

APRIL PROGRAM

The Future is Nonbinary and Queer

Plus--- Annual meeting, Elections & Officer installation, Name Grant Recipient Announcement

Presenter: Willem (Will) Van Roosenbeek
he/him/they/them
LGBTQ+ Services Director, UW- L



When: Saturday, April 13

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

Brunch: Cost \$12

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

RSVP to email message from Robert Richardson by April 7

In the past couple of years, states have advanced a record number of bills that attack LGBTQ+ rights. In 2023 there have been 591 bills introduced in 49 states ([translegislation.com](https://www.translegislation.com)). Are you ready? Come learn about the LGBTQ+ community and how you can help.

2023 research shows 5.6 % or 14.1 million adults in the U.S. identify as LGBTQ+ (Williams Institute). In 2020, 9.5% (1,994,000) of the U.S. population of youth ages 13-17 identify as part of the LGBTQ+ community (Williams Institute). LGBTQ+IAAPNB2S are just a few identities within the community. Young people are embracing their identities and are more open to others who come out. As a society, are we ready?

Learning Outcomes:

1. Identify terminology and examples of identities within the LGBTQ+ community.
2. Illustrate the barriers and the needs of LGBTQ+ people.
3. Discuss ways to be an active support to the LGBTQ+ community.

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AAUW

LA CROSSE (WI)

The Current

a publication of the La Crosse, WI AAUW Branch



VOLUME 63, ISSUE 8

APRIL 2024



PRESIDENT'S PERSPECTIVE:

Springing with Energy

by Andrea Hansen, Branch President

AAUW-La Crosse Branch marched into spring with energy, creativity, and organizing **acumen*. We came together in committees, meetings, collaborations to *"advance equity for women and girls through advocacy* (DEI initiatives & AIA events), *education* (International Women's Day, monthly programs), *philanthropy* (S&G and Art Fair) *and research* (Women's History Month)." Our March-ing has made good things happen, for our members, branch, community, and beyond.



I've been thinking about how all this work happens and what makes our Branch so effective. (Please see my note on the word "acumen" for a clue.) I think uncovering the "why" of the work is even more important, and found in the interplay of ideas and purpose, heart and relationships. Perhaps these questions will spark some reflection and discussion for you:

What fueled your interest and involvement in AAUW? What keeps you involved? What challenges have you faced in maintaining your involvement? What "big ideas," people, and individual experiences have shaped your life and individual commitments, paid and unpaid work, involvement in AAUW and other community organizations?

I'll share a bit of my story: In my second semester at Roanoke College (1977-78), I was introduced to the "sociological imagination," a concept coined in the late 50's by C. Wright Mills. This asserts that in order to "see right," one must be able to "translate personal troubles into public issues." This is done by placing our experience within the historical, cultural, and structural context. It requires paying attention, asking critical questions about systems and power, and making connections with our lives and circumstances. I became a sociology major.

I was primed to understand the meanings and implications of the feminist rallying cry "the personal is political", coined by editors of Notes from the Second Year: Women's Liberation, published in 1970. In the essay with this as its title, Carol Hanisch wrote, "One of the first things we discover in these (consciousness-raising) groups is that personal problems are

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NEXT BOARD MEETING

Tuesday, April 9

via Zoom at 5:00 pm

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

Springing with Energy... (continued from page 1)

political problems. There are no personal solutions at this time. There is only collective action for collective solutions.” I embraced feminism and activism, working in the movements to end violence against women as a grad student and then in my paid and unpaid work.

Let me acknowledge the support and work that flowed from our long-time and past Branch members. In the small and larger organizations I worked in through the ‘80’s, AAUW’s research papers and advocacy efforts helped to inform and empower our work. Clearly, the dynamic intersectional work flowing from increasingly diverse voices, communities, organizations and disciplines continues to enliven, challenge and shape our work and our understandings. It’s exciting and challenging, too!

The upcoming vote on the proposed by-law that makes support of AAUW’s mission the sole requirement for membership provides an opportunity to exercise your “sociological imagination,” in evaluating the information, taking a position, and casting your vote.

