

AAUW Chicago, Inc. Branch 2023-2024 Year Recap

The board members met virtually June 22 and virtually July 26 in 2023 to plan programs for the coming year. Our programs continue to promote the AAUW mission and values. We were still engaging members both virtually and in person as there are benefits to both formats. We can attract speakers more easily with the virtual format.

AAUW celebrated Black Equal Pay Day on July 27, 2023. This recognizing the day that, after seven months of extra work, Black women have finally caught up to the average earnings of a white man in 2022. Then on October 5th was Latina Equal Pay Day. Latina women make only 53 cents on the dollar compared to men. There was a social media campaign to raise awareness of Equal Pay Day, #LatinaEqualPayDay. Native women must work until November 30, while Asian American, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander women must work until April 5 to earn the same as the average man. The Chicago branch is part of the Equal Pay Day Chicago Coalition. In 2024, we promoted Equal Pay Day on March 12, the first Equal Pay Day of the year, when white women equal men's earnings from the year before. White women earn 84 cents compared to white men.

The branch started a new interest group this year called Lunch Bunch. The group has met at various restaurants for brunch or lunch. It is informal and friends and guests are welcome. The first meeting was Saturday, August 26th at Dash of Salt and Pepper Dinner 2201 N Lincoln Ave, Chicago. The group also met on November 4 at Roux 1055 E. 55th St Chicago. The last lunch was May 4, 2024, at Furama Restaurant (Asian Cuisine & Dim Sum) Chicago.

On Sept 23, members and guests met at the home of Paula Purdue for our fall kick off meeting. We heard Professor Nancy J. Borhne on "How Survivors of Torture Recover and Share Their Humanity". TASSC, Torture Abolition and Survivor Support Coalition, seeks to abolish torture wherever it occurs and support survivors as they empower themselves, their families and communities. Paula Purdue provided cinnamon rolls and Charlene Reynolds brought treats. Megan Moser welcomed us at the door. Thank you to Paula Purdue for hosting us and inviting the speaker.

Megan Moser and Paula Purdue hosted the Wine N Write on Monday, Sept. 25. Members met online and wrote thank you notes to our Illinois Assembly members to thank them for supporting AAUW focused bills. Contact Megan for your Assembly members if you want to thank your legislators at any time. Some members also heard back from their legislators after sending out the thank you notes.

Chicago branch member AJ Conroy attended the AAUW Regional Convention in St. Louis from October 19-21. The AAUW Regional Convention "REACHING NEW HEIGHTS – TOGETHER" was held at the Drury Plaza Hotel, St. Louis (at the Arch). 11 states participated in this regional convention. It was a great way to learn more about AAUW, meet members from our region and become energized about AAUW. AJ also presented a breakout session and shared the ERA coloring book and shared information on the status of ratifying the ERA. About 150 members

and guests were in attendance. The speakers were Gloria Blackwell, CEO OF AAUW and Lisa Maatz, Public Policy & Organizational Consultant. Thank you, AJ, for attending on behalf of the Chicago branch.

On Saturday, October 28, members and guests meet for a private tour of The History Makers. The HistoryMakers is a national non-profit research and educational institution committed to preserving and making widely accessible the untold personal stories of both well-known and unsung African Americans. Thank you to Helen Elkiss for organizing the tour and planning lunch for the group at La Cantina Restaurant.

The Chicago Branch, in partnership with the Jane Addams Branch, once again hosted a virtual meeting to showcase three AAUW Fellows and Grantees on Saturday November 11, 2023. This year's presenters included:

- Aparajita Santra International Fellowship, India University of Illinois, Urbana -Champaign Archite
- Seyma Kabaoglu International Fellowship, Turkey Northwestern University Cultural anthropology: Ph.D., Cultural anthropology
- Dana Fanslow Career Development Grant University of Illinois, Urbana Champaign Library sciences: M.S., Social Justice & Administration

This webinar is available on YouTube <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HT2eSROO0so>

A big thank you to Ruth Holst of the Chicago branch and Kate Skegg of the Jane Addams branch for organizing and hosting the zoom webinar and for moderating the discussion.

