



## AAUW-NM Winter Roadrunner

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

**Note:** this is a longer-than-usual issue. When you get to the end on your computer or tablet, you will see a notification: "message clipped"....click there to "view entire message"

Judy McGuire, Editor



The photo was taken at the Fall Leadership Team hybrid meeting



### From our President:



Welcome to the Fall Season,

Our recent in-person and zoomed-in leadership team meeting in Albuquerque on Oct. 30 seemed like a reawakening of the AAUW body politic. While technical difficulties often impeded clear communications both verbally and visually, we did our best to have a successful first hybrid meeting. One appreciates, even more, the challenges faced by schools, teachers, students, and parents in adjusting to online and hybrid learning. Special thanks to **Pat Maben** and **Sylvia Fink** for welcoming us to the Center for Peace and Justice and feeding us well.

Only days later our guest speaker, our own UNM professor of English **Tracy Lassiter** Ph.D., was featured on the front page of the Gallup Independent newspaper describing the "Visual Depictions of the American West" conference in Venice, Italy, a conference she helped organize and had shared with us. Academics from across the globe came together to explore how graphic novels depict the American West and what those depictions can tell us about the world we live in. Tracy also serves as co-chair of the International Comparative Literature Association's Research Committee on Comics Studies and Graphic Narratives. Of particular importance to AAUW NM, Tracy was confirmed at our meeting as International Chair, a perfect fit for this assignment.

Our traditional Winter LTM, leadership team meeting, will be held in Santa Fe on Sunday, January 23 from 8:30 to 4:30 in-person at the Hotel Santa Fe and via zoom. AAUW SF President **Anne May** has also reserved rooms there at a discount rate for both Saturday and Sunday nights. We encourage you to attend Advocacy Day as well on Monday, January 24. More information on public policy and advocacy can be found further down in this newsletter.

And don't forget: **The AAUW NM Annual Convention** will be held in **Socorro** on the campus of NMTech on June 3, 4, and 5. Thanks to **Becky Reiss** and the AAUW Socorro branch for making this possible.

**Please Remember:**

- Members not paying dues by November 30 will be dropped from the AAUW Membership Database. 90 members from the 2020-2021 Roster have not renewed membership this year.
- **AAUW NM Legacy of Leadership Award nominations** are due 3 weeks before the winter LTM or Jan. 2, 2022. Check the website for information and the application form.

Happy Upcoming Holidays and I Hope to See You at the Winter LTM.  
*Lynn*



## On November 13, AAUW became 140 Years Old

When AAUW began in 1881, few women had the opportunity to pursue a degree—prompting founder **Marion Talbot** to support a women's education fund. Today, women outnumber men in earning degrees at nearly every level. Yet, our work is far from done.

Over the past 140 years, AAUW has evolved to become the leading voice in advancing gender equity in education and workplaces everywhere. Through research, education, and advocacy, we're committed to ensuring that everyone gets the same opportunity to learn, earn and lead. Our programs aim at moving women forward—and we fight for policies that support our goals.

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## Call for Nominations



Nominations for Leadership Team members will be accepted via email or at the Jan. 23 LTM meeting in Santa Fe.

The following offices are elected in even years for a two-year term:

- State Co-Presidents
- State VP Membership
- State Secretary
- Academic Chair
- Nominations Chair

I am hoping that our current position holders, whom all have done an excellent job in a rough couple of years, will continue to serve AAUW- NM in these positions but we do need another name for Co-President since Lynn has served in this position without a "Co". Please think of those in your local chapter who may want to serve at the state level. All are welcomed in the nomination process.

The following positions will be appointed in even years for two-year terms (again I am hoping that the wonderful people currently in these positions will serve another two years or help recruit someone to serve):

- AAUW-NM Awards Chair
- Governance Chair
- Diversity Chair
- Roadrunner Editor
- International Interest Chair
- Parliamentarian
- Website Manager
- Media Relations Chair

We are also in need of a Co-VP for Programs and an AAUW-NM Fund Chair for partial terms. Email me with your suggestions or if you are interested in being elected or appointed.