Our work resides in an alarming political/global context that shifts my feminist and sociological imagination into overdrive. I see our work as AAUW providing an accessible counterbalance to the uncertainty and chaos that are so present and alarming. Historian Timothy Snyder places our work in this larger context and identifies Lesson #15 "Contribute to Good Causes" in his small book, *On Tyranny: 20 Lessons from the Twentieth Century* (2017). Snyder advises, “Be active in organizations, political or not, that express your own view of life...you will have made a free choice that supports civil society and helps other to do good.” He writes, “The capacity for trust and learning can make life seem less chaotic and mysterious, and democratic politics more plausible and attractive.”

For me, I find it essential to place AAUW in this big picture. Like millions of other organizations and individuals, we are living out our commitments to democracy and justice, and practicing the critical values equity, diversity, and inclusion. We do it locally and collectively, setting a good example for generations to come.

**According to the Merriam-Webster dictionary, acumen implies “a searching mind that goes beyond what is obvious or superficial...combined with keen practical judgement.”*

Seems an apt descriptor of our members, our Branch and how we get things done!

AAUW WI Issues Statement of Solidarity

Our AAUW mission is clear and focused: we advocate for women’s equal access to education, economic security, and for justice for people of all races, ethnicities, religions, and gender identities.

AAUW-Wisconsin Executive Committee has crafted a statement of solidarity and caring, realizing that there are millions of women, children and men who are suffering the effects of war worldwide.

AAUW-Wisconsin stands with women and children who are innocent victims of war in Gaza, Israel, Ukraine, Sudan, Nigeria, and many other countries worldwide. We encourage branches to educate their members about the issues of humanitarian crises and the impact on women and children, and discuss what actions, if any, branches would like to take.



For further study, the United Nations has programs in place to promote world peace and security: <https://www.un.org/en/global-issues/peace-and-security>

April program

(continued from page 1)

Will's bio:

I identify as a trans man (AFAB) and queer. I have been out as a queer person for over 30 years. However, I did not come out as trans until the early 2000s. On January 15th, Will was honored with the 2024 Martin Luther King Jr. Leadership Award.

Officer Election and Installation

The annual meeting portion of our April 14 meeting will include a vote on the following slate of officers, followed by an installation. Officers will begin their 2-year terms on July 1, 2024. Thank you for agreeing to serve in these elected leadership roles.

We are grateful for the appointed board members who serve in key leadership positions in committees and as branch representatives.

Slate of Officers for 2024-2025

President: Lema Kabashi (2 yrs)



Associate Professor, Educational Studies, UW-Lax

Lema looks forward to fostering fun and building relationships within the Branch.

Secretary: Ann Brice (2 yrs)



Consultant, Brice Cohey Consulting, Inc.

Ann served as Branch President during the first years of COVID, helping make the transition to Zoom and online projects. She is completing her position as Finance V-P.

Program Co-VP: Linda Rauch (2 yrs)



Assistant Professor, School of Nursing, Viterbo. Linda joined the Viterbo faculty in 2020, and joined the AAUW La Crosse Branch shortly thereafter! Linda will overlap

1 year with Program Co-VP Silvana Richardson

Finance Co-VP: (2- yrs) Noreen Holmes.



An advocate for older people, Noreen has served as director of aging services in Monroe and La Crosse counties.

and **Andrea Hansen.**

Andrea is completing her 2-year term as branch president, and is the director of UWL Self-Sufficiency Program.



The 2024 Name Grant Recipient

will be announced at this meeting.

Hearth & Home

The Hearth and Home group will meet on **Friday, April 19th** at the **Hungry Peddler, 3429 Mormon Coulee Rd. at 11:30 for lunch.**

After lunch, wqge will visit the Genoa National Fish Hatchery and Interpretive Center.

Everyone is welcome to join us. Please let Sharon DeCicco know if you have any questions or are planning to attend. Email, sharon.decicco@gmail.com or phone 608-452-4571.



Membership News

by Barb Fischer, VP Membership

OUR CONDOLENCES



Joan Marchiando passed away on Dec. 15, 2023. She was a past member of AAUW and a Name Grant recipient in 1987. Our condolences go out to her family and friends.

