



AAUW NM Roadrunner

editor Judy McGuire

Mission: to advance gender equity for women and girls through research, education, and advocacy.

Visit AAUW-NM [Website](#)

REMINDER: 2021-2022 dues are due June 30. See Membership tab on [AAUW.org](#)



Beverly Chambers
Co-President

Lynn Heffron
Co-President



From Our Presidents:

To all AAUW NM members,

While it is disheartening to have **Beverly Chambers** no longer be my co-president effective July 1, I assure you I will work with our Leadership Team, our many branches and their leaders, and all our members throughout the state with dedication, pride, and the focus needed to deliver on our mission. I also look forward to the joy of us being together again in person.

Beverly has been a great educator to me about the workings of our organization, not to mention the do's and don'ts and what a zoom meeting must include, and how it should operate. The Covid pandemic presented her new challenges in working with a newcomer co-president. I applaud her patience, her honesty, her humor, and her willingness to accept my many questions with a smile. I hope to grow even further in my role flying solo as president, as many of you have already let me know you are ready to advise, guide and help. Yes Sylvia, yes Helena, yes Kathie, yes Phyllis, yes Nancy, and many others. I want to thank you ahead of time. But especially, right now, thank you, Beverly. You've been terrific!

How blessed I've also been this past year to get to know our many officers. I am continuing thanks to the many new and retiring elected and appointed officers of AAUW NM. Las Cruces' **Christa Slaton**, you were terrific as the Finance Chair; Silver City's **Elaine Carson** graciously has agreed to follow you in this crucial role. Carlsbad's **Rocky Lara** continues as Co-VP of Programs and our newly elected newcomer **Louise Yakey**, formerly co-president of the branch in Santa Fe. She is replacing **Judy Prono** from Los Alamos, who truly led the charge to encourage and ensure all branches reach the Stars. We all know the extraordinary ongoing contributions of **Pamelya Herndon**, and we applaud that she will continue as Public Policy Chair. Former co-president of our state, **Helena Whyte**, is taking on the AAUW-NM Awards Chair position. Her knowledge of our organization is a guaranteed plus. **Rebecca (Becky) Reiss** is now our College/University Chair. She recently served as the Socorro branch's president and is well aware of both

faculty and students' challenges in the college or university setting. And finally, thank you, **Kathie Davis**, for your continuing role as Nominations Chair. Our new slate is due to your intense efforts to help secure the future growth of AAUW NM.

AAUW strives to help women, young women, and girls become better informed, better-educated citizens who can both imagine and achieve their successful places in national and global communities. In 2019 two-thirds or 68.5% of young women, ages 16 to 24, worked involuntarily in part-time jobs earning less than \$15 an hour. And 27.1% of women aged 25 to 64 also worked part-time and for less than \$15 an hour. Women heavily dominate the workforces in the fields of service, leisure, hospitality, and retail industries, all of which have been in serious decline during the pandemic. Even in recovery, the continuing growth of low-wage, low-quality work impedes the progress of women. This threatens women's economic security for the near term and makes it more difficult to gain footholds in labor markets, offering better financial and career possibilities.

If you have ever needed more motivation to advance equity for women and girls through advocacy, education, and research, please consider what is needed now.

AAUW NM is only limited by our members' visions and dedicated work to eliminate the plights of poverty, lack of education, and the business inequalities and inequities that affect so many women and girls in New Mexico. Let us not forget our strategic goals as we welcome a renewed sense of life. Let us think anew about how to help others.

Lynn Heffron - President

Dear Members,

As I think back over the past three years, I'm finding it hard to pinpoint what I enjoyed most about my time as your AAUW NM CO-President. I thoroughly enjoyed visiting several branches for a variety of reasons. It was such a pleasure to meet so many special and dedicated members from across the State. I truly enjoyed working with the other members on the AAUW NM Board – such a wonderful, talented, giving group of people! And in these dire times, perhaps it was also the moment I was forced to reflect on the order of events and the changes we needed to make to continue and complete our business.

