



of New Mexico



AAUW-NM Spring *Roadrunner*

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



Helena Whyte, Co-President



Lynn Heffron, Co-President

From our Co-Presidents:



While celebrating the Spring season, let's also remember that on **March 12th, 2024**, we celebrated Equal Pay Day in the US, a symbolic day recognizing how far into the year women must work to earn what men earned in the previous year. This is because the latest gender pay gap for women in 2022 cites women earning 84 cents to the man's dollar for full-time, year-round equal work. If you include part-time and seasonal work, women earned 78 cents to the male dollar. Other statistical summaries for 2022 show that Black women earned 69 cents, Native Women earned 59 cents, Latina women earned 57 cents, and even Moms when combined across all cultures earned 71 cents to the male dollar.

Women are paid less than men because of historical occupational segregation, discriminatory hiring and promotion practices, devaluation of women's work including as moms, societal norms valuing males over females, and cultural norms that ignore sexual violence against women leading some women to miss work and lose jobs. Migrant women fare far less as they are overrepresented in the "informal sector" of domestic service, street vending, artisans, coffee shop attendants, and agriculture. They do not have secure employment contracts, workers' benefits, social protection, or workers' representation.

One approach to rectifying unequal pay is for women to be encouraged and trained to organize and bargain collectively and get involved in employer and union leadership to enable legislation that establishes comprehensive frameworks for gender equality in the workplace. The President of the actor's union SAG-AFTRA, Fran Drescher, successfully negotiated new terms for both men and women to end their strike last Fall. She stated, "At first, they (the men across the table, no women) tried to suggest that I was being too aggressive in the room. Then, when that really didn't work, they tried to suggest that I was too frivolous in the room. Ultimately, I saw it as an opportunity to start the conversation as a movement for women and girls that I don't have to emulate male energy to lead, that I can lead with intellect and empathy and dignity and morality, and I can be me and still rock a red lip."

In 1973, women earned 56 cents to the male dollar. Many AAUW NM women have worked since that year and even earlier; thus, one's savings and pensions also received unequal contributions. It is shuddering to think that even poverty may have resulted for some. It's taken almost 50 years to get to 84 cents meaning it will take till 2088 at this current rate for women to be paid equal wages for equal work. Our Branches and members must continue to find ways to address these inequities and share what they are learning and have learned. A toast to Fran!

Submitted by *Lynn Heffron, Co-President*

In April AAUW members will be asked to vote on a proposed national **bylaws amendment to eliminate the degree requirement for AAUW membership**. Shifting our focus away from restricting membership will make AAUW a more inclusive organization opening our doors to a broader coalition of change-makers.

Equity knows no academic boundaries.

Voting for the broader inclusion of members will not change AAUW's support for higher education. We will not have to change our name. We will still be "AAUW", a national brand that works for gender equity. This change will allow change-makers such as Eleanor Roosevelt and Lilly Ledbetter to join our organization. Many of us know a bright, capable, hardworking, and passionate person who does not hold a degree. Once we make this change, we will no longer feel embarrassed to ask anyone for their credentials before we ask them to join our AAUW Branch.

An amendment to the national bylaws requires 5% of eligible members to vote and a 2/3 majority of voters to pass. In 2021 62% of voters nationwide approved the change (certainly a majority even though not quite 2/3). New Mexico had a similar outcome.

Voting will take place **April 3 – May 15 at noon EDT (10 am MDT)**. Look for your encrypted ballot email from **Simply Voting** (check your spam folder if you don't receive it around April 3). All members without an e-mail or who have unsubscribed from AAUW National e-mail will receive a paper ballot.

More information about the eligibility history for AAUW membership and the advantages to changing this requirement can be found at <https://openupaauw.org>

Submitted by *Helena Whyte, Co-President*



[Help keep the AAUW NM database current:](#)

Please notify **Judy McGuire**, judymcguire2@gmail.com, of any changes to your Branch roster, including new members and members not renewing. Please provide the individual's full name and email address. Thank you.



CALLING ALL CANDIDATES FOR AAUW NM STATE LEADERSHIP

This spring at the AAUW NM Convention, AAUW NM members will vote to elect a Co-President and Secretary. But first, we need candidates!

