveland, Barb Fischer, Sandy Sechrest, Betty Kruck, Ginny Brochhausen, Anita Evans, Monica Foster, Pam Thiel, Lema Kabashi, Annie Allen-Wyman, Cheri Niedzwiecki, Amy Poteet, Jan Eriksen, June Reinert, Michele Strange.

Guests present:

- Stacy Narcotta-Welp, Director, Student Success Services & Foster Success For Independent Scholars, UW-La Crosse
- Xong Xiong, Executive Director of Cia Siab, Inc.

President Andrea Hansen called the meeting to order at 10:05.

Andrea welcomed guests and our newest Branch member, Monica Foster. She thanked the La Crosse Branch members who hold positions for AAUW-WI for their work and expressed appreciation for the work of our branch's committee chairs and members this year.

Andrea recognized the nominating committee, the slate of officers prepared, and the decision for email vote. Robert Richardson reported the final tally of vote for slate of officers: 53 approved. 1 abstention.

Recognition of Outgoing Officers and Installation of New Officers, facilitated by Ann Brice.

Deep appreciation was expressed for excellent work of out-going Co-VPs of Programs, **Karen Lange** (completed 2-year term) and **Marlene De La Cruz-Guzman** (completed 1-year of term)

Thank you to the Branch's continuing officers: **Andrea Hansen** (President); **JoAnne Revels** (Secretary, continuing); **Barb Fischer** (V-P Membership); **Ann Brice** (Treasurer)

Installation of newly-elected officers of the La Crosse Branch (terms begin July 1, 2023):

- **Lema Kabashi, President-Elect**
- **Silvana Richardson, V-P Program**

Name Grant Award recipient was announced by Jan Eriksen. With this award, we recognize the many contributions of **Barb Fischer**, V-P of Membership and website maestro. Special appreciation for (re)creating a virtual Art Fair during the pandemic. Thank you!

Robert and Sharon introduced two of our 2023 Grant Recipients, Stacy Narcotta-Welp and Xong Xiong who gave short presentations on their work. Fostering Success provides student support services to undergraduates who have aged-out of the foster care systems or independent of family support. Cia Siab is an innovative and expanding nonprofit providing direct service support to the Hmong community, with special emphasis on Hmong youth, elders, survivors of gender-based violence, and LGBTQ folks. A full list of grant recipients will appear in the Current.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:07

Respectfully submitted by JoAnne Revels, Secretary