Nomination Chair

*Kathie Davis* ([kadkathryn@gmail.com](mailto:kadkathryn@gmail.com))

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Tech Trek NM received the first STEM Equity and Inclusion Award from NMOST (New Mexico Out of School Time) at the *Fall into Place Virtual Conference* on October 21. One of the things they ask Advancing Young Women in STEM scholarship applicants each year is to describe an experience outside the typical school day that was influential in their decision to pursue STEM in higher education and/or as a career path. Over the four years of the scholarship program, many applicants and recipients point to Tech Trek as an important experience on their STEM journey. One of the Women in STEM panelists attended Tech Trek NM in 2014.



We plan to return to the residential camp at New Mexico Tech in Socorro, NM, June 19-25, 2022. AAUW requires all campers, staff, and volunteers to be vaccinated for COVID-19. We must also follow all NM Health Orders, such as wearing masks indoors. We do have a pivot plan if cases make virtual or hybrid camp the only option. Since many teachers have retired or left the profession, we need your help identifying current 7th-grade science and math teachers in your branch community and surrounding towns. Send us the names of the current 7th-grade math and science teachers, their schools, and e-mails to [techtreknm@gmail.com](mailto:techtreknm@gmail.com) so we can reach out to them for nominations in January. If you would like to help us prepare for Tech Trek NM 2022, we have many small and not-so-small ways you can volunteer.

AAUW Tech Trek NM is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization. You can donate by credit card on our web page [techtrek-nm.aauw.net](http://techtrek-nm.aauw.net) or mail your check to PO Box 90322, Albuquerque, NM 87199. The breakdown of Tech Trek NM income is: 46% Corporate grants, 20% individuals, 16% Government grants, 16% Branch, and 3% families. Campers only pay \$50 to attend one week of camp. The cost is about \$1200 per girl at camp.

You can view our 2021 camp videos on YouTube.

The June 2021 camp for rising 9th-grade girls <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wSI9Kssazjw>

The July 2021 camp for rising 8th-grade girls <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bzoSH2-cz4Q>

*Helena Whyte*, AAUW Tech Trek NM Board President

*Cheri Burch*, AAUW Tech Trek NM Board Vice-President

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# REDISTRICTING SPECIAL SESSION- DECEMBER 6

AAUW-NM has been participating in the Fair Districts for the NM coalition. Thanks to the efforts of many organizations, we were able to get legislative support and funding for our highly respected **Citizen's Redistricting Committee**. This esteemed bipartisan committee led by retired Supreme Court Justice Edward Chavez has superb public input processes and used accurate data to propose their preferred maps. After considering many alternatives and broad public participation, it is now up to the legislature to listen to the recommendations and not bow to political pressures that have resulted in voter suppression, gerrymandering, and incumbency protection in past redistricting cycles. After the legislature deliberates and forwards their preferred maps, hopefully from the map options that the CRC approved, the governor must sign the legislation. Assuming fewer court cases or none, candidates for the newly designated districts will be able to file on a timely basis for the June primary.

In the upcoming and subsequent legislative sessions, we will be working on getting an independent redistricting commission resolution/constitutional amendment proposal to voters. We need AAUW members to help gain an IRC approved by legislators and on the ballot. We have tried unsuccessfully for decades to get legislators to give up their power, and proposed legislation has never gotten very far in the process. Now with the success of the CRC, there may be a growing consciousness that the current process needs to be replaced. We need to end the cycle of having our Supreme Court draw the maps after contentious partisan battles, expensive litigation, and lengthy delays.

*Meredith Machen*, Public Policy Chair. [meredith.machen@gmail.com](mailto:meredith.machen@gmail.com)

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## Strong State Depends on Helping Girls Enter STEM

(This is a reprint of an article published in the Santa Fe New Mexican, written by President Lynn Heffron)

How does the educational world address the lost time and missed opportunities to encourage young women to pursue the exciting and well-paying fields of science, technology, engineering, and math? Today women make up only 28% of the current STEM workforce in the United States. While that might be an improvement over 8% in 1970, an increase of 20% in 50 years does not exactly demonstrate dynamic growth. Not to be ignored, of that 28%, Black women represent only 9% of the STEM workforce and Hispanic/Latina women 7%. While some may be encouraged to know that 21% of college engineering majors are now women as are 19% of computer science majors, lucrative STEM fields remain heavily male-dominated working domains. And for their reward, women currently working in STEM fields earn 74% to 87% of what men earn. This comports with the most recent 2021 figures that place the average woman's earnings at 80% of the average man's earnings when in the same job. If you're lucky, some women can earn 82% in some non-STEM jobs compared to men.