Starting off 2024, the branch co-sponsored the Paid Family and Medical Leave webinar on January 13. AAUW-IL has been working on a bill to provide insurance for workers to take paid medical and family leave. This legislation, when passed, will allow all workers to take paid family and medical leave. Paula Purdue, AAUW-IL Public Policy co-chair and Chicago branch member, moderated the discussion. Sarah Labadie, member of the Women Employed staff, shared the ups and downs of getting this complicated legislation passed. Thank you to Paula Purdue for inviting our speaker and thank you to Kate Skagg and the Jane Addams branch for hosting the webinar. It is available to watch online if you were not able to attend.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4Kta7-OP1HE>

Next on February 21, we hosted a "Community's Guide to Human Trafficking." Elisa Munoz, the Human Trafficking Victim Coordinator for the State's Attorney's Office Human Trafficking Unit in Chicago presented. Elisa has been in the anti-human trafficking field for 4 years. Attendees learned the facts about exploitation and the crucial role community members have in trafficking prevention. Human Trafficking doesn't discriminate based on race, gender or geographical location. Victims of human trafficking are protected under United States and Illinois law. We had a very large group of attendees from the branch as well as from all over the state and a guest from Iowa. Thank you to Loretta Pearson for inviting our speaker, moderating the discussion, and reaching out to the Jane Addams branch to host the webinar. The webinar is also available online <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C9OvNNDiDiQ>

On March 24, the Chicago branch co-sponsored with AAUW-IL Public Policy: Protecting Public Education and Libraries. Our speakers were Rick Jascucla, Chairman of Jascucla Tierman Strategic Communications and Holly Bartecki, Executive Vice President at Jascucla Terman. Chicago branch member Paula Purdue moderated the discussion. In September of 2022, AAUW-IL was part of organizing a coalition to protect public education and libraries by defeating Mom's for Liberty candidates in the recent school board and public library board elections. The program described the outcome of the elections and the importance of continuing this work for future elections. This webinar is available on YouTube.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A3-CdpZ5Uuo>

A big thank you to the Jane Addams Online Branch for partnering with us for this important program. Also thank you to AAUW-IL Public Policy Chairs Paula Purdue and Tracy Sherman-Falcon for organizing the meeting and inviting our speakers.

On Saturday, March 30, members and guests celebrated the 16th Annual SWAN Day (Support Women Artists Now) with a screening of **Big Eyes** starring Amy Adams directed by Tim Burton, screenplay by Scott Alexander & Larry Karaszewski. The event was held at the Chicago Cultural Center in the Cassidy Theatre. The event celebrated the legacy of Margaret Keane & the Women behind Tim Burton's *Curtain*. The event was simulcast from NYC. Thank you to Jan Lisa Huttner, (www.ff2media.com) Creator of International SWANs, for organizing the event from Brooklyn. Also thank you to Branch member Dorthea Juul and Lori Switzer for leading the event in Chicago.

From April 19-20, over 125 enthusiastic AAUW-IL members from across Illinois came together at Elgin Community College to celebrate our 100-year AAUW-IL anniversary, *Celebrating 100 Years of Empowering Women*. Ruth Holst, Jenni Purdue, Paula Purdue, AJ Conroy, Charlaire Reynolds, and Lori Switzer attended on behalf of the branch. Attendees saw and felt the value of meeting face to face. Convention attendees enjoyed a look back through history as well as current programs at the branch table displays. We were reminded by Meghan Kissell, AAUW Senior Director of Policy and Membership Advocacy: to follow 5 Calls to Action: JOIN, GIVE, ENGAGE, LEARN, and SHARE.