Please volunteer to serve with Helena Whyte as co-president. Or could you add your name to the ballot to volunteer and serve as Secretary? Both positions ask for a two-year commitment commencing July 1, 2024.

As you recall, our state members requested and approved a restructuring of AAUW NM. These changes and corresponding bylaws are being amended to reflect all changes and will be presented to the convention members for voting.

The number of elected officers was reduced to four: president/co-president, finance chair, secretary, and public policy chair. Those elected officers will then appoint positions as needed to serve for specific jobs such as webmaster, convention leader, and newsletter editor.

Please consider this request to volunteer for AAUW NM leadership. If you also know you would like to volunteer for an appointed position, even a new one you would like to create, also let us know at the convention.

PLEASE SUBMIT YOUR NAME AND THE STATE LEADERSHIP POSITION YOU SEEK TO LYNN HEFFRON'S EMAIL:
lgheffron@gmail.com.

Where will you be on May 17th and 18th?

"I'm going to be in Alamogordo with all the other cool people – I hope you'll be there too."



Why?

For the AAUW-NM State Convention!

The Convention's theme is "Successful Women and How To Be One". We have organized a great agenda around our theme, and everyone who attends will walk away better for attending. You'll have a chance to mix and mingle with old and new friends who share your focus on equity for women and participate in creating new bylaws to reflect our restructuring. It's going to be a blast!

Where is all the fun going to be?

Fairfield Inn Alamogordo

(Block of rooms have been reserved for AAUW-NM 575-437-4000)

Preliminary Outline:

May 17

1:00 Meet at **Pistachio Land** for the tour (just for fun)

3:00 – 6:00 PM – LTM Meeting – Fairfield Inn

7:00 PM – Dinner at Lescombes (Across the street from the Fairfield Inn)

Awards and presentations

9:00 PM Games and fun back at the Fairfield Inn

May 18 – Fairfield Inn

8:30 – AM Registration

9:00 AM – Business Meeting and Speakers
12:00 – Box Lunch (Provided)
1:00 – 4:00 PM – Business Meeting and Activities

Bring a book for a book swap – by a woman or about a woman, fiction or nonfiction – be ready to sell us on your book in the segment – “What’s her story.”

How do I register?

A link will be sent out through Constant Contact by **Monday, March 18**. There will be an early bird discount so register early (just \$40 and includes lunch on Sat). Registration fees will be collected at the convention.

AAUW-NM **Legislative Preview**



AAUW’s Advocacy at the Legislature- 2024

Short sessions focus on the budget, capital outlay, tax reforms, and items deemed germane because they relate to the governor’s “call.”

We correctly predicted that education spending, which accounts for half of our state’s budget, would be debated for a significant amount of time. Last fall, when we planned our AAUW Legislative Advocacy Day program, held on January 29, we invited speakers with this assumption. Given that NM must comply with the Yazzie-Martinez court orders, we expected meaningful discussions on investments to improve our dismal outcomes, including increased funding for special education, multicultural/bilingual/ESL education, community schools, tutoring and support services, and robust career-technical programs. Those topics were barely discussed. There were no debates on the need for better teacher training and professional development, and recruitment and retention incentives. Since NM has already made historic investments to improve early childhood programs, teacher salaries, scholarships, and much more, we expected some pushback, even though they were dealing with the largest revenues in state history.

Instead, legislators swiftly approved pre-K-12 spending requests. PED got the lion’s share of the \$10.2 billion budget, a \$394 million/8 percent increase. Legislators were fine with items they had argued about other years. They were fine with increased funding for literacy initiatives, free school meals, community schools, teacher training and retention programs, raises for all public education employees, and more. Their focus was on preventing the governor’s mandate that all students attend school for 180 days. The governor used her authority to strike out the illegal provision when she approved the state budget and subsequently ordered PED to implement the very unpopular plan that undermines district level and state charter school authority. Her thinking is built on sound evidence but very challenging for rural educators, students, and families who love their four-day weeks.

We were pleased we could endorse this year’s high school graduation requirements bill, though we were unable to get legislators to support requiring financial literacy as a standalone course. HB 171 was the first bill the governor signed. The new law requires all schools to offer Algebra 2 but allows districts and state charter schools to offer students practical math and financial management as options. She rejected last year’s bill because it watered down math requirements, essential for many careers and admission to competitive colleges.

