

BADGER BRIEFS



November issue 2024

Wishing Each of You an Outstanding Fall!

With Branch meetings now in full swing, here's hope that you're having an enjoyable and engaging year with AAUW. Many of you have been fundraising, helping to register voters, sponsoring booths for community inclusivity events, and so forth. Wonderful! I've heard from several Branch leaders who wholeheartedly welcome others to share in their Branch programs and meetings. Tele-conferencing (AKA Zoom, Teams, etc.) has expanded our prospects from the comfort of our own homes! So, if you are at all interested in sharing Branch information or finding out more about other events, please check out our [AAUW WI Calendar](#). Use this excellent resource to further your connections and impact. Feel free to reach out to Becca, our Communications Coordinator, (Rebecca.surges@gmail.com) for assistance. Sometimes connection is proactive medicine. Follow us on [Facebook](#) while you're at it.

Read highlights from our October State Board Meeting throughout this newsletter. I am lucky to chair such a go-getter Board! This was an important election year, locally and nationally. We exercised our hard-earned right to vote and stand with those who support your goals and principles. Sometimes anxiety fills us with much that is out of our control. Don't let it consume you. I find that by digging in and helping or taking even a small action, I can alleviate that anxiousness and feel more empowered. That is what makes us unstoppable!



So as the fall whirlwind pushes into winter, remember to take time to breathe – there will be much to work on in the months ahead. We are all in this together. I hope to continue to get around our State and know many of you better through your Branch events and other opportunities. I'm looking forward to our April Convention, which promises to be inspiring as well as informative. Plan on coming and invite an interested friend to join you.

With Deep Regard and Respect,
Deb Thiel
AAUW- WI President



Here I am with Erica Koonmen and Andrea Hansen, as the LaCrosse and Tomah Branches support the first communitywide Pride Event in Sparta. It felt great to be there!

Public Policy



For AAUW members, elections are always about issues. Women's equality, healthcare options, educational opportunities, workplace inequalities, paycheck and social security equity.

Some members may be disappointed, fearful, angry and sleepless over the election results of November 5th. Women's issues did not factor well in this election. It seems that economic issues took preference. That is not entirely bad because we want economic fairness issues to be part of our solution – fair pay, childcare availability, family leave. Our advocacy work remains essential. We are committed to fighting for justice and equity.

The Public Policy Committee, made up of all interested AAUW members, will be assessing our priorities in light of the new Congressional and state legislatures. Where can we have an active role in advocating for our issues? What is the best way to channel our advocacy?

The Public Policy committee thanks every one of you who volunteered at the polls, made calls to GOTV or went door to door to educate the voting public. Thank you for your time and efforts. You make us proud!

In this November election we asked you to advocate for a “No” vote on the constitutional amendment. We asked that you speak to 5-10 friends about why changing the language from “every” eligible citizen to “only” eligible citizens was a solution looking for a problem. Legislating by constitutional amendment is contrary to how legislative laws should be changed. We hope this change is not used to discourage eligibility for voting – requiring bringing your birth certificate or passport to the polls. We did not win that advocacy. This constitutional amendment did pass. How can AAUW members have a bigger voice in educating the voters in the future?

So now we rest and reflect. **But we cannot be quiet and uninvolved for long. Get on your feet members!** Find out who your federal and state legislators will be. Write to them, discussing your issues. They represent all of us. Do not use threats or harsh words. Invite them to join you in advocating for your issues. Remember that we have two years to find other candidates who will act on behalf of AAUW issues.

The next Public Policy committee meeting is on Zoom on Monday, November 11th at 4:00. We meet monthly. Your branch president has the link to the meetings. Join us if you like and add your voice to our discussion. We welcome your questions and concerns individually if you want to contact us.



