



AAUW Capital Branch Annual Report 2021 – 2022

For more than 75 years, AAUW Capital Branch has served its members through collegiality, education, and inspiration. As part of the national organization, the Mission of AAUW is **“To advance gender equity for women and girls, through research, education, and advocacy”**. Its Vision is **“Equity for all”** and its Values are **“Non-partisan. Fact-based. Integrity. Inclusion and Intersectionality”**. The achievements of our Branch this year are the result of a committed Executive Board and a dedicated membership whose values support the goals of our organization. During the 2021 – 2022 year, the following goals, objectives, and action plans have guided our work.

Branch Goals

1. To promote diversity, particularly in ethnicity and age, in branch membership and activities through targeted outreach to local community groups.
2. To increase the effectiveness through our Branch communications and activities by building members' technical skills.

Branch Objectives

A. Membership: To recruit, engage, and retain members.

1. Make concerted effort to have all members feel welcome
2. Increase visibility and awareness of AAUW's principles, policies, positions, and priorities to new and continuing members via inclusion in the newsletter, Fall Member Event, monthly and annual meetings.
3. Generate activities to seek and retain a diverse membership, especially as to age and ethnicity. Support new AAUW targeted outreach efforts to diverse community groups.
4. Provide a variety of interest groups to increase membership involvement and engagement.
Promote volunteer opportunities for member involvement with Branch activities.
5. Increase outreach and support to members dealing with Covid 19 constraints to participation.

B. Program: To provide a variety of programs which highlight AAUW's mission and public policy, while meeting the interests of our members.

1. Survey the membership regarding their priorities for monthly program topics and speakers.
2. Provide opportunities for member feedback and comments.

C. Public Policy: To bring awareness of AAUW's public policy.

1. Engage local elected officials in discussion related to AAUW public policy.
2. Encourage members' participation in AAUW's Two-Minute Activist.
3. Promote voter registration with the community, including increasing awareness of AAUW's website on voter education materials.
4. Educate and empower voters by co-sponsoring non-partisan candidate and issue forums with League of Women Voters and Sierra Nevada Forums.

D. Philanthropy: Provide support for local scholarships, the AAUW Greatest Needs Fund, and other local community projects such as WorkSmart and STEM-related projects.

1. Promote the sale of pecans to generate income.
2. Sponsor the Annual Feast of Chocolate to generate additional income.

E. Community Collaboration: Collaborate with other community groups such as League of Women Voters, Sierra Nevada Forums, Western Nevada College, Soroptimist, Nevada Women's Lobby, Nevada Women's Commission, Nevada Coalition for Women's Equity, and others to pursue common goals and principles focused on support of women and girls.

Despite the challenges posed by Covid 19 restrictions, our Board met regularly through the year. In July 2021, a joint Board retreat-style meeting was held to explore a strategic planning opportunity. The Board members participated in a SWOT analysis. SWOT stands for Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats. Members shared their perceptions of how our Branch measures up when asked to identify these four categories. These categories were used to understand our internal and external perceptions of our Branch. During this meeting our Goals, Objectives, and Action steps were reviewed to plan for the coming year.

A nominating committee was formed in early 2022 to identify officers for the 2022 – 2023 year. A Slate of Officers was identified and presented to the Board and Membership for a vote. The new officers are:

President/Co-President: Janice Noble and Patricia Cuocco
Vice President/Co-Vice President Programs: Diane Koditek and Iris Blaisdell
Vice President/Co-Vice President Membership: Sharon Orgain and Rita Osborne
Treasurer/Co-Treasurer: Betsy Strohl and Diana Clark
Secretary/Co-Secretary: Mary Wilson and Michele Gleitsmann.

Membership

Membership played an active role in ensuring that our members remained informed and engaged in Branch activities. Beginning with the production of our annual survey and offering monthly updates on member activities, our membership Vice Presidents **Nancy Bailey and Sharon Orgain** kept us well informed through newsletter articles and periodic emails, name tagged, and counted in at each meeting. Bravo to a very successful year!