This year ended strangely. I appreciate the flexibility and innovation you embraced as we tried to conduct business in ways some of us never have. To those who participated in our annual convention– thank you.

Thank you for everything. You honored me with your support, your laughter, your comradery, your wonderful and varied talents, your enthusiasm and passion for the issues at the forefront of our continuing fight for equality for women and girls, and your commitment to AAUW's mission. It's been my honor and pleasure to serve as your AAUW NM President.

Please take good care of yourself.

Beverly Chambers

Program Report

Congratulations to all the branches that have earned stars in AAUW's **5 Star Recognition Program**. Remember, you have until June 30 to submit your work toward earning more stars.

Looking toward the coming year, as you plan your programs—and as we move from Zoom to in-person formats, hopefully—keep in mind the resources available online. Under the Membership tab (<https://www.aauw.org/membership/>), the Governance & Tools link gives you access to State & Branch tools, the Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Toolkit the Advocacy Toolkit, among other guidelines.

Although members have sometimes voiced frustration about navigating the new website, it provides useful resources for planning and running branch programs. It is worth your time to check it out for tips and guidelines that may help you plan branch programs and understand AAUW policies, such as those that govern fundraising for local scholarships.

The summer is a good time to do a little online homework to familiarize yourself with these resources. Then they will be at your fingertips as you roll out your branch activities this Fall.

Judy Prono and Rocky Lara
AAUW-NM Program Co-chairs



[AAUW Public Policy Initiatives](#)

On April 28, 2021, President Joe Biden unveiled the American Families Plan, a strategy designed to invest in children, families, and the economy's growth. Similarly, the public policy initiatives of AAUW support children, families, and economic growth in the economy by strengthening the financial well-being of women.

AAUW women continue to lead the way in helping build a stronger economy that does not leave anyone behind. Our advocacy work in New Mexico focuses on supporting policies that will help the thousands of women forced to leave the workforce due to the COVID 19 pandemic.

Our goal in 2021 is to continue to advocate for policies that will help make life easier for every woman and her family. Our work in New Mexico focuses on helping every woman, without regard to her race, color, religion, national origin, or zip code.

Investing in education is a down payment on the future of New Mexico and the future of America. In New Mexico, our advocacy includes making education a key policy initiative that will raise the graduation rates in our state from 74.9% to ultimately surpassing the national graduation average of 85.3%. Accordingly, we supported the passage of legislation that supported education.

We supported House Joint Resolution 1, a transformational investment in early childhood education that would ensure high-quality preschool options for all three and four-year-old children. Preschool is critical to ensuring that children start kindergarten with the skills that set them up for success in school. **Research shows** that kids who attend universal pre-K are more likely to take honors classes and less likely to repeat a grade. Other studies show that low-income children who attend universal programs do better in math and reading as late as eighth grade. House Joint Resolution 1 allows lawmakers to use money from a multibillion-dollar state permanent fund to boost services for young children. However, voters must now decide if they support the initiative. Voters will cast their votes during the 2022 general election to determine the ultimate fate of House Resolution 1. In the meantime, the women of AAUW will continue to support House Resolution 1. We ask that you encourage your friends and family to support the initiative when it appears on the ballot.

The American Families Plan will provide direct support to working families through a national comprehensive paid family and medical leave program that will bring America in line with competitor nations that offer paid leave programs. The program will allow people to manage their health and the health of their families and not have to choose between going to work and staying home to help sick family members. In New Mexico, AAUW women supported HB 20, a bill that requires all employers to provide their workers with paid sick leave. House Bill 20, also known as the Healthy Workplaces Act, will provide workers with at least one hour of paid sick leave for every 30 hours worked. Too many families and workers feel the squeeze of low wages combined with the high costs of meeting families' basic needs. The AAUW public policy agenda supported a \$15 minimum wage to help ensure that New Mexico families earned a living wage to help their families thrive.