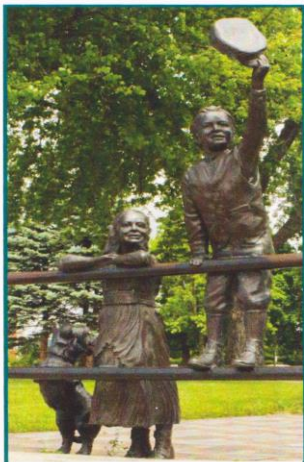
The committee wants Stephanie Malaney to know that we extend our love and care for her after the loss of her husband of 53 years in October. We are your sisters in sorrow.

Public Policy Co-Chairs:

Barbara Peterson (651)-492-8503
Lbpeters@dishup.us

Stephanie Malaney (920)-734-6750
Smalaney5@aol.com

Continue advocating for Women's issues. Follow in their footsteps!



JOIN US IN
LA CROSSE

FRIDAY,
APRIL 25

- AND -

SATURDAY,
APRIL 26

2025
CONVENTION

AAUW

OF WISCONSIN

Sponsored by District 4

AAUW Wisconsin Convention 2025 Update

The convention committee has been meeting monthly, with lots of discussion between meetings, to plan an outstanding convention for 2025. Convention dates are April 25 and 26 and location is Stoney Creek Hotel and Conference Center in La Crosse/Onalaska. The committee has negotiated a reasonable hotel rate, \$104 plus tax = \$118.04 per night. The price includes a hot breakfast.



Forward AAUW: Bridges to the Future is the convention theme. The convention is being hosted by District 4, which consists of Chippewa Falls, Eau Claire, La Crosse, River Falls, and Tomah Branches. Convention committee co-chairs are Kleo Baruth Kritz, AAUW-WI Program Vice-President and member of the Monona /Madison Branch, and Andrea Hansen, the La Crosse Branch's immediate past president. The committee is sponsoring a contest for college art students and other amateur artists to design a convention logo that will appear on our program booklet. If you know of someone who may be interested in entering, please contact me at jperiksen@viterbo.edu.

The convention will open at 2:00 p.m. on Friday, April 25. An optional activity is being planned for Friday morning for convention attendees who arrive early. Friday afternoon will include counterpart and district meetings leading up to dinner and a keynote speaker in the evening. Saturday morning (April 26) will begin with the business meeting at 8:45, followed by breakout sessions, lunch and a keynote speaker, with the convention concluding at about 3:20 Saturday afternoon.

Please mark your calendars for what promises to be an educational and fun two days. In addition to keynote speakers, breakout sessions and meetings, there will be plenty of time to network with AAUW members from across the state. We look forward to welcoming you all to our beautiful city! More convention updates will appear in upcoming editions of *Badger Briefs*.

-- Jan Eriksen, AAUW La Crosse

Resolutions



Please note: the procedure for submitting proposals will be in accordance with AAUW WI Policy Sheet, dated July 22, 2023. All proposed resolutions will be reviewed by the Resolution Committee. The Resolution Committee will consist of the following officers: President, Leadership VP, By-Laws Chair, Public Policy Chair and Resolutions Chair. The review will ensure the proposal complies with AAUW policies and that it is clear and concise. The Committee has the authority to reword, clarify and combine resolutions. The Committee will report all resolutions to the membership before the Annual Meeting and recommend suitable action. The membership will vote on the resolutions at the Annual Meeting.

This year's Resolution Committee will be Deb Thiel, President, Carole Salinas, Leadership VP, Sara Ramaker By-Laws Chair, Stephanie Malaney, Public Policy Chair and Kathy Walsh, Resolutions Chair. Feel free to direct any questions to any members of the Resolution Committee. Please submit all proposed resolutions to Kathy Walsh, Resolution Chair at kath3032@gmail.com.

Leadership Report

Great attendance at fall district meetings!

All five Wisconsin AAUW districts held in-person fall meetings with branch presidents and/or other officers during September or October. This represented 77% of our Wisconsin branches (17 of our 22) coming together to engage in rich conversations about important AAUW topics. Thank you to all who took the time to travel and participate in these meetings.

