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AAUW Capital (NV)

Annual Report for FY 2020-2021

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AAUW CAPITAL (NV) BRANCH PRESIDENT

AAUW Mission

The mission of AAUW is to advance gender equity for women and girls through research, education, and advocacy.

5 Star Branch

AAUW Capital (NV) is 5 Star Branch. Being recognized as a 5 Star Branch means that our branch work is “aligned with the AAUW strategic plan and other initiatives that foster the organization’s mission of advancing gender equity for women and girls”. We were the fourth 5 Star Branch in the country, one of 28 5 Star branches out of nearly 1,000 branches in the U.S.

This past year, we did more than survive the pandemic, we thrived! This is demonstrated by our work within our branch as well as in our local communities. It is most strongly shown in our **fundraising** efforts. Because of the determination and efforts of our branch members, our fundraisers were as successful this year as ever! Our pecan sales and “Virtual” Feast of Chocolate were so successful, that even with the pandemic, we were able to fully fund all three of our annual college scholarships and make our usual contribution to AAUW National’s Greatest Needs Fund!



The First Star: Programs

The first Star is for **Programs**. This year we had excellent speakers and a few interactive programs. Our branch:

- Conducted our first ever virtual Annual Membership Event in September.
- Learned the facts of the new (mail-in) voting procedures from a panel of elected county representatives in October.
- De-stressed after a contentious National election in November by gathering virtually with AAUW Kona to talk, sing, practice a little Qi Gong, and line dance!
- Celebrated the December holidays with a beautiful evening walk around our state Capitol (masked and distanced) filled with fresh air and holiday lights.
- Became more aware of the experiences of our local indigenous peoples through a presentation on the history of the Stewart Indian School by Stacy Montooth, Director of the Nevada Indian Commission.
- Educated ourselves about rural health care issues via a presentation by Dr. John Packham of the University of Nevada, Reno’s School of Medicine.

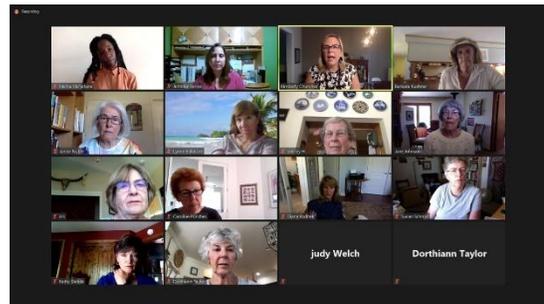


- Prepared ourselves to advocate during this year’s Legislative Session via a thoroughly researched presentation on proposed bills provided by our branch’s Public Policy Chairs and Legislative Steering Committee.
- Honored scholarship recipients from Carson High School and Western Nevada College, installed officers, and celebrated Branch and Board members’ contributions with an in-person event in May at the Governor’s Mansion.

 **The Second Star: Advancement**

The second star is for **Advancement**. This year, we had strong member involvement, even with Covid protocols in place.

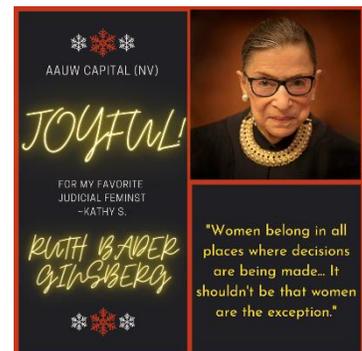
- Our branch had a high participation rate, with 85% of our members participating in our work in some way.
- We fully funded the \$10,000 endowment for the Linda Hiebert-Sekiguchi Honorary Fund that we established with AAUW National in 2018. The LHS Fund is a “Greatest Needs” Fund, specifically dedicated to the area of Education & Training.
- We assisted members with technology and are now able to communicate with ALL members via email.
- Our Interest Groups pivoted and went strong during Covid! Interest Group leaders learned how to conduct virtual meetings enabling our Afternoon & Evening Book Groups and Great Decisions groups to proceed. Members established a new group – Capital Hikers – to provide a new and safe way to connect. And our Knitting & Crocheting and Gourmet groups are now meeting once again.
- We honored our newest AAUW Lifetime Member!



 **The Third Star: Communication & External Relations**

The third star is for **Communication & External Relations**. Our branch set a goal to improve our technical and social media skills this year, and to significantly increase our presence and use of social media. Our branch:

- Built new skillsets in attending and conducting virtual meetings. With “How To” and one-on-one (virtual) sessions, we learned how to use Zoom, Twitter, and conference calling software.



- Learned “How to Tweet Our Representatives” with two member-led training sessions that were open to all AAUW members throughout Nevada.
- Posted news and events on our branch Facebook and Twitter accounts, we engaged in three social media campaigns: 1) the national “Why I Vote” campaign, 2) our own campaign highlighting “Women we are Thankful For” (in November), and 3) our own campaign highlighting “Women we are Joyful for” (in December and January).
- Expanded and regularly updated our branch website.
- Continued to publish an informative and fun monthly newsletter.
- Participated in the development of the Western Women’s Leadership Council at our local community college, Western Nevada College (WNC).
- Presented on Work Smart at the annual Women’s Leadership Summit at WNC.
- Actively participated on AAUW NV State Council and attended State events (including a virtual meeting with Senator Catherine Cortez-Masto and our virtual State Convention).
- Regularly volunteered at Envirolution, a local STEM-oriented non-profit with K-12 educational programs. We also made our first donation to their girls-first programs.



The Fourth Star: Public Policy & Research

The fourth star is for **Public Policy & Research**: The Nevada Legislature met in the spring of this fiscal year. To help us advocate for mission-based legislation, our Public Policy Chairs and Legislative Steering Committee conducted several activities:



- A social media campaign on “Why I Vote” was conducted in the fall in alignment with this National movement.
- Two “How to Tweet Your Representative” tutorial webinars, open to all AAUW Nevada members, were conducted, resulting in many members using social media in the electoral process for the first time.
- A panel of elected representatives of our local counties educated members about the mail-in ballot procedures for the National election.
- A “How to Use NELIS” tutorial webinar, open to all AAUW Nevada members, helped members build skills in bill tracking and online advocacy.
- A thorough review of dozens of bills proposed in the Nevada Legislature was conducted and presented to membership.
- Calls to Action on specific pieces of legislation were made, including use of the Two-Minute Activist.

- Our branch website was updated with key policy-oriented information.

 **The Fifth Star: Governance**

The fifth star is for **Governance**. Building on our robust governance foundation, this year, our branch:

- Created a Strategic Plan for the year – and accomplished both of our branch goals– 1) to build our technical and social media skills, and 2) to increase our awareness of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusiveness (DEI) issues.
- Enjoyed the active participation of our 24-member board!
- Updated our Policies & Procedures.
- Updated and is poised to distribute (online) our Annual Member Survey to collect data that will guide next year’s programming and activities.



It has been a productive and engaging year!

Respectfully submitted:

Jennifer Verive, Ph.D., President, AAUW Capital (NV)