We appreciate the excellent presentations related to STEM that Lina Germann and Gail Mattson made on our Advocacy Day. STEM will be a focus for the 2025 session.

The governor also signed SB137 school board training and accountability, one of our priority bills, which Kristina Fisher explained in detail for those who attended Advocacy Day and/or AAUW’s Online Branch meeting on THINK NM’s educational reform goals and initiatives. We stand with them on requiring financial literacy and won’t give up.

SB 137 requires school board candidates to report campaign contributions to the Secretary of State when they exceed \$1000. The bill also requires school board members to get at least 10 hours of training on budgets and accountability each year. To the extent

practicable within broad challenges, schools will have to broadcast their board meetings and post recordings on their websites in searchable archives. These transparency measures are sorely needed and will increase public participation and engagement.

Who would have imagined that so many pieces of legislation could have been filed in a 30-day session, but then again, all 112 legislative seats are on the November ballot, so some legislators sponsored bills that would resonate in their campaign messaging. Everyone knew there was not enough time to consider nearly 800 bills, resolutions, and memorials on topics ranging from the sublime to the ridiculous to the essential. So much more could have been accomplished, especially on gun violence prevention and public safety legislation, the governor's priority. As core members of the Alliance for Gun Violence Solutions, we worked hard to get HB 129 creating a gun purchase waiting period, and SB 5 restricting guns at polling places across the finish line. Please see the adjoining article about these bills, other gun safety legislation we will work to pass, and our leadership role in this coalition we helped create.

Out of all of those measures, only 72 reached the governor's desk. She vetoed one bill and pocket-vetoed two.

Here's the link to those bills.

https://www.nmlegis.gov/Legislation/BillFinder/Governor_Actions?mc_cid=e6d95a8b80&mc_eid=655a07f1e7. Hit **GO**.
https://www.nmlegis.gov/Legislation/BillFinder/Governor_Actions?mc_cid=e6d95a8b80&mc_eid=655a07f1e7

Many may be cringing at the likely prospect that the governor may call for a special session on guns and crimes. It was the last hurrah for almost 20 legislators who are retiring or at the end of the year or declining to run again. Several probably decided not to run again for unpaid legislative seats, unwilling and/or unable to sacrifice their careers and time with their families and friends. Good legislation was stymied by grueling debates, shameless filibustering, and nuisance amendments both in committee hearings and during floor sessions. The advocates who were there every day and night experienced vicariously a small sample of what legislators and our truly committed leaders endured. Frustration with the grueling process, the horrendous hours, and the enormous waste of precious time and effort must propel the next legislature to amend the legislative rules for each chamber so that the legislature can operate more effectively and efficiently.

Meredith Machen, State Public Policy Chair

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**LOOKING FORWARD** -The Interim and Planning for the 2025 Session

Members of the Modernization Coalition will work on recommendations to improve legislative operations and will submit them to the bipartisan Legislative Council Committee, which determines the joint rules. The budget the governor approved contains \$6 million to pay permanent, nonpartisan LCS staff to assist legislators with policy research and drafting of legislation.

Both chambers also have separate rules of operation. The leaders of each chamber serve on this committee, which meets periodically with the nonpartisan Legislative Council Services director in the interim and if necessary, during the session. Our ongoing recommendations include setting a maximum number of bills each legislator can introduce, limiting floor debates in the Senate to three hours as the House does, and scheduling bills on the same topics together or sequentially in committee hearings before taking votes on separate or combined legislation. Several of our committee chairs already do this quite successfully. I will contact retiring Senators Ortiz y Pino and Rodriguez and Representative Chasey and some of the other legislators who declined to file for candidacy for their suggestions. Not only will we gain valuable insights and perspectives from their experiences, but their expertise and voices will make our recommendations carry more weight. *If you are comfortable doing so, please ask your current legislators to share their suggestions regarding improving the efficacy and efficiency of the legislative process. Please send them to me, and I will compile them for our coalition.* I will also research and compile practices other legislatures use that we might also recommend.

What a vast improvement it would make if NM were to adopt Oregon's legislative rule

requiring legislators to be prepared and distributed to legislators in advance of floor debates and prohibiting amendments from being introduced on the floor. Or limiting each legislator to an hour maximum to question a bill sponsor about elements in a piece of legislation under floor debate? Early in the session, Senator Bill Soules gave me a pre-publication copy of his forthcoming book, *The Sausage Factory*. Look for it and retired Senator Dede Feldman's books and articles on the subject. *Nothing ventured, nothing gained*.