Speakers were mission focused, providing us with action steps to support and challenge us. Dr. Suzanne Chod showed us the relationship between trust in government and polarization, the difference between misinformation and disinformation, and maybe most important the enthusiasm of her college students to engage in the political world. Meghan Kissell in her presentation "Courage. Commitment. Collaboration" gave us highlights from AAUW National including ways to engage ourselves and our members in issues important to women and girls. Some topics she covered were debt relief, ERA, Title IX, and ways to invoke change in ourselves, branches, and communities such as 2-Minute Activist, new 5 Star Program, and the Work Smart/Start Smart programs that will be free to C/U Partners. Jennifer Ford and Pat Chamberlain provided us with an important snapshot on youth/family poverty in Illinois as well as efforts in the Elgin Area AAUW branch to actively address such poverty needs.

An update on Illinois politics was provided by Jenni Purdue, while AJ Conroy clearly addressed the status of ERA. All of us participated in a postcard campaign for ERA. We are thankful for all the hard work, energy, and enthusiasm that Jenni and AJ give educating us on

issues. Members of the Batavia-Geneva-St. Charles introduced us to the Dignity Index (<https://www.dignityindex.us/>) affording us an opportunity to take a closer look at the words we use and the messages being sent. We closed the convention with an important look to the “next 100 years”. Affinity groups provided important dialog that the AAUW-IL Board can consider as they plan for the upcoming year. As expected, the opportunity to dialog with like-minded women and men was valued by all.

On May 8th, AAUW-IL sponsored a Lobby Day in Springfield. AAUW-IL state public policy chair and branch member Paula Purdue and member Barbara Yong among others met with Illinois legislators in Springfield to promote AAUW issues.

On May 18, nine members and guests attended the tour of the American Writers Museum. Following the 30-minute guided tour, members explored the Museum on their own. Everyone agreed the AWM is a great addition to Chicago. The group continued their conversations over lunch at the Elephant and Castle restaurant one block from the Museum. Thank you to Ruth Holst and Anne Foley for planning and organizing this outing.

On June 8, we will hold our Annual Meeting at the Edgewater Beach condo party room of Charlaire Reynolds. We will look forward to meeting in person and celebrating Branch activities during the past year. We will have an Italian buffet lunch catered by Pizzeria Aroma. We will also introduce members to the Dignity Index to learn more about our words and messages being received. Thank you to Charlaire Reynolds, Lori Switzer, and Megan Moser for organizing and planning this meeting.

Communication/Website/Newsletter – Lori Switzer, editor

Our branch has excellent communication through our continually updated webpage, which is connected to the AAUW-IL website. Make sure you check the website often to see what is new with the branch and AAUW. <http://chicago-il.aauw.net>

Our newsletter is sent to 99% of our members electronically each month. The current and past newsletters are also available on our website. We use Constant Contact for most of our communication so make sure you are signed up or contact chicagoaauw@hotmail.com to be added to the distribution list.

The Chicago branch has a continually updated Facebook page. We have 450 fans (Increase of 21 fans from last year). Become a fan of the “Chicago Branch of AAUW” on Facebook. <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Chicago-Branch-of-AAUW>

There is also a branch Instagram page. This page is gaining followers and has 103 followers (increase of 20 followers from last year) and 269 posts. Check it out – AAUWCHICAGO <https://www.instagram.com/aauwchicago/>

Membership – VP of Membership, Megan Moser

We ended the year with **54** paid members, up from 52 last year. The branch had 4 new members join this year. Megan sent out interest emails to women attending AAUW events. As of June 1, information was taken from AAUW national Branch Member Roster, 15 members have renewed for the 2024-2025 year. We have 39 members still to renew.

Thank you to Megan Moser for serving as the branch membership VP for the past term. Megan will end her term as Membership VP and Charlaire Reynolds will be the next Membership VP.