Some might say the pay gap status quo is just fine and that STEM fields of study and employment stats are also okay. But some of us in New Mexico don't agree with those statements at all. In fact, isn't New Mexico's prosperity at stake if you do believe those misconceptions? The American Association of University Women New Mexico (AAUW) believes that high-quality, gender equality public education for all is not only the foundation of a democratic society but is also the key to improving the economic prosperity for all our citizens. Why delay or discriminate against women's entry into profitable adulthoods like STEM career paths?

Here's one way Honeywell, the Sandia Labs, Facebook, other New Mexico corporations and private donors encourage and support STEM education and professional advancement for our young women. They generously sponsor AAUW

NM Tech Trek, a weeklong summer camp for 60 girls from across the state, upcoming 8<sup>th</sup> graders, who go to the New Mexico Tech campus in Socorro. Tech Trek is designed to empower, excite, develop, and build interest and self-confidence in NM girls so they can envision themselves in STEM pursuits. This year the camp was held virtually, but still incorporated the same hands-on elements with daily 3-hour core classes, workshops, field trips, and Q & A sessions with women STEM professionals from around our state. Workshops included the study of drones, forensic science, hydrology, and solar cars. Virtual field trips included the Very Large Array (VLA), Spaceport America, and Bosque del Apache.

Since our first camp in 2014, girls have experienced building and programming robots, learned how computer simulations are used to show how disease spreads, and how to build electronic circuits and control the components by coding. They have built “wearable” technology like an LED glove to help with sign language in the dark. This year they also participated in the NASA Climate Science core class and directly uploaded to NASA data to assess the effects of cloud cover and smoke on ground temperatures. And let’s not forget Cyber Security and what it takes to become a White Hat Hacker (one of the good guys and gals) and be a more secure user of the internet.

Hats off to the ten girls from Santa Fe who were selected to attend our virtual camp this year and to their 7th-grade math and science teachers who nominated them. Mandela International School, Milagro Middle School, Pojoaque Valley Middle School, the Academy for Technology and the Classics Charter School, the Santa Fe Girls School, and Monte del Sol Charter School were all represented and thus are helping to demystify the world of STEM for young women.

Thanks also to the 2021 NMOST STEM Equity and Inclusion Award for recognizing AAUW NM Tech Trek as being an influential program in introducing and guiding young women to pursue STEM in higher education.

For further information, please visit our website: <https://techtrek-nm.aauw.net>

*Lynn Heffron*

AAUW New Mexico President

AAUW NM Tech Trek Board

AAUW Santa Fe President 2017 - 2019

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## [AAUW-NM Legacy of Leadership Award](#)

**Description:** Biennial award given in even-numbered years to an AAUW-NM member for sustained contributions to AAUW’s mission and leadership at the branch, state, or national level or any combination of them.

**Purpose:** To honor and recognize outstanding AAUW service and support of AAUW’s mission.

**Criteria (must meet all):**

- AAUW member for more than ten years with at least five years in New Mexico
- Significant and extended service to the AAUW mission
- Sustained leadership role in AAUW of at least ten years
- Not a current elected member of the AAUW-NM Leadership Team or the Immediate Past President

Complete the nomination form by January 5, 2022, and send it to AAUW-NM Awards Chair **Helena Whyte**. [The nomination form is linked here](#) and also available on the AAUW-NM Web Page. The Awards Committee will review and submit no more than three nominations for final consideration.

Selection is by Secret Ballot to current elected members of AAUW-NM Leadership Team and Immediate Past President one week before winter Leadership Team Meeting. The completed ballot is to be returned to Awards Chair before or at the winter Leadership

Team Meeting.