Since legislators in 2025 won't be facing a general election, they should be willing to pass the constitutional amendment resolutions addressing session length and establishing a commission to determine legislative salaries so these measures will be ready for voter consideration on the 2026 ballot. Without fair compensation, people with means can monopolize our legislative seats and/or be swayed by campaign contributions from business and industry. We need representation that reflects our state's demographics, especially younger people of color from diverse economic and social backgrounds. We currently have more women than men in our legislature, a higher proportion than in most states, and they often work across party lines for safety nets for families.

It was mostly conservative male legislators with means who killed SB3 Paid Family Medical Leave. Fed literally and figuratively by industry lobbyists they scared fellow legislators and small business owners with exaggerated scenarios of potential fraud, abuse, and insolvency. They ignored the actuarial data confirmed as accurate by reliable economic experts including the Small Business Majority and a division of the US Chamber of Commerce. We will continue working with Southwest Women's Law Center and the many other organizations in the coalition to educate the public on the financial benefits and aspects of the Paid Family Medical Leave Act, to pass it next session. Thanks to the governor's support of the legislation, we have the commitment of the Secretary of Workforce Solutions to analyze the implementation logistics. Once the legislation is signed, potential rules and draft regulations will be developed and sent out for public comment and refinement during the two-year process prior to any disbursements to qualified, approved applicants. You can read these financial sustainability analyses, details relating to the collection of contributions and repayment to the state for its initial investment in the creation of the fund, and proposed implementation schedules at [nmpmfl.org](http://nmpmfl.org).

Industry lobbyists making hefty campaign contributions and other vested interests also helped legislators kill the Alcohol Harms Alleviation Coalition's endorsed bills, HB 179 and SB 147 in this session. AAUW will continue its very active role in this coalition. NM has made national headlines for having the highest and near highest rates of alcoholism, alcohol-involved domestic violence and gun violence incidents, suicides, homicides, accidental injuries, DWI, cirrhosis, and other health problems. NM also has the lowest tax rate on alcohol in the nation. Despite massive media coverage of our problems and clarion calls over the years about the need to increase taxes legislators failed once again to do anything to address the situation. We have national studies showing reduced consumption in states that have increased taxes. In the interim and next session, we will make the case about how alcohol abuse affects all of us. Healthy lifestyles will improve educational achievement, career success, family stability, employment, public safety, economic opportunities, and the overall quality of our state. We will disseminate the research demonstrating that higher alcohol prices reduce drinking. Next year we will advocate for a reasonable tax increase, which has remained the same for 50 years. Alcohol consumption has soared in NM and around the country since 2020 exacerbating our perennial problem. We must insist that our legislators pay attention to the proven correlations and take positive actions next session. Ya, basta!

We will also support a Tribal Trust Fund managed by the 23 sovereign pueblos, tribes, and nations to provide funding for bilingual/multicultural education and the Tribal Remedy Framework. HB 134 passed unanimously but was pulled by the sponsor for final consideration in the closing hours due to internal disagreements among Indigenous legislators about how the fund would be divided and distributed. We expect they will work out the logistics, so that the legislation can pass in 2025. The 2024 bill was expected to become law since the governor had indicated her approval. This legislation is an important element in responding to the Yazzie-Martinez court orders.

Most importantly, NM has to rectify a grave, ongoing situation. Each year, massive

amounts of money are allocated to the Public Education Department's various sections of HB2, the state budget. In 2024, HED received funding for Opportunity Scholarships, teacher residencies, loan forgiveness, and some programs, but sadly the lone-piece bill to increase salaries for higher education faculty became a memorial calling for more study. With the huge revenue surplus, legislators should not have punted on tackling this huge problem. We keep hearing about the severe economic hardships and challenges that adjunct faculty experience and the inequity of their pay. We applaud the state for paying tens of thousands of dollars more per year to K-12 teachers and improving the salaries of all other educators. However, we continue to do nothing about the inequity of paying teachers with bachelor's degrees and fewer years of experience thousands of dollars more annually than college faculty who are required to have advanced credentials. The higher education salary issues have been studied several times over the past 50 years, including about 20 years ago when the majority of classes were taught by regular faculty.