PLEASE VOTE ON OUR AAUW MEMBERSHIP REQUIREMENT

Whatever your view, it is important to vote. Voting starts April 3rd and will end May 24th. Please add the "Simply Vote" email "vote@simplyvoting.com" to your email contact list.

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE MEETING

The Membership Committee will be meeting on April 30th at 4:30. Everyone is welcome. Please let me know if you are interested.

LA CROSSE MEMBERSHIP SURVEY!

It will be available to fill out at our April meeting.

A SPECIAL WELCOME TO ALL NEW MEMBERS

Plans are being made to have a special event for new members.



Community Events



UW's Social Justice Week set for April 2-4. UW-La Crosse will celebrate its eighth-annual Social Justice Week with the theme "Building belonging: Identities shaping communities". Full schedule and registration [HERE](#).

UW's ALANA (Asian Latinx African Native American+ Womxn) will celebrate their annual Phenomenal Women's on Sat, April 6th from 5:30-8pm. Tickets are \$8. Buy tickets [HERE](#).



New Horizons is offering a FREE 3-hour advocacy training course online via Zoom on April 23, 4:30-7:30 pm. More info [HERE](#).

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.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.

Next meeting: Annual potluck at Erica's. May 23, 5:30pm



Thank you to everyone who attended the International Women's Day event on March 5th. We had a great turn-out and collected several bags

of period products that we donated to REACH and the jail ministry program. If you are interested in being part of the IWD committee for next year, please email me at moogs56@hotmail.com. It would be wonderful to have you join us!

In response to the UW system's regent decision to bargain with DEI commitments, Annie Allen-Wyman has written a letter to our community partners letting them know that our branch supports them in their DEI initiatives. June Reinhert, our DEI chair, reviewed the letter and made suggestions on organizations to receive it. We've also discussed sending a version of it to the current WI state legislators letting them know that we object to using DEI as a political tool. The letter was mailed to community partners on 3/19.

Rebecca Mormann-Krieger, one of last month's program presenters, continues to apply for grants to support the Enduring Families Children's books project. All the public elementary schools in La Crosse county will get a set of classroom books to share with funding from the La Crosse Community Foundation. The plan is to have 8 sets of different books. We look forward to hearing more about the project and how we can help support it!

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

by June Reinert, DEI Chair

Difficult Conversations



Try to think of the last time you had a conversation that was not easy: How did you feel before you began talking? How did you feel once the conversation ended? Did you accomplish your goals? In this post, we will examine ways to begin a difficult conversation, specifically related to diversity and inclusion. We aim to provide tools to make these conversations meaningful and productive.

“How do we Get Started with Difficult Conversations”. Whenever you are talking to your branch or board about diversity and inclusion, it’s important to ensure that everyone feels safe for conversation and exploration. Because some activities explore potentially sensitive topics, it’s a good idea to establish some norms to provide ground rules for your conversation and to ensure that space feels safe for conversation and exploration. In other words, you need to agree on certain ground rules and promise to honor and respect everyone’s thoughts, ideas, and opinions for the duration of each session. Examples of ground rules might include:

- Speak from the “I” perspective: Avoid speaking for others by using “we,” “us,” or “them.”
- Listen actively: Listen to understand, not to respond. Sometimes we are tempted to begin formulating what we want to say in response, instead of giving 100 percent of our focus to the speaker. So, let’s make sure we are listening 100 percent.
- Step up, step back: If you usually speak up often or find yourself talking more than others, challenge yourself to lean into listening and opening space for others. If you don’t usually talk as much in groups and do a lot of your thinking and processing in your head, know that we would love to hear your contributions and challenge you to add your voice to the conversation.
- Respect silence: Don’t force yourself to fill silence. Silence can be an indication of thought and process.
- Share, even if you don’t have the right words: Suspend judgment and allow others to be unpolished in their speaking. If you are unsure of their meaning, ask for clarification.
- Uphold confidentiality: Treat the candor of others as a gift. Assume that personal identities, experiences, and shared perspectives are confidential unless you are permitted to use them.
- Lean into discomfort: Learning happens on the edge of our comfort zones. Push yourself to be open to new ideas and experiences even if they initially seem uncomfortable to you.