The AAUW-NM Legacy of Leadership Award is presented during the State Convention. AAUW-NM donates \$100 to the AAUW Fund of the recipient's choice and gives the recipient a small token of appreciation of the Awards Chair's choice. The Awards Committee will prepare an article about the recipient to be published in Summer Roadrunner and posted on the AAUW-NM website. The AAUW-NM Media Relations Chair will publicize this award widely, including print and electronic media in the recipient's hometown.

Submitted by *Helena Whyte*

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## [Gift Scholarships: Pathways to Careers](#)

The AAUW-NM/Title V Endowed Scholarship has just been established at **Santa Fe Community College**. The U.S. Department of Education's Title V Program is dedicated to improving education for Hispanic and low-income students at Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSI). Santa Fe Community College, a designated HSI, was awarded a five-year \$3,000,000 grant which includes matching funds (1:1) for building endowed scholarships to benefit Hispanic and low-income students in perpetuity.

We already have \$1,500 in the AAUW-NM Fund. If we can raise \$5,000 by the **end of November 2022**, every additional dollar will be matched through the Title V Program. Distributions from the endowment will equip students, especially Hispanic women, with the STEM skills, knowledge, and resources they need to prosper in tomorrow's economy.

Please consider making a 2021 year-end gift or honor a special lifecycle event, e.g., birthday, wedding, anniversary, or the memory of a loved one. If we can't reach \$5,000 during the Title V gift match opportunity, we will still solicit gifts for scholarships, but an endowed scholarship will cost us \$10,000.

For more information, contact Kelly Marquez, Director of Annual Giving at (505) 428-1175 or [kelly.marquez@sfcc.edu](mailto:kelly.marquez@sfcc.edu). To make a gift, go to <https://www.sfcc.edu/give-now/> or mail a check with AAUW-NM in the subject line to the SFCC Foundation, 6401 Richards Avenue, Santa Fe, NM 87508. Thank you for investing in the future!

*Meredith Machen*, AAUW Public Policy Chair, [meredith.machen@gmail.com](mailto:meredith.machen@gmail.com)

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## [Women Writing History](#)

The National Women's History Museum is pleased to share our new, [comprehensive microsite](#) for ***Women Writing History: A Coronavirus Journaling Project***, our groundbreaking initiative designed to ensure that the unique voices and experiences of women, girls, and nonbinary individuals were not left out of the telling of the COVID-19 story.

Our dynamic new microsite serves as an interactive space where visitors can browse the powerful submissions of journal participants and search by specific topic or tag. Nearly 1,500 people have signed up to participate, and more than 350 journals have been submitted to date. We will continue to [accept submissions](#) through **December 31, 2021**, and add new submissions to the site as they are received.

The journals will be used as a living archive of experiences during the COVID-19 pandemic and for online and physical exhibits, articles, publications, and scholarly research.

**The Women Writing History: A Coronavirus Journaling Project** microsite is made possible through the generous support of leadership partner Pivotal Ventures, an investment and incubation company founded by Melinda French Gates.

<https://journals.womenshistory.org/>

<https://www.womenshistory.org/journal-project>

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## **Public Policy Report**

Our common good and our shared future depend on what we do—individually and organizationally—today and every day. The work of AAUW members over the past 140 years has led to vast improvements in the conditions of women and girls, but we are facing challenges today that would have seemed unimaginable just a few years ago. We are fortunate to be part of such a respected and effective organization committed to addressing challenges and paving the way for major societal transformation. Let us fight the fear and polarization. I look forward to working closely with you on our newly updated national and state public policy priorities.

We have a very important advocacy agenda, building on the work begun by courageous, founding foremothers. I frequently wonder how they and subsequent generations of women would view the progress we have made. While significant, we are miles from genuine economic, social, ethnic, and gender equality. We face constant challenges in areas we thought were settled law, and women's progress has eroded since the pandemic hit in March 2020. Women have risked and sometimes lost their lives working on the frontline as health care and sanitation workers in the emergency.