Nowadays most college coursework is taught by part-timers. Adjunct faculty learn whether they have one, two, or no classes only after full-time faculty have met the loads required in their contracts. Being bumped off classes right before the semester started got worse during the pandemic and is now standard procedure. When adjuncts do get classes, they are paid "slave wages and have no benefits." Low faculty morale is exacerbated by seeing K-12 teachers receive major increases over the past five years. Next year we need to push legislators to address the problem that is causing faculty shortages at colleges and universities. It will cost millions to provide fair compensation for regular college faculty, who have gone years without salary increases, and to address the adjunct faculty crisis. How will our state address the situation where adjuncts, "third-class citizens," have to work several jobs to make ends meet, living in poverty and uncertainty without health care? We are seeing increased college enrollments with the Opportunity Scholarships, which now have a trust fund to draw from. We need to make sure that the Legislative Finance Committee conducts a thorough study and makes recommendations for increasing higher education salaries.

Higher education has been core to AAUW since its founding in 1881. To improve NM's college completion rates, career opportunities, and our economy, we must insist on having qualified faculty available to teach our students and insist on fair compensation and working conditions.

We can and must do better. Our voices carry some weight. PERSISTENCE furthers!

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



## **AAUW NM Ingenious Ideas Award**

**AAUW-NM Ingenious Ideas Award Nominations will be accepted until April 30, 2024**

**Description:** Award given annually to AAUW-NM branches for innovative and successful mission-based programs, activities, or governance practices. This award was originally created and inspired by Marjorie Bell Chambers and Gloria Cordova, both long-time AAUW NM members and mentors.

**Purpose:** To recognize groundbreaking and outstanding branch programs, activities, fundraising ideas, member recruitment activities, and governance practices. To encourage mission-based programs and provide tested ideas for other branches to replicate.

**Criteria (must meet one or more):**

- Innovative and successful mission-based branch program
- Successful new branch activity or new collaboration (within the past 3 years)
- Innovative and successful membership recruitment activity
- Innovative and successful fundraising activity
- New and successful governance practice (within the past 3 years)

**Who nominates**

Branch board, council, or president/facilitator

**Nomination deadline**

April 30

### **Nomination process**

Write a paragraph describing the event, program, activity or governance practice and how it meets one or more of the criteria. If available, attach relevant photos, publicity, etc. Send to Helena Whyte, Awards Chair, [mozden08@aol.com](mailto:mozden08@aol.com)

### **Selection process**

AAUW-NM Awards Committee chooses the winner.

### **When awarded**

AAUW-NM convention in Alamogordo

### **Award**

Check for \$75 to one branch for the best idea. All nominations that meet one or more award criteria are recognized at the convention, published in Summer *Roadrunner*, and posted on the AAUW-NM website.

Submitted by *Helena Whyte*

## **AAUW National Information**

### **2024 Equal Pay Day Calendar**

- Overall Equal Pay Day- March 12, 2024
- Asian American, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander Women's Equal Pay Day– April 3, 2024
- LGBTQIA+ Equal Pay Awareness Day– June 13, 2024
- Black Women's Equal Pay Day– July 9, 2024
- Moms' Equal Pay Day– August 7, 2024
- Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander (NHPI) Women's Equal Pay Day– August 28, 2024
- Latina Equal Pay Day – Oct 3, 2024
- Native Women's Equal Pay Day – November 21, 2024

**Provided by Meghan Kissell, MSW** (she/her)

Senior Director, Policy & Member Advocacy

**American Association of University Women (AAUW)**

1310 L St. NW, Suite 1000, Washington, DC 20005

(O) 202-728-3300 | (C) 571-643-3526

## **Save the date** **AAUW-NM Annual Convention** **May 17& 18** **Alamogordo, NM**

### **Branch News**

#### **Carlsbad**

We decided to do a new event to kick off the new year. We hosted a Vision Board Party at Miltons Brewing. We provided all the supplies needed to make their vision board and encouraged those attending to bring stuff of their own if they wanted. Mimosas were available for purchase and snacks were provided. We had about 11 people attend and had a wonderful time. We plan to do it again next year.

