



Newsletter of the

Kirkwood–Webster Groves Branch

Founded April 1971 ~ **Celebrating 54 Years!**

2025-2026, No. 1, September 2025

AAUW Mission: AAUW advances gender equity for women and girls through research, education, and advocacy.

AAUW Vision: Equity for all. **AAUW Values:** Nonpartisan, fact-based, integrity, inclusion, and intersectionality.

AAUW is open to graduates who hold the associate, baccalaureate, or higher degree from a qualified college or university.

The Kirkwood-Webster Groves Branch of AAUW supports the full range of the AAUW mission through its monthly program meetings, special interest groups, and public outreach events, by engaging in social action, collaborating with local organizations and educational institutions regarding AAUW topics, and supporting area young women and girls directly. We are one of five branches in the St. Louis, MO, area that comprise the AAUW Metro St Louis Interbranch Council (IBC).

Branch Officers, 2024-2025

Co-President:

Nancy Hutchins

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Co-President:

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<https://facebook.com/AAUWKWG>

<https://stlouis-ibc.aauw.net>

<https://aauw-mo.aauw.net>

Plan to come to our 2025-26 Kickoff Gathering!



Caffeinated Calculus: Fueling AAUW's Future

Join us for Coffee and Convos—an energizing get-together to multiply connections between St. Louis and Kirkwood-Webster Groves members, add members-at-large and university allies into the mix, and subtract barriers as we focus on the future of AAUW and our personal practices. Bring your ideas while we add up possibilities, solve for x (hint: x = inspired action), and turn our collective equation into real-world impact. Let's calculate change together—one conversation at a time.

Please RSVP to <https://pp.events/bVQPkrL3>

September 14, 2025 — 2-4 p.m.

The Brentwood Community Center

2505 S. Brentwood Blvd, 63144

We can't wait to brew ideas and multiply our impact—see you there!



From Your Co-Presidents ...

Welcome to our new 2025-2026 AAUW year.



Nancy

As your new co-president of the Kirkwood-Webster Groves Branch, I would like to bring some new ideas to you. We all have the power to make something happen.

Charlotte

We're not just culture consumers, but creators, too. What does it mean to shape culture, not just absorb it? Getting out and doing activities in our community is a start, as well as contacting our legislators. If you're able to stand or sit in vigil lines, it would be a beginning. In Kirkwood on Saturdays a vigil is held at 9:30 a.m. in front of the city hall on Kirkwood Road. On Tuesdays, a vigil is held at the Eliot Unitarian Chapel, 100 S. Taylor Ave., at 5:00 p.m. It's always a good idea to talk with someone involved beforehand to make sure it's being held that week and the times. Your contact person for these two events could be myself, Charlotte Parsons (573.690.5792 or 314.394.1122).

Another important way to be active is to attend and support AAUW. Our first meeting this year is Sunday, September 14th at 2 p.m. at the Brentwood Community Center, Room A, 2505 S. Brentwood Blvd, Brentwood, MO. This is a combined meeting with the St. Louis Branch (some of our members are dual members with St. Louis). Bring your friends. This is a meet-and-greet session.

Our public policy activities include signing up for the AAUW Two-Minute Activist. *The Independent* is another useful online resource. It is a nonpartisan, nonprofit news organization covering state (Missouri) government, politics, and policy. You can receive their email newsletters by going to <https://missouriindependent.com/subscribe/>.

Our Movie Club is a unique way to stay active with friends. Each of us watches a selected movie on Netflix. On the fourth Monday of the month at 7 p.m., the movie is discussed by the group on Zoom. You can request to join the email list by contacting dshe63105@gmail.com. Selected movies for August through November are *The Storied Life of A. J. Fikry* on Monday, 8-25; *Procession* on 9-22; *Between the Temples* on 10-27; and *Maria* on 11-24. (See page 7 for the meeting I.D. and passcode.)

The IBC (AAUW Metro St. Louis Interbranch Council) ¡Adelante! Book group meets virtually to discuss books written from diverse perspectives. It meets at 1:30 pm on the fourth Thursday of the month in September, October, January, February, March, April, and May. Book selections and Zoom access information are on page 7.

Upcoming Meetings:

August 26—12 N—2:30 pm, Grand Glaize County Library, meeting room 1, 1010 Meramec Station Rd. This is the next quarterly meeting of the AAUW Metro St. Louis Interbranch Council. All AAUW members are welcome to attend. Since this also is Women's Equality Day, those interested will meet for lunch at a nearby restaurant. For further information, contact Carol Davis McDonald.

Charlotte and Nancy

Save
the
Date!

