

FEBRUARY PROGRAM

Mujeridad & Movement:

A Landscape of Beauty, Violence, Gender, Identity, and Racism: An Auto-ethnographic Journey in the USA & Latin America—A Quest for Understanding, Healing, & Dialogue during Historic Times in Indigenous Americas.

Presenter:

Diana Elena Moran Sanchez
Thundercloud, Ed.D



When: Saturday, Feb. 10

Time: 9:30 Registration, 9:45 Brunch
10:15 Meeting, 10:45 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: \$12; pay with cash or check

Menu: eggs, selection of pastries,
potatoes, fruit, water, coffee, tea

Please RSVP to email from Robert.

Diana will share a series of images from her travels in the USA and Latin America. Her images were part of her dissertation research that is now being shaped into a book for publication. Her images are from Mexico (Mexico City, Veracruz, and Chihuahua), Peru, Bolivia, USA, and Chile. She will explore why the Arts and Citizen Science are important for healing, understanding, and the Greater Good for all. Why learning through the visual can help us to see within our communities too. To see with our hearts during these critical times in society. Interactive with photos/images.

How can the visual help us to see? How can the visual help us to ask critical questions? How can the visual support social change in society? Why do these images matter to us in Western Wisconsin?

Dr. Diana Elena Moran Sanchez Thundercloud is an educator, lecturer, and community advocate for women and youth in the Midwest/ USA and Latin America. She has experience with program and policy development within universities and tribal communities. She divides her time between her families in Mexico City (Mexico) and in Western Wisconsin (USA).

AAUW

LA CROSSE (WI)

The Current

a publication of the La Crosse, WI AAUW Branch



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PRESIDENT'S PERSPECTIVE:

Working Together

by Andrea Hansen, Branch President

"AAUW believes that high-quality public education is the foundation of a democratic society and the key to improving economic prosperity and gender equality." *from Public Policy 2023-25 AAUW Public Policy Priorities.*

<https://www.aauw.org/resources/policy/aauw-public-policy-priorities/>

My modest daily diet of political news and analysis continues to be an unsettling experience. Is that true for you? Here's a sampling of my recent reads.

New stories included these WI stories: 6 of the 14 anti-LGBTQ bills introduced this January focused on our schools, tax-paid vouchers for private schools, and passage of a "parents' rights" bill in the Assembly. In Florida, a school district is prepared to ban 1600 books, including dictionaries, encyclopedias, and "The Guinness Book of World Records."

Sometimes, folks send me links to research and videos. A recent Ted Talk featured Diane Greene Foster, a UC-SF demographer and her landmark "Turn-Away Study." The 10-year study followed 1000 women who sought abortion care. The study compared the health and well-being of women who received the abortion they sought with the women who were denied abortion services. The findings didn't support the speculations that are used to justify

public policy and restrictions. A finding that crushed me: Educational aspirations and attainment were negatively affected, of the parents who were denied health services, and their children.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L-FTI14OVrg>

These days, I find myself thinking about Greg Wegner's 2019-2020 presentation to our Branch. A retired UWL history professor, Greg's PhD research centered on the propaganda machine of the Third Reich and, specifically the targeting

of school children and curriculum materials. It was a terrifying lesson in how quickly and systematically democracy can be un-done. Control of education was the key to shaping perceptions,

creating scapegoats, othering and dehumanizing people, and minimizing dissent. I use this lens in understanding the current attacks on our education system. Dr. Wegner's research came to mind as I watched "Israelism," the new documentary from two American

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NEXT BOARD MEETING

***NEW* Tuesday, February 6**

via Zoom at 5:30pm

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

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

Working Together.. (continued from page 1)

Jewish students. The filmmakers describe their experiences and distress of learning the full history of the creation of Israel and the removal of Palestinians. They give voice to the difficult questions surfacing about what they were taught about Israel and the government/military's brutal system Palestinians are forced to live under.

How do you practice hope and refresh your spirit community in such a time? One simple response is this: I include regular visits to the AAUW website, not only as a source of information, but also for support and encouragement. I see a clarity of focus on education, work, opportunity and equity. AAUW's research, position papers, and information highlighted validate and inform my concerns, and it's easy to share with others. Most immediately, I am reminded that I am/we are part of the significant work done by AAUW and so many other organizations. Together, we do work that matters. This is what democracy looks like.

Working together builds hope and lifts spirits. The nominating committee will begin looking to fill the open Board positions soon. Please think about saying YES when contacted!

Defend Institutions.