A special thank you to our district coordinators: Consuelo Lopez, Jean Kreul, Bonnie Diehl, Annie Allen-Wyman, and Debbie Roder for planning, organizing, and hosting these gatherings.

Winter district meetings will be held via Zoom...due to our unpredictable Wisconsin weather...during late January or February.



...from our district meetings

1. What works to increase membership?

Community collaborations, relevant AAUW programs and events, inviting friends of current members. To retain new members, keep them involved: volunteer opportunities, trips, committees, etc.

2. What works for member engagement?

Potlucks are cheap and a wonderful way to get to know each other (basically, offer food whenever possible).

3. What works for recruiting new officers?

The personal touch is the best recruiting tool. It's not easy to say no in person or over the phone. Offer to mentor them in the position you need to fill. Many branches are going to co-presidents to ease the burden of the job.

4. What works for promoting the AAUW mission?

Plan programs and events that focus on local issues that tie to our mission. Check the resolutions that passed at the state convention from 2013-2024.

5. What works for publicity?

The use of a large AAUW banner on the front of a table or canopy at community events where tables are free for local non-profits.



A note from AAUW National about Greatest Needs Fund

National is 100% encouraging that all donations go to the unrestricted Greatest Needs Fund (GNF). All of their other funds are permanently restricted or temporarily restricted in how the money can be spent. Approximately 80% of what AAUW National does comes out of the Great Needs Fund. This unrestricted fund supports Advancement & Partnerships, Advocacy & Legislation, Operations & Administration, Member Services, Communications, Program Development, Public Policy, Occupancy (cost of the AAUW headquarters in Washington, DC), and miscellaneous expenditures. This is where the money is most needed and can do the “most good” to promote our mission.

News about NCCWSL (National Conference for College Women Student Leaders)

For 39 years, AAUW has had the honor of bringing thousands of college women to the Washington, DC area for leadership training, inspiration, and networking at NCCWSL. Hosting NCCWSL comes at a high cost, but the financial support has not risen to meet the challenge. Ultimately NCCWSL's costs are unsustainable for the long-term viability of AAUW. However, NCCWSL is not going away. Beginning in 2025, NCCWSL will be organized and administered by the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA). If you have questions, contact Carole at csalinas3767@gmail.com.

Carole Salinas
AAUW WI Leadership VP

Update on Bylaws



REMINDER:

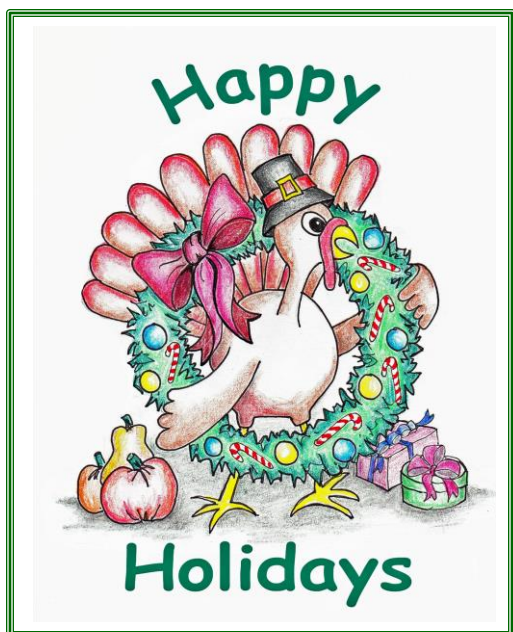
The deadline to ensure Branch bylaws are up to date with the changes passed in 2023 is spring 2025. As AAUW WI Bylaws Chair, I am supposed to have a copy of every branch's bylaws. These copies will be stored on the state's Google Drive. If you have already updated your bylaws, please send a copy to ramaker.sara@gmail.com

As a reminder, if you are merely adding the required first seven articles, you only need a vote by the board of directors. If there are any other changes to the articles, you must follow the procedures outlined in your bylaws. If you have any questions or concerns, please call me at 920-432-8249 or email me at

ramaker.sara@gmail.com

I look forward to hearing from you.

