

# OCTOBER MEETING

## Understanding Anti-HMoob Violence

Speaker: Maij Xyooj from Cia Siab, Inc

When: Saturday, Oct 14

Time: 9:30 Registration  
9:45 Brunch  
10:00 Meeting  
10:30 Program

Where: Viterbo University  
School of Nursing, Rm 195  
10th and Jackson Streets, La Crosse  
Parking available in the lot next to the building

Brunch: Cost \$12; pay with cash or check  
Menu: eggs, selection of pastries,  
potatoes, fruit, water, coffee, tea

Please RSVP to email message from Robert Richardson

In November 2022, Cia Siab, Inc. released a [white paper](#) (click to read) on hate violence against HMoob people from 1975 to 2019 in California, Minnesota, and Wisconsin. This white paper was part of a multi-year, community-driven research project that aimed to track and document violence against HMoob people in the USA. In this presentation, Maij will share findings and analyses from the research project as well as provide recommendations on how to improve the wellbeing of HMoob communities in WI.

Maij Xyooj (Mai Xiong) is the Community Resource Advocate at Cia Siab, Inc. where she works on hate violence prevention and education. She received her BA from UW-Madison ; her MLIS and MA in Women's and Gender Studies from UW-Milwaukee. Maij is a 2022 Association for Asian Studies Humanities Fellow. In this capacity, she helped to recently launch Cia Siab, Inc.'s white paper on hate violence against HMoob people.



Please see page 6 for an article about the new term "HMoob".



LA CROSSE (WI)



# The Current

a publication of the La Crosse, WI AAUW Branch

VOLUME 63, ISSUE 2

OCTOBER 2023



### PRESIDENT'S PERSPECTIVE:

## Non-Partisan But Not Value Neutral

by Andrea Hansen, Branch President

Since June, WI Assembly Speaker Vos has promised no funding for needed raises for UW employees unless UW System and campuses dismantle their DEI programs and positions. The attacks leveled against the staff, faculty, and researchers are mean-spirited. They are devoid of content reflecting any real knowledge of this dynamic field, programs and best practices. It is lost on Speaker Vos and others that DEI initiatives, services, and scholarship have evolved overtime in response to the demands of students, parents, communities, workers, and employers. Of course, understanding the role of DEI in students' learning and success isn't the goal. As Wisconsin is second only to Tennessee in extremely gerrymandered electoral maps, students and many others are finding it difficult to have their voices heard.



of Race, Gender, and Sexuality Studies helps me to see the manifestations of these large patterns up-close-and-personal. The harm to our present and future students is real. Dedicated faculty and staff are affected.

There are consequences for the misrepresentation and disdain for DEI, the scholarship and practice, the values and experiences that inform it. There is no way to dismiss this conflicted situation as merely or acceptable "politics."

A snapshot of "real college" under these conditions: I feel tears coming when talking with a student who can't wait to have their own classroom as a teacher while letting me know how bad it was for teachers back in their home district. I hear from SSP student parents who are

*Continued on Page 2 »*

### NEXT BOARD MEETING

**Monday, October 9**

via Zoom at 5:00pm  
Zoom link available from Andrea

Meetings are open to all members

**To place items on the agenda or confirm your attendance,** contact Andrea at 608-487-5571 or [ahansen@uwlax.edu](mailto:ahansen@uwlax.edu)

## Non Partisan But Not Value Neutral... (continued from page 1)

amazed that “someone like me” could ever attend a university, while they share their worries about keeping their car in working condition and finding childcare. I think of the students who share, with considerable relief, that they’ve finally found a place of belonging at college.

Targeting DEI programming is calculated to protect the very systems House Leader Vos and other politicians deny exist. Many students understand this, especially the students from historically underrepresented groups. They know their race, gender, class, sexuality, disability, age, immigrant status, and/or other identities can and do shape the conditions of their families’ lives and their own. College provides the support, structure, conceptual tools, and practice to help deepen understanding of self and society. DEI services, programs, and activities are critical.

My question for Mr. Vos: Where is the downside in acknowledging the rich diversity in our communities and state, promoting inclusion and belonging, and working for equity and fairness in education and all areas of our common life?