"It is institutions that help us to preserve decency. They need our help as well... Institutions do not protect themselves. They fall one after the other unless each is defended from the beginning. So choose an institution you care about... and take its side." *from On Tyranny: Twenty Lessons from the Twentieth Century, Timothy Snyder, 2017.*

Voting on Proposed AAUW Amendment Statement and How-to-Vote

This spring, AAUW members will be asked to vote on an amendment to the national bylaws recommended by the AAUW Board of Directors and AAUW Governance Committee that would **open membership to any individual who supports AAUW's important mission of advancing equity for women and girls.**

We remain committed to higher education as a pathway to eliminate barriers that hold women back and to enhance their leadership opportunities at all levels. We admire the effort of the inspiring women who have led the way in earning their degrees. We recognize, however, that in today's world higher education degrees are one of several paths needed to advance equity for women and girls. Professional certifications, on the job training, career technical experience and life experience all are alternative paths to obtaining education and the skills needed to become leaders and advocates for ending discrimination against women.

AAUW's name, which continues to have significant brand recognition for AAUW as a women's rights organization, will remain the same if the amendment is adopted.

The National board recognizes that some members have strong views on the proposed change in the requirement for membership and encourages respectful debate on this important issue.



All voting will take place online starting April 3. AAUW is utilizing an independent, third-party voting system for this year's vote. Most members will receive emails from **vote@simplyvoting.com** with their unique Elector ID and Password to vote. Please make sure the address is in your contacts so the email doesn't go to your junk folder.

Voting will close on Wednesday, May 15 at 11:00 pm CT. If the amendment passes, changes to the bylaws take place immediately.

OPEN BRANCH POSITION

Art Fair Grounds Chair

Contact: Carol Robertson

Duties:

Grounds Chair is responsible for arranging the site for the art fair and serving as coordinator with the person at the site for set up and takedown. This person works closely with the art fair chair and artists' co-chairs as to what is needed for the fair in the way of AAUW tents, tables, chairs, etc. Traffic on the day of the event falls under this person.

I will help you:

We have well-established guidelines in place! The grounds have already been reserved for this year. This would be a great year to ease into the position.

AAUW STATE CONVENTION APRIL 26-27, 2024 DELTA HOTEL, RACINE

Online registration will open soon!

Friday Keynote Speaker: Pardeep Singh Kaleka "Healing in Aftermath of Hate".

Saturday will feature 2 speakers from AAUW National.

Watch for complete information next month!

2024 STATE CONVENTION

EMPOWERING WOMEN SINCE 1881

AAUW WI
STATE
CONVENTION
2024

**APRIL 26-27,
2024**

VENUE: DELTA HOTEL BY
MARRIOTT RACINE ON
EDGE OF MT. PLEASANT

**SAVE
THE
DATE**

COMING SOON

Hearth & Home

Hearth and Home meets on the third Friday of each month.



On **February 16th**, we will meet for lunch at Fork and Fable on 16th and Jackson at 11:30 am. Following lunch, we will tour the Chapel at St. Rose Convent.

Everyone is invited to join us.

For more information call Sharon DeCicco at 608-452-4571 or email at sharon.decicco@gmail.com.



BRANCH BOOK EXCHANGE

By Carlene Roberts

Our AAUW branch 'Little Free Library' began in December. Do you have a book you would like to share? Something that you found especially interesting, moving, informative, entertaining - fiction or non-fiction? Or is there a topic you would like to read about and you appreciate a recommendation from an AAUW friend?

The 'library' will be out at each meeting. Deposit your donation and check out what others have brought. Post-it notes will be available for your brief enticement to adopt your book.



Name Grant Nominations Sought

By Jan Eriksen, Chair

AAUW-La Crosse has been awarding Name Grants annually since 1960. The honor recognizes a member whose work has advanced AAUW's mission at the branch, state, or national levels. Funds are donated, in the honoree's name, from the La Crosse Branch to AAUW National. The monies are used for a variety of activities, such as scholarships and STEM projects. A list of names of previous Name Grant recipients appears close to the end of AAUW-La Crosse Branch's 2023-2024 Membership Directory.



If you know of a member who is deserving and has not previously received a Name Grant, please nominate her or him. To make a nomination, e-mail me at jperiksen@viterbo.edu or send it via US Mail to my address in the directory. I'll need the nominee's name plus a few sentences about why you think that the individual is worthy of the 2024 Name Grant.

The deadline for nominations is April 5. Recipient(s) of the Name Grant will be announced at the April meeting.