Keeping our members engaged in our Branch is an important function and one that **Cathy Haber** and her Interest Group team have done so well. Cathy has reported on attendance at each of the Interest Group gatherings and it is clear our members enjoy a wide variety of options. Participant numbers in the following Interest Groups were:

Afternoon Book Group	13
Evening Book Group	13
Gourmet Group	13
Great Decisions	10
Hiking Group	10
Knitting/Needle Point	7
Informal Lunches (8)	6 average attendees/11 different members

Cathy's records indicate that approximately 58% of our members participate in person in our Interest Groups. While this is a decrease from times past, this is probably due to Covid 19 restrictions.

Capturing the essence and details of each meeting is an art and a skill. Minutes of our meetings provide a history of our Branch for the future. It is also another mechanism to keep members engaged in our activities when they are unable to attend. Kudos to **Anita Habberfield and Mary Wilson** for diligently recording our activities this year. They have provided our current and future members with a legacy of our events for 2021 – 2022. We are grateful for their work on behalf of Capital Branch.

Another way we help our members stay connected is acknowledging them during times of celebration and times of trial. Our thanks go to **Maureen Smith**, Corresponding Secretary for the well-wishes of congratulation and support. Members are encouraged to contact Maureen Smith or the Co-Presidents, Janice Noble or Patricia Cuocco when the occasion arises for cards to be sent.

Our Program Vice Presidents, **Barbara Kuehner and Diane Koditek** provided excellent offerings to our members throughout the year. The Fall Member Event at the Governor's Mansion was a smashing success with the theme of "Getting to Know You." Several guests were turned into members on the spot when they saw how welcoming and inclusive our members are.

In October, we heard a fascinating discussion of an AAUW grant recipient on *Border Studies and Human Rights* presented by Elizabeth Villalobos, Ph.D. November provided us with a change as we met in the afternoon at the Stewart Indian School for a visit to the museum and a self-guided tour of the grounds. The weather was perfect and we learned a great deal from the presentation from the School's Executive Director.

The year 2021 ended with a lovely Holiday Party at the home of **Mary Wilson**. Members and their significant others enjoyed the festive culinary delights from the Gourmet Interest Group as well as goodies brought by others. Tours of her home were provided by our host and a truly heartwarming first-time-in-a-long-time gathering was the highlight of the season. Thank you, Mary!

Pandemic Inequity presented by Shadi Martin, Ph.D., Professor and Dean of the School of Social Work at University of Nevada, Reno in January. This was an insightful and in-depth discussion of details about how medical care was available across the country. It gave us much food for thought.

Isabelle Rodriguez-Wilson was our speaker for February. She is the President and CEO of the Nevada Women's Fund. She shared her story of how she came to this role and the amazing actions her organization is taking to support women's education through scholarships from multiple donor sources.

We must never forget the truly talented women in our Capital Branch! In March, our very own members provided an excellent overview of the Voting Rights Act and how redistricting happens in Nevada. **Beth Mancl, JoAnn Carpenter, and Patricia Cuocco** discussed details of the Voting Rights Act and **Kathy Steinle** shared her experiences over many years of her involvement with redistricting in Nevada, complete with maps! These were very comprehensive presentations and timely as we approach our mid-term elections. Thank you!

April was our Annual Business meeting facilitated by our President, **Dr. Janice Noble**. A Slate of Officers was voted upon and the members were presented with the 2022 – 2023 Budget approved by the Board for adoption by the membership. Chairs and Interest Group Coordinators provided updates regarding their groups and Land Acknowledgements were discussed.

Our final meeting of the year in May honored our Scholarship recipients. Each had the opportunity to share their high school achievements and their plans for the next chapter of their lives. They were inspiring and brought to focus the importance of the work AAUW Capital Branch does all year in order to support such amazing young women.