Please refer to the series of short videos called: [5 Questions to Get the Diversity & Inclusion Conversation Started in Your Organization](#)

Historian's Corner

by Marilyn Hempstead, Branch Historian

What's in a Name?

The women’s history biographies skillfully written for the La Crosse Tribune by Lois and Liza Gilbert begin with names and continue with their accomplishments. (The list is available on our website.) It begins with the name and then there is a discovery of the person.

In the historian’s scrapbooks and other material related to AAUW’s past, it is the names that bring that past to life. Directories are an especially rich source going back decades with a treasure trove of lists: officers, current members, name grants, past presidents.

The discovery of the person in the multitude of names in the archival material would be too vast a manuscript. Thus, the name dropping in this article will include pictures from 2002, a while ago but not the distant past. Some of the people are still with us. Others are gone, but have left their mark.



Bev, Pam & Carlene

The April State Convention in Racine that year was attended by Bev Bodine, Pam Thiel and Carlene Roberts. These three had already been involved in AAUW activities and have continued to be up to the present. Bev was the long-time treasurer of art fair and branch secretary. Pam was branch and state president as well as a National officer. Carlene was president and a contributor to many projects and study groups especially in relationship to public policy.

Three art fair luminaries were Polly Smith, Karen Landstrom and Pat Staube. Polly is now concentrating on her career. Karen is still going strong managing the art fair raffle. Pat was featured in last month’s “Corner” about the scholarship named in her memory.



Polly, Karen & Pat



Ardis, Dottie & Rosemary

Pictured at the branch 80th anniversary celebration are Ardis Cleveland, Dottie Dedo and Rosemary Burnett who have all been presidents. Ardis has contributed in many ways in her 50 years of membership. Dottie, a military veteran, was a powerhouse as, among other things, the first editor of the CURRENT and a State president. Rosemary, who was active in fund raising projects, left the branch for family reasons after her presidential term.

This month we will be voting on the new slate of officers whose names are listed in the newsletter. They will be making branch history as the accomplishments associated with their names manifest.

FROM THE TREASURER

Ann Brice

Financial Report as of
March 25, 2024

Checking Account.....\$7,337.36

Scholarship Bridge.....\$341.00

**NAME GRANT
NOMINATIONS**

by Jan Eriksen, Chair



**LAST CALL for Name
Grant Nominations!**

April 5 is the last day to submit nominations for the 2024 Name Grant. Please think about an AAUW-La Crosse member who has provided outstanding service to the organization at the local, state, or national levels. Check the last few pages of the membership directory to make sure that the individual is not on the list of previous Name Grant recipients. Then send me your nomination at jperiksen@viterbo.edu or 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.

AAUW-La Crosse has been awarding Name Grants annually since 1960. 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.

Recipient(s) of the Name Grant will be announced at the April meeting.

**There's still time to register for the
AAUW WI State Convention!**

April 26-27, 2024

<https://aauw-wi.aauw.net/convention-2024/>



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.com

WOMEN'S HISTORY BIOGRAPHIES



Lois Gilbert and her daughter, Liza Gilbert, did a fantastic job writing the Women's History Month 2024 Biographies. Here is the link to see them all on our branch website: <https://lacrosse-wi.aauw.net/files/2024/03/AAUW-WHM-bios-2024.pdf>

AAUW NATIONAL VOTE

No matter what you vote, it is important that you vote! Below is a link for information regarding the vote. https://lacrosse-wi.aauw.net/files/2024/03/AAUW_vote.pdf

BADGER BRIEFS IS LOADED WITH INFORMATION

You can still register! Convention update, voting information, and more at our branch website. Use link below. <https://lacrosse-wi.aauw.net/welcome/badger-briefs-march-2024/>

A GREAT WEBINAR ON AAUW HISTORY

Link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xCGHf_w109Y&t=23s

AAUW-LA CROSSE SCHOLARSHIP INFORMATION

Link: <https://lacrosse-wi.aauw.net/scholarships>



NCCWSL Scholarship Winner Announced

by Jan Eriksen, Chair



Sarah Peterson, Nursing major at Viterbo University, has been selected to receive the AAUW-La Crosse Branch's 2024 scholarship to attend the National Conference for College Women Student Leaders (NCCWSL). The La Crosse Branch has been covering the complete cost to send one student each year, with monies from the Dobrunz Fund through the La Crosse Community Foundation.