In February, we held our Annual Scholar's Reception which honors high school girls with a GPA of 3.5 or higher. Our guest speaker was Ekta Bhakta, who is in charge of Community Relations and Charitable Giving for SIMCO, the Management and Operating Contractor for WIPP. We had a large turnout and we had beautiful decorations by a local party decorator and some light refreshments. This took place at Southeast New Mexico College;

they are always very generous in letting us use their facilities for our events.

In March, we held a *Women's History Trivia* Night at Miltons Brewing, We held this event last year and were excited to do it again. 11 teams participated. It was a lot of fun and I think those participating learned about Women's History. We also are continuing to sell our *Empowered Women Empower Women* t-shirts. We have less than 20 left.

Submitted by:  
*Cassie Marrs* AAUW Carlsbad President

### **Las Cruces**

The Las Cruces branch has begun introducing a short Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) discussion at our General Meetings. Tricia Brainard shows a short visual animation or skit and then leads a discussion with the group. It is meant to show us how we unknowingly can offend and the simple ways we can improve.

Otherwise, we have been putting all our time and energy into planning our annual Girls Can! event. It is scheduled for March 23<sup>rd</sup>, so we'll be sharing that in the Summer Roadrunner. We have about 350 6th-grade girls attending and have 25 presenters. Whew! Kudos to Laura Bemis for heading it up again this year!

*Anne Chase & Donna Yargosz*  
Co-Presidents

### **Los Alamos**

We received a congratulatory email in early March from National indicating that our branch earned 2 stars in the FY23 AAUW Five Star Recognition Program. Based on our input for the FY23 Branch Impact Survey, we were recognized for our "outstanding contributions" in Programs, Governance, and Sustainability.

In late February, we held our annual "Un-Tea" fundraiser for Tech Trek. Members were mailed an "invitation to donate," a teabag, and a stamped/addressed envelope to send donations to Tech Trek. This has become an annual event that helps members show their support for the camp's STEM outreach to Middle School girls across our state. When we have heard from Los Alamos girls who attended Tech Trek, they have been enthusiastic champions of the camp as being both transformational and fun. That's a winning endorsement!

Our recent branch meetings have focused on community outreach supporting women, families, and our northern New Mexico communities. In February we learned about Los Alamos' First Born Program, a nonprofit that supports new babies and their families. In a community where many families have no extended family nearby, this program offers education, networking opportunities, and practical advice on raising healthy babies/children in supportive, nurturing families.

In March, we will learn about the work of the Regional Development Corporation, a nonprofit dedicated to improving economic development in northern New Mexico. Their work includes business outreach, collaborations to support regional housing and broadband infrastructure, and educational outreach, including internships and apprenticeships, to develop a well-educated regional workforce. The RDC partners with seven northern NM counties, including the Pueblos therein, as well as with Triad National Security LLC, which runs Los Alamos National Laboratory. Carla Rachkowski, Director of Operations for the RDC, will talk about the nonprofit's success stories, challenges, and plans.

*Judy Prono & Carroll Thomas*  
AAUW-Los Alamos Co-Facilitators

### **Online Branch**

The AAUW Online Branch held its most recent meeting via Zoom on February 25<sup>th</sup>. Our program was presented by Jenifer Rafael Getz, Executive Director of The New Mexico Commission on the Status of Women. Jenifer spoke about the history and objectives of the Commission and also listened to our members as we discussed her AAUW's mission along with specific events and priorities of our branch. Our next meeting will be May 18<sup>th</sup> (in person, as required by our bylaws) at the AAUW-NM Spring Convention in Alamogordo.

The Online Branch meets quarterly via Zoom on Sunday afternoons. We have had some very interesting programs throughout the year. We also will be presenting certificates and gift cards to the female winners of the New Mexico State Science and Engineering Fair to be held in April.

Our branch has 23 members. Many of us have other primary branches throughout NM and some are former NM residents who have moved. We also have out-of-state members. Our branch has no dues – the only requirement is to be a member of AAUW and AAUW-NM. When you log into your profile on the AAUW Community Hub, you can easily add or join the Online Branch under “My Affiliations!”