AAUW has responded to the backlash to hard won progress and backsliding on core values in our 140 year of advocacy and organizing for equity and belonging. We know that democracy and a just system require constant work to maintain. I encourage you to contact Rep. Vos: rep.vos@legis.wisconsin.gov or 608-266-3387, Toll-Free: (888) 534-0063 and your State Assembly representative (info in the back of the directory). If you haven't done so yet, please sign up for AAUW's Two Minute Activist: <https://www.aauw.org/act/two-minute-activist/>

### AAUW and La Crosse Branch DEI resources:

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

<https://lacrosse-wi.aauw.net/2020/08/26/diversity/>

### To see the DEI programs, services, and initiatives at UWL:

<https://www.uwlax.edu/diversity-inclusion/>

### To read more about Wisconsin's democracy backsliding since 2011:

<https://urbanmilwaukee.com/2023/05/10/data-wonk-wisconsin-ranks-among-four-least-democratic-states/>

### A study on the importance of "Belonging"

<https://www.thirdway.org/report/how-social-belonging-impacts-retention-at-broad-access-colleges>

### Responses of pre-service teachers:

<https://wisconsinexaminer.com/2023/07/06/diversity-equity-and-inclusion-practitioners-push-back-on-attempts-to-demonize-their-work/>

## AAUW Regional Conference Oct 19- 21 St. Louis MO



Registration is going on now for the AAUW Central States Regional Conference, “Celebrating AAUW: Reaching New Heights Together!” The 2023 conference will begin at 1:00 p.m. Thursday, October 19, and close at noon Saturday, October 21. The Drury Plaza Hotel St. Louis at the Arch is the conference site.

There will be two keynote speakers: Lisa Maatz, a gender equality expert, will present, “Challenges Facing Member-Driven Organizations” and Gloria Blackwell, AAUW CEO, will be there in person to speak about the organization, its members, and its programs. There will be numerous sessions on topics ranging from women’s health and reproductive rights, the gender pay gap, and book bannings to voting rights and challenges.

Thursday evening dinner entertainment will be a performance: HERstory – Susan B. Anthony, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, and Sojourner Truth.

The AAUW-Missouri website has additional information and forms: [aauw-mo.aauw.net](http://aauw-mo.aauw.net). Registration can be completed online. The Drury Hote reservation line is 1-800-325-0720. Please use the AAUW Code 10046618 when booking a room.

## OPEN BRANCH POSITION

*Newsletter Editor, The Current*  
Contact: Erica Koonmen

Duties: Collects the information from committee chairs and puts out the branch newsletter 10 times a year.

My hope for the next newsletter editor: I hope that you will make the newsletter an expression of your style and feel free to change it up anyway you like. It is time for a new outlook and and fresh vision!

I'll help you!

I am available to either help you use Adobe InDesign or transition to an entirely different program. I have ALL the ID files and the .pdf files to pass on. We can use this year as a transitional year.

## BRANCH DIRECTORY

By Robert Richardson

AAUW mailed (via USPS) the Directory to all members. If you did not receive your Directory or if any of your information in the directory is inaccurate, please contact Robert. This year’s cover in Marbled Blue, as a Chakra color, is associated with a person’s capacity to express genuine self and to converse freely with others.

## SCHOLARSHIPS & GRANTS COMMITTEE

By Robert Richardson



Prior to the October Branch meeting, the Scholarships & Grants Committee (SGC) will meet in-person on

10/14/23 at 9:00am in Room 103 in the School of Nursing at Viterbo. In advance, Robert will send to SGC members the meeting-preparation materials.

We will approve 2024 scholarship applications and select researchers for grant considerations.

## STEM

by Annie Allen-Wyman, Chair

The U.S. Department of Education hosted last year the YOU Belong in STEM National Coordinating Conference in Washington, D.C., and introduced the [Raise the Bar: STEM Excellence for All Students](#) initiative of the Biden-Harris Administration. Its goal is to help implement and scale equitable, high-quality STEM education for all students from PreK to higher education—regardless of background—to ensure their 21st century career readiness and global competitiveness. “Research shows how a sense of belonging in rich and rigorous classrooms is directly correlated to students’ long-term academic success. Moreover, the Department’s Civil Rights Data Collection continues to demonstrate that students of color and students with disabilities are disproportionately excluded from learning opportunities in STEM,” said U.S. Deputy Secretary of Education Cindy Marten. “Today, we are saying unequivocally to all students and educators that they belong in STEM and that they deserve to have rigorous and relevant educational experiences that inspire and empower them to reach their full potential as productive, contributing members of our nation’s workforce.”

Quote is taken from a US Department of Education 2022 news release -- [Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math, including Computer Science](#) | U.S. DOE.

The role of the La Crosse Branch of AAUW is to provide similar access locally to STEM resources through collaboration with UW-La Crosse, Viterbo, and Western Technical College -- and through outreach to our local high schools.

## Scholarship Bridge

The AAUW Scholarship Bridge Tournament is starting again after a pause due to Covid. If you, or you and a partner, male or female, would like to play with either a women's or couples group, please contact Sharon DeCicco at 608-452-4571, [sharon.decicco@gmail.com](mailto:sharon.decicco@gmail.com) or Jack Hasse at 507-313-1128 by Oct 31st.