Study after study shows that women are still disproportionately burdened with caring for family members young and old. Though fewer mothers are still serving as full-time learning coaches for their children learning remotely, they have not been able to return to the workforce in full measure, knowing that in-person schooling may shut down at any time. Women also continue to serve as the primary eldercare providers in their families. Many professional women who had to put their careers on hold have helped make a stronger case for paid family leave. At long last, there is general approval of governmental support for some paid leave and childcare assistance and an understanding that government may need to mandate some work-friendly policies in large private sector operations. This rising consciousness is fundamental to advancing the rights of women.

Together with other activists, we are advocating on a non-partisan basis for substantial allocations for social programs in the Build Back Better soft-infrastructure legislation. Funds for general tuition assistance for community college education may be a lost cause; however, scholarship funding for income-eligible students in STEM fields may survive the process. Job development funding and other incentives to address health care, educator, and other worker shortages may also survive. Federal grants and subsidies, American Rescue Act, and CARES funding have already brought billions into New Mexico. These emergency relief funds, mainly used for health care, sanitation and safety, human services, economic recovery, and education, should help us address some urgent issues. Build Back Better funding will stretch over five years. But sustained investments are needed to address the multi-generational challenges connected to our poverty rate, one of the highest in the nation.

In many ways, New Mexico women are poised to make a giant leap forward. We can be proud that, at long last, persevering women and allies could get legislators to repeal the 1969 state statute that made abortion a felony. We stand in solidarity with women across America who are fighting to keep the right to make personal decisions about their bodies. We are thankful that the national AAUW has joined lawsuits to end restrictive, unconstitutional laws and prevent governmental interference in personal choices.

AAUW and other organizations advocate that Congress pass legislation that will enshrine the protection guaranteed by the Supreme Court's ruling in *Roe v. Wade* in 1973. Without a federal law decriminalizing abortion, some legislators in states will find ways to prevent access to the current very safe procedures. From time immemorial, including our suffragist

founders, women considered abortion a personal decision and family planning a fundamental human right. I urge you to attend in person or virtually the AAUW New Mexico leadership team meeting in Santa Fe on January 23 to learn more about our state advocacy agenda. More information about serving as an AAUW Public Policy Advocate (APPA) will be provided, and commentary on any pertinent legislation filed by this point in the session. We will discuss what we support or oppose and our planned testimonies to committee members on Advocacy Day on January 24.

We need you especially in 2023 when we have a 60-day session and legislation on every imaginable topic will be filed. Bills we consider important can die from inattention buried among a thousand others trying to make their way. Sometimes we have to use our best persuasive and persistent skills to keep legislation moving along, and every voice helps! Often it takes years to get legislation passed. Just remember that it took 42 years for the women's vote amendment to get through Congress and that we are still working on the Equal Rights Amendment, which has been lingering since 1923!

All Members Please Review the AAUW-NM Public Policy Priorities Draft for 2021-2023  
<https://aauw-nm.aauw.net/policy/>

*Meredith Machen*, AAUW-NM Public Policy Chair,

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## **AAUW-NM's Public Policy Advocacy Team Makes a Difference!**

Join us! Core members of the **Public Policy Advocacy Team** will read legislation that relates to our priorities and tracks changes as it proceeds from mid-January through mid-February while the legislature is in session. The core team, made up of the branch Public Policy chairs, will meet on a regular basis by Zoom or conference call. We will work carefully to determine exactly what we support or oppose, who is able to testify in which committee hearing, and what we want to say, probably by Zoom. As advocates, we are often instrumental in making sure that the legislation covers elements that would otherwise be left out.

Please ask your branch Public Policy Chair how you can help or sign up as an individual. Oftentimes, contacting a legislator as a constituent can make the difference about how s/he will vote in committee. A list of AAUW-NM's Public Policy Priorities will be provided to members and listed on our website. The Public Policy Advocates job description and the sign-up form is also on our website.