One of our most important public policy initiatives is ensuring that every eligible person gets to vote. We advocate against any policy that restricts a person's right to vote. We hope every AAUW member who resides in Congressional District 1 in New Mexico





Donate to AAUW Tech Trek with a Unique AmazonSmile link

*Want to help make a difference while you shop in the Amazon app, at no extra cost to you? Simply follow the instructions below to select **"American Association of University Women Tech Trek New Mexico"** as your charity and activate **AmazonSmile** in the app. They'll donate a portion of your eligible mobile app purchases to Tech Trek. How it works:*

1. Open the Amazon app on your phone or computer
2. Select the main menu (=) & tap on "AmazonSmile" within Programs & Features
3. Select "American Association of University Women Tech Trek New Mexico" as your charity
4. Follow the on-screen instructions to activate AmazonSmile in the mobile app

The direct link: smile.amazon.com

In addition, visit [Techtrek-nm.aauw.net](https://techtrek-nm.aauw.net) to use PayPal or your credit card to **DONATE** directly to Tech Trek. The postponed 2020 and the 2021 Tech Trek camps are **virtual** this summer, using the technology of Zoom, but the costs are as high as the in-person camps. Adequate funding depends on AAUW Member donations as well as grants.

VIRTUAL Title IX Public Hearing

June 7, 2021 – June 11, 2021

The U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights (OCR) announces a virtual public hearing to gather information to improve enforcement of Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972.

At the hearing, members of the public may comment on steps the Department can take to ensure that schools are providing students with educational environments free from discrimination in the form of sexual harassment, which encompasses sexual assault and other forms of sexual violence. Members of the public may also comment on how the Department can continue to ensure that schools have grievance procedures that provide for the fair, prompt, and equitable resolution of reports of sexual harassment and other sex discrimination, cognizant of the sensitive issues often involved. OCR also seeks the public's comments on the Department's role in addressing discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity in educational environments. Click on the following link:

[Virtual Public Hearing](#)

There is still time

El Voto Femenino - Women and Suffrage in New Mexico

The Philadelphia Area Consortium for Special Collections Libraries (PACSCL) and In Her Own Right project team invites you to join us in exploring a century of women's activism leading to the passage of the 19th Amendment.

The symposium celebrated more than 5 years of work on the In Her Own Right project:

<http://inherownright.org/>

Sylvia Ramos and Pamela **Herndon** presented in this symposium section about suffrage.

link to Symposium on Youtube:

[Video Recording of Symposium](#)



Women on new Quarters!

The U.S. Mint has asked the public to **submit suggestions** for women to be honored on future quarters. Each design will celebrate “the accomplishments and contributions” of a prominent American woman.

The law says that no living person will be depicted in the coin designs.

Maya Angelou and Sally Ride Will Be Honored on Quarters

The coins are part of a new U.S. Mint program that will feature as many as 20 American Women.

You can submit your nominations. Click here: [THIS FORM.](#)

2021 Academic Report

Several bills that affect education were passed during the recent legislative session. The majority of these bills concern funding:

- Both chambers passed a constitutional amendment that, if approved by voters, would increase disbursements from the state’s \$20 billion Land Grant Permanent Fund from 5% to 6.25%. The extra money would fund early childhood education programs such as universal pre-K and increase spending for K-12 schools.
- Lawmakers also supported bills to permanently increase funding for school districts and capital outlay projects in areas serving Native American students, who are party to the recent lawsuits.
- The legislature also supports increasing learning hours to help students recover from the losses during the pandemic.
- Anti-discrimination bills passed will also affect students. The law limits discriminatory dress codes and protects traditional hairstyles such as dreadlocks or indigenous braids and religious head coverings. It also provides additional recourse for verbal abuse.
- NM’s system for distributing broadband is changing. Coordinated House and Senate bills, created and fund an office and oversight body for broadband programs, and put aside \$70 million for cities and counties and \$25 million for schools. This will put one single entity in charge of supervising this program.