## Hearth & Home



After a hiatus of several years, the Hearth and Home study group is starting anew. The first meeting will be in November, date and time to be determined after a group is formed. We will be having a tour of the LaCrosse Historical Society located in downtown LaCrosse. Pam Theil will make arrangements. Following the tour we will have dinner at a nearby restaurant. If you would like to join us, contact Sharon DeCicco at 608-452-4571 or email at [sharon.decicco@gmail.com](mailto:sharon.decicco@gmail.com).

## Small Group Contacts

### AAUW IN ACTION (AIA)

See this page for meeting info

Contact: Erica Koonmen, [moogs56@hotmail.com](mailto:moogs56@hotmail.com)

### DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION (DEI)

Contact: June Reinert, 608-461-1109

[reinert.june@eagle.uwlax.edu](mailto:reinert.june@eagle.uwlax.edu)

### CONTEMPORARY AUTHORS

3rd Tuesday of the month at 2pm

Contact: Alice Ross, 788-4206

### SCHOLARSHIP BRIDGE/CARD GAMES

Contact: Sharon DeCicco, 608-452-4571

[sharon.decicco@gmail.com](mailto:sharon.decicco@gmail.com)

### STEM

Contact: Annie Allen-Wyman 608-514-2871

[therosyorb@gmail.com](mailto:therosyorb@gmail.com)

### WOMEN SUPPORTING WOMEN GLOBALLY

Joint partnership group with Viterbo and UWL

Contact: Erica Koonmen, [moogs56@hotmail.com](mailto:moogs56@hotmail.com)

## 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](mailto:moogs56@hotmail.com)

### Next meeting: Wed, Nov 1, 4pm, Main Public Library

Banned Book week is October 1-7. Pearl St. Books and The Root Note are co-sponsoring the Adult Banned Book Fair on Thursday, Oct 5, 7pm at the Root Note, 115 4th St S, La Crosse. We're checking to see if we can be involved with that too!

We decided to have the Women Supporting Women Globally be a separate Interest Group so they will be setting up their own meetings and events. If you're interested in being part of that, please let Erica know.

The theme for Women's History Month 2024 (March) is: **Women Who Advocate for DEI**. We have some good ideas for activities and Annie will be heading up this work.

Our annual International Women's Day event planning will begin in November for the March 8th program. We'd love to have you join us in the development of that.

Other activities in the pipeline:

- Working with LWV to do a program on "Understanding Political Offices" for high school girls.
- Following up with Hope Restores to see what partnerships we can do together.

Exciting things going on--you can be part of it!

## Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

by June Reinert, DEI Chair

### Inclusion Infusion

The initial call for diversity training encompasses the entire AAUW membership. In a letter from the CEO of AAUW National in 2018, AAUW put forth a bold vision for our future with a new strategic plan. The AAUW La Crosse Branch has been asked to develop a plan to diversify our membership. The DEI (Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion) committee has been charged with the development of programs and membership to make our AAUW branch more inclusive. The Committee is eager to continue this work and needs your help.

Our committee has developed a questionnaire for you to complete. You will find it on pages 7 & 8 of this newsletter. This will help us plan programs to better suit your needs and plan programs in the future, utilizing some of your expertise. Please send the completed form to June Reinert, reinert.june@eagle.uwlax.edu or 2555 7th St. S. #129 La Crosse WI 54601. You may also bring the form to our AAUW meeting on October 14th. We will have paper copies of the questionnaire for you to fill out at our meeting aslo.

If you are interested in serving on the La Crosse Branch of the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion committee, please contact June Reinert: reinert.june@eagle.uwlax.edu.

I hope to hear from you.



## You're invited: YWCA Tribute to Outstanding Women Event

Program includes dinner, awards ceremony, and guest speaker. Dancing will follow the formal program beginning at 8:00 p.m.

To purchase tickets, scan the QR code or visit [givebutter.com/ywcalaxtribute2023](https://givebutter.com/ywcalaxtribute2023)

Branch Member Erica Koomen will be receiving an award. Please contact Betty at [krux@mwt.net](mailto:krux@mwt.net) for more info.

## Historian's Corner

by Marilyn Hempstead (33 yr member), Branch Historian

### 50 Years Ago; Part 2

The 50-year members were recognized and received certificates at the September meeting thanks to Membership Chair Barb Fischer. Part II gives added details of our branch, with some connections and some differences, from the time when the honorees were new members.