Chicago Branch Treasurer’s Report – Ruth Holst
Budget Report (July 1, 2023 – May 31, 2024)

	2023-2024 Budget	2023-2024 Actual
Revenue		
Dues	990	266
Donations for Program Expenses	100	5436*
Member Donations	200	28
Transfer from Investment Acct.	1,000	0
Total Revenue	2,290	5730
*Includes \$5266 for Mar 30 SWAN event		
Expenses		
Insurance	200	200
IL Incorporation fee	20	10
Printing, Supplies, Postage	120	112
Membership Recruitment	75	0
Program Expenses	300	5546*
Program Planning Meetings	0	0
Annual Meeting Expenses	150	0
Public Policy Expenses	75	0
Contributions to AAUW National	600	0
Communications Software	350	343
Convention Travel Expense	400	0
Miscellaneous	0	65
Total Expenses	2,290	6276

Chicago Branch Checking Account Balance - May 31, 24: \$2,051.11
(no longer includes funds designated for Next Steps Collaborative)

Chicago Branch Investment Account Balance (Marston) - May 31, 2023: \$13,717.12

AAUW Funds Report

The Chicago, Inc. branch raised and donated **\$4989- total** in 2023, for all defined AAUW Funds in 2023. (An increase from 2022 \$3406-) This includes AAUW's Greatest Needs Fund, Education and Training Fund, Economic Security Fund, and Leadership Fund.

AAUW has been working toward a fairer, more equitable society for over 143 years. Your support helped AAUW to continue to address gender inequalities. Our annual "no-dinner" dinner is the primary fund-raiser for the Chicago Branch of AAUW.

Chicago, Inc. Branch held its sixteenth "non-event" fundraiser to gather donations from Branch members for AAUW's Greatest Needs Campaign. In October/November/December 2023, we raised **\$1992-** which is down from the \$2020- raised the year before.

Daytime Book Club – Lori Switzer and Ruth Holst - Chairs

The Daytime Book Club met via zoom all year. This accommodated attendees as well as included newer members and members from other AAUW-IL branches. All are welcome to attend. The group meets on the third Wednesday of every month at 1:00pm. The group will continue to meet on zoom. Thank you to Ruth Holst for hosting the zoom meetings each month.

2023-24 book list

August 16: The Great Displacement: Climate Change and the Next American Migration by Jake Bittle

September 21: Things We Lost to the Water: A Novel by Eric Nguyen

October 18: The Last Girl: My Story of Captivity, and My Fight Against the Islamic State by Nadia Murad

Nov. 15: Lessons in Chemistry: A Novel by Bonnie Garmus

Dec. 20: The Nurse's Secret: A Thrilling Historical Novel of the Dark Side of Gilded Age New York City by Amanda Skenandore

January 17 – Lady Tan's Circle of Women: A Novel by Lisa See

February 21 – The Children's Act by Ian McEwan

March 20- The Indigo Girl by Natasha Boyd

April 17- The Diamond Eye by Kate Quinn

May 15- The Little Old Lady Who Broke all the rules by Catharina Ingelman-Sundberg

June 19 – Tom Lake by Ann Patchett

Recognition of Branch Leaders

Thank you to all Chicago branch members that have helped throughout the year. Thank you to Lori Switzer who agreed to act again as our "Admin" during our second year of using a Steering Committee. Lori also edits our Chicago Edition newsletter and serves as our website/social media chair. Thank you to Helen Elkiss, Barbara Harris, Paula Purdue, Jackie Kirley, Anne Foley, Loretta Pearson, Ruth Holst, Megan Moser, Charlene Reynolds and all the members who helped plan and organize our programs for the year. Thank you to Ruth Holst and Megan Moser for hosting the Zoom programs. Also thank you to all our members for being an active part of our branch through virtual attendance and membership.

Program Planning meetings for 2024-2025 year

Our first program planning meeting will be in person at the home of Paula Purdue on Tuesday, June 25. Please bring ideas for topics, speakers, and meeting locations. The second meeting will be in July via zoom at 6:30pm.

2023-2024 Board/Steering Committee List

Administrator – Lori Switzer

Treasurer – Ruth Holst

VP Membership – Megan Moser

VP Programs – run by program planning committee

Secretary – Barbara Harris

Directors at Large – Anne Foley and Margaret O’Hara (2022-2024)

Charlaine Reynolds and Helen Elkiss (2023-2025)

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