New Mexico schools are expecting a boon from the latest federal pandemic relief. There are conditions under which the money must be used, but it can be spent through 2023. Most public schools and institutes of higher education in the state are now fully open as more people, including school faculties and staff, have been vaccinated. Some schools are still operating as a hybrid, and some students are learning virtually at parental request. Several schools are extending the school year into June.

Lastly, this week Governor Lujan-Grisham signed the bill allowing NMSU-Carlsbad to become independent of the NMSU system. The college will be called Eastern New Mexico College.

Mary Sandford

AAUW-NM Academic Chair

Branch News

Carlsbad:

Every year AAUW Carlsbad honors the senior girls with the highest GPAs for their **Girl of the Month** Program. The top 18 girls from Carlsbad High School and the top 3 from the Early College High School were honored this year. Normally, the branch puts on a



luncheon for the girls and their mother/mentor, but due to COVID-19, this was not possible. Instead, the branch had yard signs made to deliver to each girl. Volunteers from the branch drove to each girl's house to deliver a yard sign, mask, and certificate. It also gave the branch members a chance to talk to the girls for a bit to learn about their future plans. Overall, this was very successful, and we may plan to do it again in the future as our luncheon attendance has been low the past few years. Biographies of the girls were submitted to our local newspaper and posted on our Facebook page. Feel free to look up AAUW-Carlsbad on Facebook to check it out.

Las Cruces:

Advocacy

- Branch members followed the NM Legislative session and advocated as requested by our AAUW NM Public Policy Chair.

STEM

- AAUW-LC is committed to hosting Girls Can! in 2022.

Funds Raised

- AAUW-LC is currently conducting two fundraising campaigns: Tech Trek and Scholarships for 2022.

Other Activities

- In March, we collected clothing for our Homeless Student program operated by the Las Cruces school district.
- Our March Women's History Month program was presented by AAUW Board Chair Julia Brown. Our April program *White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Backpack*, was presented by **Dr. Tricia Brainard**.
- "Virtual Conversations" were held monthly on Hispanic education issues, the book: *Gutsy Women*, a follow up to our April Program focusing on racial bias.

AAUW Silver City / Southwest NM Branch:

WE DID IT! In May, our Branch (and friends) completed the assembly and delivery of 200 boxes with STEM activities for girls in Grades 5–8 in southwestern New Mexico for our 2021 "Expanding our Horizons" (EYH) event (see photos). EYH encourages girls to further their education and potentially pursue careers in STEM fields by providing hands-on activities, role models, and information about STEM careers.

For 27 years, we held the event on the campus of Western New Mexico University, hosting hundreds of girls from our four-county area annually. This year, however, given that we could not hold the event in person, we devised a remote experience with a free box of science and engineering activities, a t-shirt, and other goodies to be taken home by registered girls just before the summer break.

Each box included materials for six or seven different activities, depending on the student's grade, with illustrated step-by-step instructions in Spanish and English. Activities included making bath bombs, creating a string from algae, dissecting owl pellets, building a tower with liquids of different densities, fingerprinting, building a DNA model from gumdrops and Twizzlers, testing items for electrical conductivity, building miniature lightsabers, testing the pH of solutions, and, of course, creating slime!

We will be receiving feedback from students through an evaluation form they can return in a stamped, addressed envelope we provided in the box. We're confident the girls enjoyed their boxes!



Box Contents

Las Vegas:

AAUW Las Vegas has finished the online sale of items from the estate of **Louise Drlik**, AAUW LV Life Member. The proceeds of this sale were for Tech Trek New Mexico, so you'll be pleased to know **\$2984.02** went to TTNM, thanks to all of you who purchased items or donated money. AAUW Las Vegas also sent \$85 to AAUW New Mexico as half of the donations given to AAUW LV in place of convention registration fees to put on the convention. Again, we thank all who donated and all who attended the convention.