Thank you, Sara Ramaker



With Membership, It's Always About Numbers.

In the last issue of *Badger Briefs*, I talked about membership numbers. Here are some additional numbers related to AAUW that you might find interesting.

As you read, can you find yourself in any of them?

3 months. The renewal grace period. If you joined AAUW before 2022, your renewal window began in April 2024 and your three-month grace period ended on September 30, 2024. Other join dates have different renewal dates.

5 districts in Wisconsin. Do you know which district your branch belongs to? Not every state has branches. District Four is organizing this year's State Convention on April 26-27, 2025.

21 members. The total membership for Wisconsin's smallest branch - Tomah, where President Deb Thiel hales from.

22 branches in Wisconsin.

28 students belong to AAUW in Wisconsin.

45 Lifetime members. These members paid the equivalent of 20 years of National dues. They no longer owe National dues when they renew.

66 approximate average branch membership total in Wisconsin.

72 years of age. At the last calculation, this is the average age of an AAUW member across the U.S.

73 years. The length of membership for our two longest term Honorary Lifetime members. They both joined in 1951! I'll let you guess what their chronological age is.

99 new members were included in the February 1, 2024 report from National. They joined between July 1, 2023 and February 1, 2024.

156 Honorary Lifetime members in Wisconsin. These members have paid for 50 years of membership and no longer pay National dues. State dues are also waved.

202 members. The total membership for our largest branch - Racine. There are two other branches with over 100 members (Appleton and West Suburban-Milwaukee). One branch is so close at 98 members. Come on Sheboygan, you can do it this year!

1470 total members in Wisconsin.

Which of these numbers added up for you?

Carol S. Surges

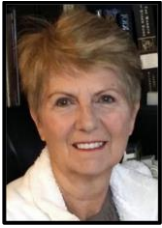
VP-Membership



The Current Landscape of Artificial Intelligence: Today's Uses



Pat Phillips, STEM Chair



I hope your branch has found a way to incorporate STEM topics in your programming calendar. There are a multitude of topics, and I think Artificial Intelligence (AI) is both fascinating and critically important for all of us to understand. With that motivation this is the first of a three-part series that I hope piques your curiosity and encourages you to plan a branch program to learn more.

AI has transitioned from a theoretical concept to a transformative technology that permeates various sectors of modern life. Today, AI is integrated into everyday applications and advanced systems, impacting everything from personal convenience to industrial efficiency. Here are some of the key areas where AI is making a significant difference.

1. Healthcare

AI is revolutionizing healthcare through predictive analytics, diagnostic tools, and personalized medicine. Machine learning algorithms analyze vast datasets from patient records, medical imaging, and genetic information to identify patterns and predict outcomes. For instance, AI-powered diagnostic tools can interpret medical images, such as X-rays and MRIs, often with greater accuracy than human radiologists. Additionally, AI systems can assist in drug discovery by simulating how different compounds interact with biological systems, significantly speeding up the process of bringing new medications to market.

2. Finance

In the finance sector, AI enhances decision-making and fraud detection. Algorithms analyze transaction patterns to identify anomalies indicative of fraudulent activity, allowing for real-time alerts and interventions. Robo-advisors use AI to provide personalized investment advice based on an individual's financial situation and risk tolerance. Furthermore, AI systems can automate trading, executing transactions at speeds and efficiencies that human traders cannot match.

3. Customer Service

AI has transformed customer service through chatbots and virtual assistants. These AI-driven tools can handle customer inquiries around the clock, providing immediate responses and resolving common issues without human intervention. This not only improves customer satisfaction but also allows human agents to focus on more complex tasks. Natural language processing (NLP) capabilities enable these AI systems to understand and respond to customer requests in a conversational manner, enhancing the overall customer experience.