In September of 1973 Sharon De Cicco remembers with some hesitation approaching the house of President Doris Skemp who was hosting a coffee for new and prospective members. She was invited in, became a member and she still is.

The dues Sharon paid were \$12.50 of which \$6.40 went to National. Monthly meeting reminders were done by the 51 telephone callers. The CURRENT was 2 or 3 typed pages stapled together and mailed to the over 350 regular members and 14 associates.

Associates Clare Engelhard and Eleanor Roraff are represented now by daughters Alice Engelhard Gassere and Catherine Roraff. There were four Dr. Gundersen wives. Currently there is one: Joan Gundersen. Josephine Hintgen for whom Hintgen Elementary is named was a member. Fifty-year honoree Carol Taebel served as recording secretary.

Numerous topics were studied with the book study groups being the most similar to today. The Bridge Scholarship program which still exists held its annual tournament in October. Also in October was the Harvest of Homes fundraiser. The tour featured four local homes, one of which in West Salem was heated by passive solar and wood an earlier concept of energy efficiency.

Another fundraiser was the Children's Theater Production of "Ali Baba and the 40 Thieves" held at the new Viterbo Fine Arts Theater. Honoree Patricia Boge was the managing director.

In line with the new wave of feminism, the La Crosse Branch participated in the ongoing topic from National "Women in Search of Themselves." The purpose was to discover, explore and promote the expanding options for women.

They did and we are standing on their shoulders still working for those goals in a different age.



The door that Sharon knocked on that fateful day in 1973!

## FROM THE TREASURER

Ann Brice

Financial Report as of  
September 22, 2023

Checking Account.....\$7,447.76

Scholarship Bridge.....\$321.00

## SSP Breakfast

By Andrea Hansen, Director

The annual Self Sufficiency Program (SSP) Locally Grown Scholarship Breakfast resumes this year. Everyone is invited.

Thursday, November 2, 2023  
7:30-9 a.m.

The Bluffs Ballroom, Student Union, UWL

Registration is required for this free event. To reserve your spot (and parking), go to: <https://www.uwlax.edu/self-sufficiency-program/locally-grown-scholarships/>

RSVP by October 19, 2023

AAUW – La Crosse Branch is a key partner to SSP, and the single parents and other adults who attend this pre-college program.

Our 2023 Breakfast Speaker is Melissa Touche, a SSP participant and graduate of UWL. Melissa is also a recipient of the Karen Wilson Scholarship, from our Branch!



Melissa Touche (R) and Sara Pederson (L), both 2019 Karen Wilson Scholarship recipients

## On The Web

by Barb Fischer, Branch Web Manager



<https://aauwlacrosse.org>

AAUW National has webinars worth watching. Visit:

<https://www.aauw.org/resources/programs/webinars/>

Or go directly to the AAUW webinars on YouTube. Below are some examples:

1. **Where the Money Resides: Demystifying Academic Job Negotiations**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Sm21JhKEvWw>

2. **Leave No One Behind: Combating Global Human Trafficking**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3bSWOPmGx64>

3. **Justice Ginsburg's Legacy and the Future of the Court**

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RDFDPWz4q3o&list=PLTLQyfGgwGXMyK\\_sroxekh4StRXtW3aN&index=10](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RDFDPWz4q3o&list=PLTLQyfGgwGXMyK_sroxekh4StRXtW3aN&index=10)

## Membership News

by Barb Fischer, VP Membership

## New Members

**Zoe de Boer** 107 11th Ave S, Onalaska, WI 54650  
zoeoliviadeboer@gmail.com, 608-385-3144

Zoe is a graduate student at Viterbo University. Those of us who attended the Social Event this month enjoyed her singing and her speech.

**Rebecca Mormann-Krieger** 806 Meadow View Street, Bangor, WI 54614  
mormannrebecca@yahoo.com

Rebecca will be speaking to us at our February meeting about the "Enduring Families Project: Children Stories"

**Lisa Mitby** 3833 Crestwood Place, Onalaska, WI 54650  
lisamitby@gmail.com, 608-780-0986

Lisa presently works at Mayo Clinic. She attended our Social Event recently and our Scholarship Meeting last May as a guest.

**Linda Jean Rauch** 60429 Buck Creek Road, Ferryville, WI 54628  
L.Rauch25@gmail.com, 608-804-0131

Linda visited us at the "Art Fair on The Green" membership booth and we look forward to welcoming her at our next meeting.



## Email Address Change

Raghad Al-khazraji is a PhD student in Higher Education at Athens, OH. Her new email is r.alkhazraji@outlook.com. Congratulations, Raghad!