**Please Check Out AAUW's Advocacy Toolkit:** Find background information on policies and how-to guide <https://www.aauw.org/resources/policy/advocacy-toolkit/>

All Members Please Review the **AAUW-NM Public Policy Priorities DRAFT for 2021-2023**  
<https://aauw-nm.aauw.net/policy/>

**AAUW's National Priorities** inform state and local action and are determined biennially by members to ensure equity, member support, and potential for AAUW leadership. No order of importance for the priorities for 2021-23 is implied, and all relate to our overall mission and goals:

<https://www.aauw.org/strategic-plan-2-0/>

**AAUW's Action Network** helps those who sign up send tailored e-mail messages to senators and representatives in Congress when their action is urgently needed on specific legislation. If you haven't already, sign up for the very friendly **Two-Minute Activist**. Please recommend it to friends and colleagues as well:

<https://www.aauw.org/act/two-minute-activist/>

*Meredith Machen*, AAUW-NM Public Policy Chair

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# Guide to the New Mexico

## Legislature's Website

<https://www.nmlegis.gov>

**Home Page:** Information below follows from left to right the useful tabs across the top of the page, including What's Happening, Webcast, and Quick Links.

### **Legislators** - Dropdown menu

Find my legislator

Leadership

Districts

### **Legislation** - Dropdown menu

Find Legislation by Number – Select a session, chamber, & # if available

Find Legislation by Sponsor – Select a representative or senator

Bill Finder – Search for bills by subject and determine the status of specific bills.

Complete Legislation List- Click on the list throughout the session to see what has been added. Though regular legislation must be filed by mid-session, leaders are allowed to file placeholder “dummy bills.” These bills, labeled HB# or SB#, have the seemingly innocuous title– Public Peace, Health, Safety, and Welfare but no content. This un-transparent and perhaps illegal practice skirts the deadline for filing bills. The public only gets to see the content of a dummy bill after a committee approves it late in the session, and it is renamed.

Key to Abbreviations

Sessions click the arrow and select session

Categories select 1, 2, or all three

Click on **Go**

You will see a list of all bills that have been pre-filed as of the current date. It gives the Bill ID/#, Title, Sponsor, and actions. To look at the bill, click on the BILL ID on the left side of the screen.

Daily Bill Locator

**Committees** – This page links to the House Committees, Senate Committees, and Interim Committees. Many Committees post work plans and handouts under Committee Information.

**Publications** – Much of interest is available on this link including summaries of previous legislative sessions, Legislative Finance Committee and Legislative Education Study Committee analyses, economic summaries and projections, evaluations of state agencies, and more

**What's Happening** – This link has the updated agendas for the committees and indicates the legislation that has made it to the chamber calendars. Schedules change frequently, so you may need to refresh your browser. You can find what is being webcast live and links to new recordings and older recordings of the legislative committees and floor sessions. Unfortunately, there is no index to what is in each recording, and committee chairs hear bills when sponsors and experts are available, not in numerical order, so bills are often rolled over sometimes for weeks, especially if the powers that be don't want them to make it through all of the wickets before the session ends. It also has the Legislative Calendar and Upcoming Committee Meetings and the LegisLetter.

**Webcast** – This link will show what is being webcast now! If you want to speak about legislation, you usually have to register with the committee secretary in advance, though some committee chairs will take public comment right after the sponsor presents the spoken piece of legislation and before committee deliberation. There is no other opportunity to comment later in the meeting and no way to see amendments that are presented during the hearing. The amendments are posted in context by the next day and may change the bill entirely.

**Quick Links** In the middle of the list is the best resource: **MyRoundhouse**, a free tracking tool that enables you to track legislation and actions during a session. Once you have registered with your email, user name, and password, you can easily add or remove

legislation throughout the session and check its status. Click "legislation link" to see the original text, the amendments, and the Fiscal Impact Report (FIR) if an analysis has been done. Some committees insist on seeing FIRs before considering legislation. If a FIR becomes available, it's a great place to start because it not only summarizes the legislation, it lists related bills, the legal background, and the projected financial impact. My Roundhouse also indicates when legislation is tentatively scheduled to be heard in a committee and links to the text. The legislative website is updated late each evening, making the tracking information as accurate as possible.

Your locator – Use this to name your choice of categories of bills e.g. education, taxes, environment. Click on "+". After naming your choices: Click on "Add legislation to locator", Check legislation you want to add, click on "Add checked legislation".

In addition to My Roundhouse, see Downloads under Quick Links to see the votes that have been taken in committees and floor sessions and other information. See also Session Dates. The list includes Glossary of Legislative Terms, Key to Abbreviations, Legislative Contacts.