In addition to honoring our scholarship women, Capital Branch recognized and thanked the outgoing officers who served the Branch with dedication and commitment for the past two years. A big THANK YOU and gratitude go to:

Barbara Kuehner

Nancy Bailey
Jane Johnson
Anita Habberfield

Finally, The elected officers for the 2022 – 2023 term were installed by **Dr. Jennifer Verive**, Past President of Capital Branch. The “Spiced Up” installation offered suggested spices that each officer could season their role and duties. Thank you, Jennifer for being our Installation Officer! The members wished the officers congratulations and best wishes for a successful year.

An important aspect of keeping members engaged is the publication of our monthly Newsletter. Special thanks to **Cindy White** for revamping the look of the publication and providing timely reminders and distributing the newsletter each month. Thanks to all those who contributed throughout the year.

Through the series of articles presented, we explored the various aspects of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI), we dived into topics that were perhaps new to us. The difference between diversity and identity, and how ethnicity, Race, and nationality differ. We even had a Race Literacy Quiz to check our knowledge. We explored what an educated person is, and examined various holiday traditions. Women in retirement and how the wage gap impacts the retiring years provided some statistics that were disappointing and worrisome. More recently, we explored unconscious bias or implicit bias and colorism and how those unidentified aspects of ourselves can influence our responses to those around us. We even had an opportunity to write our own *I AM...* poem. It is hoped that the series and activities provided on various aspects of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion provided information as well as food for provocative thought.

Public Policy

In addition to providing an excellent presentation on the Voting Rights Act, **Beth Mancl and JoAnn Carpenter** provided leadership in engaging our members in understanding details about local, statewide, and national policies relevant to AAUW issues. We are grateful for their dedication to keeping us informed with up-to-date and concise information.

Philanthropy

As always, our Pecan Sales were right on target and every bag was sold! Thanks to **Kathy Steinle and Shirley Hammon** for their amazing dedication to Pecans! A special thanks to Shirley who found last-minute transportation for our pecans so they were available at the Craft Fair. Had it not been for her quick action, the team would only have been able to take orders! Instead, the pecans were hot off the truck and ready for munching! Way to go, Shirley!

Our traditional Feast of Chocolate was once again turned into a “Virtual, calorie-free” fundraising campaign this year due to Covid 19 epidemic. Despite this circumstance,

Chris Perdomo and Jan Sullivan along with their team, received substantial donations through the goodness of so many long-term supporters of this event. We are grateful to this group for their dedication in the face of obstacles to continue the tradition of the Feast of Chocolate. We are hopeful we can return to our fun-filled in-person event in 2023!

Our Branch owes a debt of gratitude to our Co-Treasurers, **Jane Johnson and Betsy Strohl**. They expertly managed our funds making sure income was added into account, and disbursements for various donations and scholarships were properly completed. We appreciate the regular updates and responses to members' questions. Our thanks to both for developing our future budget which has been adopted by the Board and approved by the members.

Community Collaboration

While it has been difficult in the past two years to work with other organizations, Capital Branch has been able to successfully keep our relationships going through Zoom and other in-person contacts. It is note-worthy that the League of Women Voters is making a comeback in Northern Nevada and will be joining with Sierra Nevada Forums and Capital Branch to work together on Candidate Forums for this Fall. We have had representation on the Nevada Coalition for Women's Equity. Our connection with Western Nevada College has grown stronger as we have been meeting there this year. We continue to be grateful for allowing us to use their classroom for our meetings.

The relationship with Envirolutions has been a wonderful opportunity for us to put into action our desire to assist young girls in pursuit of their goals related to STEM education. We are grateful to our members who dedicate their time and energy regularly to create kits for teachers and students. Thanks to Barbara Kuehner and her committee for their leadership in this important endeavor.

Thank you to our members who have continued to support AAUW Capital Branch through the year. Our Branch has been a source of education, an up-lifting spirit, and collegiality for all. It is because of these attributes that our Branch continues to grow and thrive. We are grateful for your continued dedication and support to our AAUW Capital Branch.

Respectfully submitted,

Janice Noble, Ph.D.
President
AAUW Capital Branch