BOARD WORK SESSION #2

Our AAUW branch Board of Directors second work session will be held after the February 10th branch meeting, noon-2pm.

Our agenda is simple: dangling questions, new & emerging opportunities, and a visit to the "parking lot" for items from our November session. Elected and appointed board members encouraged to attend. Open to members who would like to attend. Send specific questions, ideas, issues to Andrea by 2/8. Feel free to bring snacks or other food to share.

Small Group Contacts

AAUW IN ACTION (AIA)

See this page for meeting info

Contact: Erica Koonmen, moogs56@hotmail.com

DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION (DEI)

Contact: June Reinert, 608-461-1109

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

STEM

Contact: Annie Allen-Wyman 608-514-2871

therosyorb@gmail.com

WOMEN SUPPORTING WOMEN GLOBALLY

Joint partnership group with Viterbo and UWL

Contact: Erica Koonmen, moogs56@hotmail.co

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.

Next meeting: ZOOM, Thursday, Feb. 15, 6:30pm.

Please contact Erica for the link.

We are working on plans for celebrating Women's History Month in March.

Annie is coordinating with other local organizations to see if we can co-sponsor and support each other's programs and events. She is also planning a local woman author talk or two at Pearl Street Books.

Lois and Liza Gilbert are working on the biographies of women around the 2024 theme **Women who Advocate for Equity, Diversity and Inclusion**. We hope to continue the tradition of having these printed in the La Crosse Tribune all month; we'll also be posting them on our social media and reaching out to other media outlets to try and increase the number of people who can read them.



Remember our **International Women's Day panel is Tues, March 5** at UWL Student Union, Bluffs Room. Door open at 5pm to visit organization tables and the program will be 5:30- 7pm. Free admission and free parking in lot C12. More information next month in the newsletter and on our website.

While our winter meetings are by Zoom, we'll be meeting again in person soon. We invite new members to join us and get in on the fun and action!!

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

by June Reinert, DEI Chair

Hello all, this has certainly been a down year in the fight for diversity, equity and inclusion between the University of Wisconsin and the DEI (Diversity, Equity and Inclusion) programs throughout the state. It has been a year of increasing the discussion of diversity within our branch, by a series of programs and initiatives. **It is important that you are aware of these discussions and participate and educate some of the nay sayers.**



GOP lawmakers approve UW pay raises, reassert intentions to eliminate DEI. *Wisconsin Examiner*

<https://wisconsinexaminer.com/2023/12/20/gop-lawmakers-approve-dec-20-2023> — ... **DEI initiatives** throughout the state.

The Joint Committee ... Vos and Wisconsin Republicans have been targeting **DEI efforts** throughout the year.

UW System's DEI initiatives prompt budget cuts, GOP says. *Wisconsin State Journal* <https://madison.com>

Jun 23, 2023 — Republicans approved a plan Thursday to cut the University of Wisconsin System's budget by \$32 million in an attempt to force the school officials to eliminate diversity, equity and inclusion offices and programming.



Wisconsin university system reaches deal with Republicans to scale back diversity positions. *CBS News*

<https://www.cbsnews.com/dec-8-2023> — Democrats

have accused Republicans of holding employees hostage by blocking pay raises.

This attack also follows book bans in many states. Florida leads the nation in banned books.

Florida's new black history curriculum 'sanitized', say critics

BBC <https://www.bbc.com/world-us-canada-66261072>

Jul 20, 2023 — Florida has approved controversial new standards for teaching African American history at the state's public schools. The updated guidelines include a requirement that students learn "how slaves developed skills which, in some instances, could be applied for their personal benefit".



Florida school district pulls over 1,600 books for review to possibly be banned — including dictionaries. *NBC News*

<https://www.nbcnews.com/news/us-news/florida>

Jan 11, 2024 — The books pulled from the Escambia County School District include five dictionaries, eight encyclopedias, "The Guinness Book of World Records" and Anne Frank's diary, to ensure they comply with the state's new sex education law that prohibits books describing sexual content.

As we follow AAUW initiatives in developing more diversity initiatives in our in our branches through our programs to attract a more diverse group of members in AAUW, we must be vigilant in our community to become more educated, so that we can continue diversify our branches.

Historian's Corner

by Marilyn Hempstead, Branch Historian

What's in a Name?

Among the many scholarships our branch distributes there are four that are named.