AAUW Las Vegas **Girls Can** Team has been working hard to create a fun, meaningful Girls Can experience for 5th-grade girls in the Las Vegas and Pecos School Districts. Five professional women volunteered to videotape projects shown to students at home or by teachers in classrooms. We created lists for the necessary ingredients and were ready to purchase them. As we began to discuss the logistics of how the videos would be used at home and in the classrooms, things got complicated. If the videos were used at home, we worried about the supervision of the students following instructions and using the ingredients safely. **Barb Casey**, who delivers books to Las Vegas households for the Literacy Council, said some households have two or three children at home 'doing school' supervised by a single grandparent. Teachers wanted to include the boys in the projects in the classroom setting, thus doubling the ingredients needed and requiring the teacher to supervise the whole class in doing the projects. While the ingredients were mostly household items, using them in science projects requires careful and focused supervision. After much discussion and some regret, we decided to wait until next year when we can again bring the girls to the NMHU Campus and the labs of our women scientists. ALAS....best laid plans in time of pandemic!

AAUW Las Vegas wants to recognize our member, **Dr. Rita Surdi**, who teaches math at Luna Community College. Dr. Surdi was thanked for her 'amazing teaching' by her student, Jaydan Herrera, a dual credit student at Luna and West Las Vegas High School, in a 4-28-21 *Las Vegas Optic* article. Jaydan is a junior and will complete his pre-engineering degree at Luna and high school graduation at the same time. He has been accepted to the prestigious 2021 MIT Online Science, Technology, and Engineering Community Program, which requires two classes and 30 hours per week of work between June 23 and December 12. Chosen from more than 1700 applicants, Jaydan stood out because of his 'passion for STEM, and his accomplishments and determination'. Rita has taught at LCC for 23 years and loves to watch her students excel in their STEM field goals. Well done, Rita! BRAVO!

From National AAUW



Many thanks to everyone who voted in AAUW's 2021 National Election. It took a mere three days to reach the required quorum—a testament to our members' passion and engagement.

I am honored and humbled to have been re-elected to serve as your board chair for three more years. I'm also pleased to report that Malinda Gaul was re-

elected as board vice-chair, and Elizabeth Haynes and Joseph Bertolino will retain their board seats.

AAUW's public policy priorities were approved by 92% of voters. The board recommended a ballot initiative to remove the college-degree membership requirement did not receive the two-thirds, or 66.6%, vote required to enact a bylaws change.

However, the board is heartened that a remarkable 63% of members voted in favor of making this change, indicating a momentum shift toward a more inclusive membership. This was a significantly higher number than we saw in previous votes, which hovered just below 50%, to make the change.

While we have many voices, I know we all share the same commitment to AAUW's mission of **advancing gender equity for women and girls through research, education, and advocacy**, and our vision of achieving **equity for all**.

More than ever, we must embrace our values and continue to strive towards diversity, equity and inclusion; it's a journey that will never end. No matter how you voted in this election, you are a valued part of our community. In fact, you—our members—are our core community, and the final decisions about board leaders and bylaws will always be yours to make. Now it is time to move forward together. Thanks again for making your voice heard.

With appreciation,
Julia T. Brown, Esq.
Board Chair

AAUW-New Mexico Public Policy 2019-2021

AAUW-NM supports AAUW's mission to advance gender equity for women and girls through research, education, and advocacy. The work of AAUW builds upon responsible public participation and our priorities provide a basis for AAUW members' actions. Our positions are shaped by our commitment to being nonpartisan and fact-based and acting with integrity. We strive for our work to be inclusive and intersectional by collaborating with diverse allies and coalitions to **achieve equity for all**.

AAUW-NM supports the National Public Policy Program and understands that true equity requires a balance between the rights of the individual and the needs of the community. We believe high-quality public education is the foundation of a democratic society and the key to improving economic prosperity and gender equality. We promote equitable efforts to close the persistent achievement gap that disproportionately affects low-income children, Native American students, and students of color.