**Our Recent Social Event** was well attended and fun. Click here for photos: <https://lacrosse-wi.aauw.net/programs-events/special-events-and-programs/>



## Congratulations to the New Honorary Life Members

Our 9 new Honorary Life Members were recognized at our Social Event. Thank you to the following special 50-year members; Beverly Bodine, Patricia Boge, Sharon De Cicco, Alice Gassere, Marilyn Hempstead, Clara Peterson, Lila Seager, Carol Taebel, and Katie Webster.

## From the Membership Committee

Thank you all for renewing your memberships. And, if you would like to attend our next membership meeting it will be on Wednesday, October 25th at Java Vino with a start time of 4:30. Or, if you have information for the Membership Committee, please feel free contact me at email above or at 608-780-1601.

## The emerging preference for "HMoob" as a term of self-identification

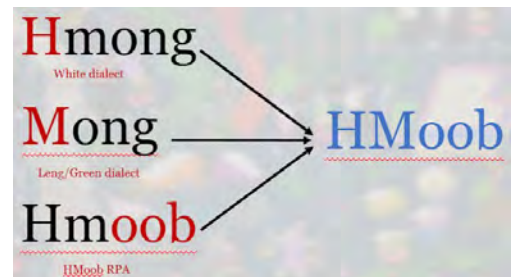
by Ariana Thao, *Featured in Expanding Access Quarterly Summer 2019 issue*

While most people have seen "Hmong" or "Hmoob" appear in text, fewer people have seen the word "HMoob" or understand where it came from. As a member of the HMoob American Studies Committee at the University of Wisconsin-Madison and as a HMoob person, I am writing this article to discuss an emergent trend related to how HMoob community members self-identify. In Wisconsin, as well as other parts of the United States, compositional diversity within HMoob communities includes linguistic diversity. The language spoken by HMoob communities is comprised of two main dialects, Green (Moob Leeg) and White (Hmoob Dawb), with of course a number of different variations of these two dialects.

The term "HMoob" was created by community members as a more inclusive alternative to the other terms (i.e. "Hmong," "Mong," and "Hmoob") that are written in a Latin-based alphabet. The term "HMoob" is considered to be more inclusive because it incorporates graphemes (i.e. letters) from all three other terms of group-based identity.

Throughout written work, the HMoob people and language have been categorized under the generic term "Hmong". However, the HMoob people and language represent a diverse group of communities and identities. The usage of the spelling of Hmong reflects the White dialect pronunciation and word structures of Hmoob used by predominantly Caucasian, English dominant speakers. Additionally, the Green dialect is pronounced as Mong under these structures. Differently, the usage of the Romanized Popular Alphabet (RPA) spelling of Hmoob reflects the written system predominantly used by HMoob Americans. The spelling denotes the voice inflections and tones necessary to pronounce the words correctly.

To be more inclusive of the different communities within the larger HMoob community, this movement to incorporate the spelling of "HMoob" in literature and writings was developed. As a we [re]claim our own narratives and to assert our own authentic level of self-determination, the HMoob American Studies Committee at the University of Wisconsin-Madison developed this different spelling. This spelling comes about as the combination of different pronunciations, identities, and forms of language. Thus, the spelling is changed from Hmong to Hmoob to claim the Romanized Popular Alphabet that is used as the dominant form of the written HMoob language. Additionally, the capital letters "H" and "M" represent the two dominant dialects spoken by the HMoob people. When saying HMoob, the "H" is heard by those who speak the white dialect, while those who speak the green dialect are heard without the "H" sound. Therefore, the capital "H" and the capital "M" represents the purposeful inclusion of both dominant dialect groups. In the culmination of these reasonings, the spelling of Hmong as HMoob was created.



In our work as the HMoob American Studies Committee, we developed the term as a rebranding of our organization to reflect our own identities instead of how the larger society identifies us. Furthermore, the "Our HMoob American College Paj Ntaub" research team at the University of Wisconsin-Madison used this term as a way to better explain their participants' identities in their study on the experiences of HMoob American college students at the University of WisconsinMadison.

Thus, as the HMoob communities establish themselves around the United States, they have worked toward movements to be recognized in the smaller and larger spaces. From literature to taking part in the larger political system of the United States, the HMoob people have worked to be a part of their communities. This movement incorporates the different language usage works to ensure that the spelling of HMoob is integrated into writing and soon replaces the spelling of Hmong. To change this spelling is to recognize the different communities within the HMoob community, but to also allow HMoob persons to determine how their own identity is represented within the literature. This movement is meant for those who identify as HMoob to advocate for in their own programming, as well for non-HMoob persons and their corresponding agencies to reconsider how the term is represented in text-based form.

*Image source: The HMoob American Studies Committee at the University of Wisconsin Madison*