**Highlights** – Summaries of previous sessions provided by the Legislative Council Services.

**Contact Info** – **Legislative Council Service, 505 986-4600, [lcs@nmlegis.gov](mailto:lcs@nmlegis.gov).** Session Switchboard, 505 986-4300, has only general information. Ask to be connected to your legislator or speak with a specific committee secretary to get agenda updates.

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**Prepared by Dick Mason, LWVNM Action Chair, and adapted by Sonya Berg, former AAUW-NM Public Policy Chair and AAUW-LV Public Policy Chair, [berg.sonya42@gmail.com](mailto:berg.sonya42@gmail.com), 505 425-6680.**

**Revised by Meredith Machen, AAUW-NM Public Policy Chair, former LWVNM President, [meredith.machen@gmail.com](mailto:meredith.machen@gmail.com), 505 577-6337, 10/27/21.**

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## [Branch News:](#)

### **Las Cruces:**

Since 1993 the AAUW Las Cruces has hosted Girls Can!, a morning of exploration for 6th-grade girls, allowing them to experience a variety of workshops with hands-on activities featuring women in nontraditional careers. From 2015 on, we have had the opportunity to host these students and their parents at Dona Ana Community College, providing three workshops for the students and a workshop for parents in English and Spanish, discussing issues such as bullying and securing financial aid. Due to the COVID pandemic, we had to cancel this program at DACC in 2021. Due to the continued uncertainty this year, we have decided to cancel for the second time. This has been so unfortunate because an important part of this program is giving these students from rural communities the experience of traveling to the "big city" of Las Cruces, being on the DACC campus, and navigating between different classrooms in different buildings. While we provide breakfast, the counselors take their students to a local restaurant for lunch before heading home on the bus.

Because of our strong belief in the importance of this program, our branch has decided to present Girls Can! workshops in individual schools in outlying rural areas in Dona Ana County, one workshop at one school at a time. The staff at the schools are very receptive to this plan. Our first presentation on November 17 took place at Mesquite Elementary School, part of the Gadsden School district. The presenter was a wildlife biologist from the Asombro Institute for Science Education Inc. At first, she explained, with a slideshow, her path from wanting to be a veterinarian to become a research biologist and how education and life experiences led her to her field today. Then she gave students a hands-on wildlife experience, investigating the diet of owls by examining owl pellets. The 6th-graders attending the workshop were totally involved in discovering what was in their pellet!

Students from NMSU in the National Student Speech Language Hearing Association (NSSLHA) were also at hand to assist in the workshop and encouraged the 6th-graders to pursue their passions. They stressed the importance of volunteering, as

this participation helps when they apply for acceptance to colleges and universities. Because of this success in Mesquite, we plan to have a variety of presenters at other rural schools in the first quarter of 2022. Our thanks to Laura Bemis, past president of AAUW Las Cruces, for organizing our Girls Can! events this year.

Our Purse Bash and Jewelry Sale in October raised more than \$1000 for our scholarships. Gently used or almost new purses were collected for the bash. A group from the branch provided beautiful handmade beaded items, including name tag lanyards, eyeglass and mask lanyards, bracelets, and much more.

After a year of Zoom meetings, we have found a venue to meet in person (masked, of course) and are very happy to do so. Our branch mee@ngs are now held at the Dona Ana Community College Workforce Development and Career Readiness Center. We hope to partner with Mary Ulrich, Director, and Tiffany Brooks, Career Resource Coordinator, on future projects. Both women have become branch members!

Submitted by *Marsha Hokkanen*, Co-President

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**AAUW-New Mexico Public Policy  
2019-2021 (BEING UPDATED)**

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 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

**AAUW NM Leadership Team  
2020-2022**

**Elected positions:**

**President:**

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**Past President**

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**Appointed positions:**

**Branch Projects Grants Chair**

Sylvia Fink

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**Governance Chair**

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

**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.

Public Policy Priorities update and changes Adopted at the annual meeting  
April 28, 2019

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**Vacant appointments:**

Diversity Chair

Historian

Media Relations Chair

AAUW Funds 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

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