Joan C. Koonmen Memorial Scholarship honors life member Joan who passed in 2023. It renames the former Karen Wilson Scholarship which was established as a memorial to Karen after her death at age 42 in January, 1980. In her two decades of active branch membership Karen was involved in many branch activities including Children's Theater and serving as branch and state treasurer. This idea of a creating a scholarship for women seeking higher education after age 30 was an innovation which has thrived for over 40 years. And it continues, with a new name.



Pat Staupe Arts Scholarship is given when a high school applicant fits the criteria of pursuing a degree in teaching of the arts. Becoming a member of our branch in 1984, Pat held several offices most notably serving terms as VP of Membership and chairing the Art Fair Committee for a number of years before she died in 2013. Her career as vocal music teacher at Kee High in Lansing IA for 37 years was the background for designation of the scholarship in her honor.

Janet K. Isler Memorial Scholarship in Undergraduate Teacher Education at Viterbo University is named for a teacher who was educated during the early 20th century in La Crosse public schools including the State Teachers College (which is now UW-L). Janet mainly taught in an Aurora IL elementary school throughout her long career. Although, not a member, she left a bequest to our branch for education scholarships in appreciation for her La Crosse educational roots.



The Bridge Scholarship is a high school scholarship which has been funded by enthusiasts of that card game for close to 40 years. Meeting regularly during the year, the pairs of players commit to contributing a sum for the scholarship and for winners' prizes. Sharon De Cicco keeps track of scores and distributes the funds at the end of the year. The scholarship goes to a student who is "bridging" from severe personal challenges to academic success.

Naming scholarships, which are given to deserving students, brings added significance to their purpose.

FROM THE TREASURER

Ann Brice

Financial Report as of
January 9, 2024

Checking Account.....\$7,756.83.

Scholarship Bridge.....\$321.00

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SCHOLARSHIPS & GRANTS
COMMITTEE (SGC)by Robert Richardson & Sharon De Cicco,
SGC Co-Chairs

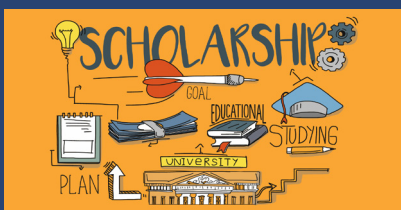
Final call for scholarship applications!

The deadline for most applications is
February 2, 2024.

To award a recipient for the Joan C. Koonmen Scholarship, we need YOU to nominate a woman 30 years of age and older who could benefit from AAUW support at any level of education. You would need to write a letter of support; the letter can be short and to the point or long and to the point. Your nominee would also need to secure a letter of recommendation from another individual. You or your nominee can download the application from our AAUW-La Crosse Branch website: www.aauwlacrosse.org

The SGC will meet in-person prior to our branch meeting on 02/10/24 @9am in Room 103 in the School of Nursing Building at Viterbo. Grant researchers will report on their findings. Funds available for scholarship awards will be verified. Review teams will prepare for reviewing applications.

The SGC welcomes other AAUW members to join us as committee members and/or as scholarship application reviewers. We review each set of scholarship applications in teams of 3 or 4 AAUW members.



On The Web

by Barb Fischer, Branch Web Manager <https://aauwlacrosse.org>Please contact me if you need help on the Internet. 608-780-1601 or fischerba@live.comAAUW-LA CROSSE SCHOLARSHIP INFORMATION IS ONLINE
Visit - <https://lacrosse-wi.aauw.net/scholarships/>

PLEASE RESPOND TO NATIONAL'S REQUEST

The DEI survey is online: <https://lacrosse-wi.aauw.net/dei/>
Paper copies will also be available at the February meeting. The goal of National is to find other connections because "Together We Are Stronger". If there are some parts of the survey that you do not wish to complete that is fine.

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Membership News

by Barb Fischer, VP Membership



A SPECIAL WELCOME TO ALL NEW MEMBERS!

We have gained 11 new members during the 2022-2023 year.
It is possible that we will have a new member at our next meeting.

VOTE REGARDING MEMBERSHIP REQUIREMENT

Please see the article on page 2. Whatever your view, it is important to vote.

CONDOLENCES

Sharon Imes who passed away on December 15, 2023, was a past President of our AAUW branch and the first women president of the Rotary Club. Her complete obituary is now online: dickinsonfuneralhome.com



MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE NEWS

The Membership Committee will be meeting the third week of February.
Everyone is welcome. Please let me know if you are interested.

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NCCWSL 2024 Scholarship Application Process Begins

by Jan Eriksen, Chair

Once again this year the La Crosse Branch will sponsor a local student to attend the National Conference for College Women Student Leaders (NCCWSL). AAUW-WI is also offering five NCCWSL scholarships, so the chances for a local applicant to receive a scholarship are good. **The deadline to apply for branch and state scholarships is March 8.** In addition, women students can apply for national scholarships through the NCCWSL page of AAUW.org.