We recognize gun violence as a health issue. We support campaign finance and ethics reform and an Independent Redistricting Commission. We support the civil and human rights of all immigrants; safe, livable, affordable housing; a clean, healthy, and sustainable environment; separation of church and state; the right to privacy; a fair, balanced, and independent judiciary; and prevention of all forms of human trafficking. We support all efforts to preserve the rights guaranteed in the New Mexico Constitution.

Biennial Action Priorities

To support a strong system of public education that promotes gender fairness, equity, diversity, and inclusivity, and to address the barriers and implicit biases that hinder the advancement of women and girls AAUW-NM advocates

- Vigorous enforcement of Title IX and all other civil rights laws pertaining to education
- Adequate and equitable funding for quality public education for all students
- Opposition to the use of public funds for nonpublic elementary and secondary education and to charter schools that do not adhere

AAUW NM Leadership Team 2021-2023

Elected positions:

Presidents

Lynn Heffron

lgheffron@gmail.com

Co-VP Programs

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Louise Yakey

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VP-Membership

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Secretary

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Academic Chair

Mary Sandford

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Public Policy Chair

Pamelya Herndon

pamelyaherndon@gmail.com

Immediate Past President

Sylvia Fink

sjsfink@gmail.com

Nominations Chair

Kathie Davis

kadkathryn@gmail.com

to the same civil rights and accountability standards as required of other public schools

- Increased support for and protection of programs that meet the needs of girls and women in elementary, secondary, and postsecondary education, including strong promotion of science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) education, and comprehensive sexual health education
- Increased support for and access to affordable higher education for women and disadvantaged populations
- Support for practices that halt the flow of students from schools to prisons, including reforming school disciplinary practices that disproportionately punish girls and students of color
- Increased number of instructional days for K-12
- Early childhood development initiatives and programs for students with disabilities
- Reasonable and fair capital outlay expenditures
- Freedom from bullying, harassment, and sexual assault
- Effective teen pregnancy and dropout prevention programs

To achieve economic security for all women, AAUW-NM advocates:

- Pay equity fairness in compensation and benefits
- Equitable access and advancement in employment, free from systemic barriers and biases, including vigorous enforcement of employment discrimination statutes
- Closing the gender and race gaps in leadership opportunities for women of all backgrounds
- Greater availability of and access to benefits and policies that promote work-life balance, including quality and affordable dependent care and paid family, medical, and sick leave
- Programs that provide women with education, training, and support for success in the workforce, including non- traditional occupations and women's entrepreneurship
- Strengthening programs, including welfare and career and technical education, to improve postsecondary education access, career development, and earning potential
- Strengthening retirement benefits and programs, including pension improvements and protecting Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid from privatization
- Access for all women to the full range of health care services to ensure economic security
- Increasing the number of quality jobs that pay a living wage

To guarantee equality, individual rights, and social justice for a diverse and inclusive society, AAUW-NM advocates:

- Vigorous enforcement of and full access to civil and constitutional rights, including affirmative action and expansion of voting rights
- Self-determination of one's reproductive health decisions
- Universal access to quality, affordable health care, and comprehensive family planning services, including the expansion of patients' rights
- Freedom from violence and fear of violence, including hate crimes, in homes, schools, workplaces, and communities
- Support for U.N. programs that address human rights and women's and girls' issues
- Freedom in the definition of self and family and a guarantee of civil rights for all family structures
- Access to well-regulated state guardianship of seniors, including strong oversight of eldercare
- Passage and ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment. Any attempt to revoke or change the NM Constitutional Amendment will become a priority for action.

Vacant offices:

AAUW Funds Chair

Appointed positions:

Branch Projects Grants Chair

Sylvia Fink

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Governance Chair

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Diversity/Inclusion Chair

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Vacant appointments:

AAUW Funds Chair

Media Relations Chair

College/University Chair

AAUW

Founded in 1923

Mission:

To advance gender equity
for women and girls
through research,
education, and advocacy

AAUW-NM Focus:

"Empowering Women to
change their lives"

AAUW NM

AAUW

The *Roadrunner* is a quarterly publication of AAUW NM
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