Mary Sandford & Nina Thayer

**Santa Fe:**

On Saturday, March 9, the AAUW Santa Fe branch celebrated the upcoming Equal Pay Day with a luncheon at the Estancia Primera Clubhouse. Guest speaker AAUW NM Co-President Lynn Heffron spoke about Equal Pay in NM and the greater US, elements of the legal history of women in the US, as well as her many years of participation as a delegate to the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women. At last year’s UN CSW whose theme was “innovation and technological change and education in the digital age for achieving gender equality,” she spoke about AAUW Tech Trek NM as a best practice in the STEM education of girls. This year’s overarching theme addresses the global impacts of poverty on education, social justice, climate change, gender biases in economic policy, and ending economic gender-based violence against women and girls. Santa Fe branch members asked many questions indicating their concerns about how to better branch awareness and participation in addressing equity issues.

Pictured below are Robbie Richards on the left and Jeanne Patrick, Co-Presidents of AAUW SF with Lynn Heffron and the many Santa Fe branch members in attendance.

Submitted by Lynn Heffron



AAUW-New Mexico Public Policy

**AAUW NM  
Public Policy Priorities 2023-2025  
Strengthen Education at All Levels**

1. Ensure quality programs through funding, professional training, and student support.
2. Promote access to both academic programs and personal development.
3. Increase career opportunities through training, scholarships, fellowships, internships, and work experiences.

**AAUW NM Leadership Team  
2022-2024**

**Elected positions:**

**President:**

Lynn Heffron

[lgheffron@gmail.com](mailto:lgheffron@gmail.com)

**Co-President**

Helena Whyte

[mozden08@aol.com](mailto:mozden08@aol.com)

**VP Programs**

Judy Prono

[djprono@msn.com](mailto:djprono@msn.com)

**VP-Membership**

## **Advance Economic Security and Healthy Lifestyles**

1. Support funding for affordable housing, social services, quality childcare, and food.
2. Advocate for affordable, accessible healthcare, reproductive rights, and behavioral health.
3. Promote fair economic policies including student loan debt relief, tax credits, pay equity, & transparency, and improved compensation.
4. Address income challenges; protect social security, aging and eldercare services, and anti-poverty programs.

### **Foster Quality Work Experiences**

1. Promote inclusive & diverse workplaces and professional development and advancement opportunities.
2. Advocate for Paid Family and Medical Leave and flexible, family-friendly work conditions.

### **Promote Safe, Just, Sustainable Communities**

1. Advance gender equity policies; address gun violence, trauma, domestic abuse, and intimidation; improve access to behavioral health services, prevent and treat alcohol and substance abuse.
2. Advocate for social justice civil rights, and equality and respect for differing viewpoints.
3. Protect our natural resources and promote environmentally sustainable practices.

### **Improve Government Effectiveness and Access**

1. Modernize legislative practices; advocate for compensation to ensure diverse representation & reduce corporate influence.
2. Promote collaborative problem-solving and reduce partisanship.
3. Provide opportunities for respectful debates on critical issues; promote civil discourse and open policy discussions.
4. Protect voting rights and accessible elections; promote citizen involvement in redistricting decision-making

For further information, visit [AAUW-New Mexico](#). Meredith Machen, AAUW-NM Public Policy Chair, [meredith.machen@gmail.com](mailto:meredith.machen@gmail.com), 505 577-6337

Cassie Marrs

[marrs.cassie@gmail.com](mailto:marrs.cassie@gmail.com)

#### **Finance Chair**

Nicole Olssen-Dial

[shelley0424@gmail.com](mailto:shelley0424@gmail.com)

#### **Secretary**

Kathie Davis

[kadkathryn@gmail.com](mailto:kadkathryn@gmail.com)

#### **Academic Chair**

Mary Sandford

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#### **Public Policy Chair**

Meredith Machen

[meredith.machen@gmail.com](mailto:meredith.machen@gmail.com)

#### **Past President**

Sylvia Fink

[sjsfink@gmail.com](mailto:sjsfink@gmail.com)

#### **Nominations Chair**

vacant

#### **Appointed positions:**

#### **Branch Projects Grants Chair**

Sylvia Fink

[sjsfink@gmail.com](mailto:sjsfink@gmail.com)

#### **Governance Chair**

Phyllis Ludi

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#### **College/University Chair**

Rebecca Reiss

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#### **Newsletter Editor**

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#### **Parliamentarian**

Phyllis Ludi

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