NCCWSL is AAUW's annual conference. It brings together more than 800 young women from around the country for two and a half days of leadership training, networking and inspiration.

The 2024 conference will be held at the University of Maryland, College Park (Washington, DC, area) Thurs, May 30 through Sat, June 1, 2024. Conference theme for 2024 is "**Dare to Be.**" Any college woman who attends school or lives in the greater La Crosse area is eligible to apply for a scholarship; however, junior or senior students will gain the most benefit from the conference. Students can apply for both the branch and state NCCWSL scholarships using one application form. The form and additional information can be found on our branch's web site <https://lacrosse-wi.aauw.net/nccwsl-info-and-application/>

Please help us spread the word among women college students.

AAUW La Crosse Board Meeting Minutes

by JoAnne Revels, Secretary

January 9, 2024

5-6 p.m. via Zoom

Members Present: Erica Koonmen, Silvana Richardson, Andrea Hansen, June Reinert, Jan Eriksen, Ann Brice, Kari Reyburn, Diana Moran Sanchez Thundercloud, Barb Fischer, Annie Allen-Wyman and JoAnne Revels

Andrea opened the meeting at 5 p.m. with **announcements.**

- Jan announced the NCCWSL registration is open. Conference dates are 5/30-6/1 conference are 5/30-6/1. Nominations for scholarships to attend the D.C. conference are being sought.
- Andrea encouraged members to vote on upcoming AAUW-National motion to remove higher education membership requirement.
- President-elect, Lema Kabashi teaching schedule conflicts with the Monday BOD meeting. **Tuesday at 5:30 p.m. is proposed**, beginning 2/6. Andrea will check and Lema will confirm.

Silvana reviewed changes in the Saturday program schedule.

- **1/13:** Will Vanroosenbeek is presenting LGBTQ + 101. 37 attendees-9 program only. Note: Will is the 2024 recipient of the MLK, Jr Leadership Award to be presented at 1/15 MLK Celebration.
- The Scholarship Committee will be highlighted at this meeting.
- **2/10:** Diana Moran Sanchez Thundercloud, PhD is presenting Indigenous Perspectives: A photo journey.
- **3/9:** Rebecca Mormann will present on African American Women's Literary and Debating Society. As the Winona Branch is invited and additional guests are expected, attendance is estimated to be 50. Catering arrangements are being made as Viterbo is on spring break.

Suggestion: June suggested a short evaluation form for each program would be helpful. Referred to Program Chair with suggestions/models encouraged.

12/4/23 BOD Minutes were reviewed and approved through email. Note: This process allows approved minutes to be included in The Current.

Treasurer's Report (Ann)

Checking account balance as of 12/31/23: \$7,796.83

- 12/9/23 Brunch: \$412.75 collected from attendees; \$399.24 food costs paid to Viterbo
- Public Funds checking account balance: \$1,222.00

New Business

1. Process review of upcoming Branch events/ business requested and followed.

2024-25 slate of nominees for BOD positions. Nomination committee includes current and immediate past presidents, and one other member. Barb Fischer volunteered to serve. Members vote on slate at March meeting and officers area installed at the April meeting.

2024-25 Budget. Budget committee includes current President, immediate past-President and Treasurer. Call to committees and chairs for budget needs begins in summer. BOD approves budget in August with publication in September's Current. June shared an example of a budget request form. Ann will check with Michele.

June BOD Meeting is a potluck and transition meeting, welcoming new appointed & elected BOD.

Art Fair: Work has begun with discussion with venue. In January, Erica sends letters to artists. Carol, as chair, provides timeline.

2. Discussion on the need for written descriptions on Branch activities, business and processes. Jan offered to create a timeline of Branch key events for BOD for review/revisions.

3. BOD work-session proposed to follow 2/10 Meeting. Silvana made motion, Ann seconded. Approved

4. Brief ideas for committees/branch shared: University/college liaison positions extend activities to area high schools; development of a DEI notebook was mentioned; and the joys and the challenges of building inclusion/welcome/belonging/diversity/equity into the work we do locally as AAUW.

Old Business

1. Andrea and Ann's attempt to create a 6-month budget for the remainder of the 2023-24 year has stopped for now. Discussion on the budget process was referred to the work-session.

Meeting adjourned at 6:18 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by JoAnne Revels, Secretary