Sarah has held various offices, including president, in the Viterbo Student Nurses Association. She is currently secretary of the Wisconsin Student Nurses Association. Sarah is on the Viterbo Student Activity Advisory Committee and is a member of the National Society of Leadership and Success. She is part of the women's golf team at Viterbo University.

Among Sarah's honors are Dean's List every semester since fall 2021, member of Sigma Theta Tau (International Nursing Honor Society), and part of Viterbo's Honors Program. She completed an externship at American Family Children's Hospital in summer 2023. To the question on the application about why she chose her major, Sarah said, "A nursing career will allow me to use my greatest strengths of empathy, compassion, communication, organization and problem-solving to ensure quality care is provided to all." Sarah's hometown is Tomah.

Thank you to Silvana Richardson for encouraging Sarah Peterson to apply for the scholarship and to Jo Anne Revels and Marla French for serving on the ad hoc NCCWSL scholarship selection committee.

AAUW La Crosse Board Meeting Minutes

by JoAnne Revels, Secretary

March 4, 2024 6:45-7:45p.m via Zoom

Members present: Jan Eriksen, Barb Fischer, Andrea Hansen, Lema Kabashi, Erica Koonmen, June Reinhart, JoAnne Revels, Silvana Richardson, and Diana Sanchez Moran Thundercloud.

Meeting called to order at 6:50 p.m.

List of upcoming AAUW events reviewed for month. Appreciation expressed for Lois and Liza Gilbert's research/writing of bios for the Women's History Month project. They are posted on our website, Facebook, and Instagram accounts, and featured on the e-edition of the La Crosse Tribune and possibly in print newspaper. Campus liaisons are sharing with their institutions.

3/9/24 Program Meeting needs discussed: 56 people coming, including 8 from Winona AAUW and 3 guests. Everyone is encouraged to meet and mingle. JoAnne is preparing name tags for Winona guests. Lema will introduce the presenters. Thanks to Silvana for organizing the set-up and tasks for Saturday.

2/10 BOD meeting and 2/11 BOD work session minutes were accepted as printed in the Current.

Treasurer's Report: \$7,176.96 (checking); \$1,222.00 (public funds) for a total of \$8,398.96. Ann will pay catering invoice from Mia's Kitchen on Saturday.

New Business:

Slate of officers and vote: We now have a full slate as Noreen Holmes and Andrea Hansen will serve as Co-VP for Finance. The slate of officers will be voted on at the April 8 annual meeting, by voice vote.

2024-25 Budget Process: Each committee/point person should review funding needing for 2024-25 activities and present a request by end of June.

AAUW-WI State Convention (4/26-27): Lema, Annie, Jan, and Barb are planning to attend. Items have been donated for silent auction baskets. Jan will take photos, itemize the contents and post them. Diana volunteered to cover Friday's District 4 meetings as Annie has work conflict.

AAUW National Vote on Proposed Amendment to By-Laws discussed. Affirmed the need to encourage our members to review the positions and to vote. Online voting from 4/3-5/15. We will offer assistance on how-to vote online at our April meeting. June recommended a video on the change. Barb will post it on our website. <https://www.aauw.org/resources/member/governance-tools/national-election/>

Other ideas offered: Updates needed to our brochure. Ideas for speakers include other civic groups, including the League of Women Voters.

Old Business:

2025 AAUW - State Conference: Annie reported she has contacted the Radisson as potential meeting site. Discussion on the dates of 4/5-4/6 or 4/25-4/26. End of month was recommended.

NCCWL: Jan reported the deadline 3/8. 2 applicants received. Jan and a committee will choose 1 from our branch and 1 to refer to State.

Name Grant: The grant will be awarded in April.

Public Policy: Diana stated that they are looking at racial inequity in the funding of schools. A lot of research is being done.

The meeting adjourned at 7:53 pm.

Respectfully submitted by JoAnne Revels, Secretary