4. Manufacturing and Supply Chain

In manufacturing, AI optimizes production processes and supply chain management. Predictive Maintenance algorithms analyze equipment performance data to foresee potential failures before they occur, thereby reducing downtime and maintenance costs. Additionally, AI systems help manage inventory levels by predicting demand patterns, ensuring that manufacturers can efficiently allocate resources and minimize waste.

5. Transportation

AI plays a crucial role in the development of autonomous vehicles. Self-driving cars rely on AI algorithms to process data from sensors and cameras, enabling them to navigate safely and efficiently. Moreover, AI is used in traffic management systems to optimize traffic flow and reduce congestion through real-time data analysis. Ride-sharing platforms leverage AI to match drivers with passengers more effectively, optimizing routes and reducing wait times.

6. Education

In education, AI tailors learning experiences to individual student needs. Adaptive learning platforms utilize AI to assess student performance and customize curricula accordingly. AI tutors can provide additional support to students, offering personalized feedback and resources to enhance their learning. Furthermore, administrative tasks, such as grading and enrollment management, are increasingly being automated through AI, allowing educators to focus more on teaching.

7. Entertainment and Media

AI is also reshaping the entertainment industry, from content creation to personalized recommendations. Streaming services utilize AI algorithms to analyze viewing habits, suggesting content tailored to individual preferences. In gaming, AI enhances user experiences by creating more responsive and intelligent non-player characters (NPCs). Additionally, AI is being explored for creative purposes, such as generating music and art.

Conclusion

The applications of AI today span across multiple domains, significantly impacting how we live and work. As technology continues to advance, the potential for AI to innovate and improve various aspects of society is immense. Embracing these advancements responsibly will be crucial in harnessing AI's benefits while addressing ethical considerations and societal implications.

In the spirit of full disclosure, this article was written with ChatGPT with the prompt, "Write a 500-word article on today's uses of AI."

OpenAI. (2024). *ChatGPT* [Large language model]. <https://chatgpt.com/share/6727b483-35ac-8012-a90a-d041edc6b989>

In the next Badger Briefs, I'll explore how AI systems work.

A Special Request from the AAUW Wisconsin Communications Team

The AAUW WI State Communications Team is excited to enhance our Facebook Page and State Calendar with engaging and informative content, and we need your help!



FACEBOOK:

We invite and encourage all branches to contribute to our social media content by sharing:

- **News and upcoming events** that may be of interest to the larger community.
- **Policy news and updates.**
- Anything with a **state-wide appeal.**
- Content featuring **images of members engaged in our mission.**

We'd love to feature your branch in our next post! Your regular submissions will help us showcase the important work being done across Wisconsin and keep our community informed and connected. Please send your submissions to Becca Surges, Communications Chair, at rebecca.surges@gmail.com.



STATE CALENDAR:

Did you know? Our website features a state-wide Google calendar, where we list upcoming events and meetings for branches.

If you'd like your upcoming branch meeting or event featured on our calendar, please send your dates and event information to Becca Surges, Communications Chair, at rebecca.surges@gmail.com.

Thank you
for your contributions!

Final thoughts:



Woman

She persists because she is stronger than the pain that
shakes her core.

Her passion rests in ideals that seem nebulous and
unattainable but true, pure and just.

She persists because her thoughts and actions are especially
needed in the world.

She persists because although feeling lonely, she is not
alone.

She impacts others more than she knows.

She's the balm for healing.

Her strength united with others is like a great seed
nurtured in fertile soil,
feeling the heavy rains, but awaiting the moment
of enduring sunlight to flourish.

She persists because she has the right
to make the world a better place for all.

Written by Deb Thiel 11.7.24
inspired by the women I know

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Badger Briefs articles due 2 weeks after State board meetings.

Special issues may be sent as needed.

The issues will be sent to branches to be forwarded to their members.

Board Meetings: Due Dates:
January 25th February 7th
April 25 May 9th

Send articles with subject line: *Badger Briefs* Article to:
rjadams65@frontier.com