Our October 12 Presentation

Our combined monthly meeting with the St. Louis Branch will be held on Sunday, October 12, 2025, at 1:00 p.m. at the St. Louis County Library-Mid-County Branch, 7821 Maryland Ave, Clayton, MO. There is underground parking accessed on the east side of the library off Maryland.

Nancy Morrow-Howell, MSW, PhD, will present an interesting topic: ***Reframing Aging: A New Narrative for Longer Lives***. She is the Bettie Bofinger Brown Distinguished Professor at Washington University in St. Louis. She also directs the Harvey A. Friedman Center for Aging that promotes research, education, and community engagement on aging-related issues across all academic disciplines at the

University. Her scholarship focuses on productive engagement in later life, specifically program and policies to optimally engage older adults in paid and unpaid work, including working, volunteering, and caregiving.

Dr. Morrow-Howell has her MSW from the University of Kansas and her doctorate from the University of California, Berkeley. She is past president and fellow of the Gerontological Society of America. She is a master trainer and a member of the national advisory committee for its Reframing Aging initiative, and is a member of the Age-Inclusive University Workgroup. She received the Distinguished Career Achievement Award from the Society for Social Work and Research as well as the Distinguished Faculty Award at Washington University. She was awarded the Maxwell A. Pollack Award for Contributions to Health Aging from the Gerontological Society of America in 2022. Thanks to Dr. Linda Lindsey (AAUW St. Louis) for making the arrangements.



*In case you still have
pecans. If not, call Kay.*

A Crunchy Mix with Coastal Vibes

Recipe from Schermer Pecans

The rich, buttery crunch of our pecans paired with the iconic, tangy, and just-right spicy kick of **Old Bay Inspired Pecan Trail Mix**

- 2 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted
- 1 tablespoon Old Bay (or your favorite seafood boil seasoning)
- 1 cup peanuts
- 1 cup oyster crackers
- 1 cup corn nuts
- 1 cup Schermer roasted, salted pecan halves
- 1/4 cup lemon rind, cut into thin strips

- 1 teaspoon lemon juice
- 1 beef stick, cut into 1/2-inch chunks (optional) makes for one delicious and simple to make snack mix!

1. Preheat oven to 300 degrees.
2. Pour melted butter into a large mixing bowl.
3. Add the Old Bay seasoning, and whisk to combine.
4. Add the peanuts, oyster crackers, corn nuts, and pecans to the bowl, and toss gently with hands or a spoon.
5. Add the lemon rind and lemon juice, and toss again.
6. Spread out evenly on a sheet pan lined with parchment paper.
7. Place in preheated oven, and bake for 10-15 minutes or until nuts are toasted and crackers are crispy.
8. Remove from heat, and add beef stick chunks if desired. Serve warm or at room temperature.



AAUW Kirkwood-Webster Groves raises money
through RADA KITCHEN STORE.

Click on this link (<https://radafundraising.myshopify.com/?rfsn=7746743.077a60>) that will ask if you want to donate to AAUW KWG. Your purchases will support the fundraiser for **AAUW Kirkwood Webster Groves**.

2024-2025 Year-End Activities

On May 3 (9 am-noon), K-WG branch members gathered at Friendship Village Sunset Hills, 12563 Village Circle Drive, for a Pathway Party - a watch party for the 2025 AAUW Missouri State Meeting by Zoom, "Finding a Path Forward: NOW Is the Time!" We were hosted by Marsha Koch, a resident at Friendship Village. The meeting was followed by lunch in the dining room for those who could stay. Those who couldn't make it out at that early hour were able to view the meeting at home on Zoom. Camaraderie and interesting discussions made this a fun approach for the meeting.

Recognition and awards were announced during the meeting. Kirkwood-Webster Groves received the following certificates:

- Ten-Star Branch in the Ten-Star Awards program
- Four 2024 AAUW MO Century Club Plus members (Carol Davis McDonald, Julia Muller, Lynne Roney, and Jeanne Webdell)
- Four 2024 AAUW MO Century Club members

(Barbara Johnson, Janet King, Deb McWard, and Kay Meyer)

- Second in the Top 5 in total giving to AAUW Fund for 2024
- Fifth in the Top 5 Branches in per-capita giving to AAUW Fund for 2024
- (We did not rank in the list of branches with 50% of branch members giving to AAUW Fund.)

Branch Meeting and Lunch Celebration

K-WG celebrated the end of the 2024-2025 AAUW year on Saturday, May 31 (11 a.m.-1 p.m.) at Kirkwood United Methodist Church, Rm. 201, 201 W. Adams, Kirkwood, MO 63122. It was a fun, informal get-together to celebrate our branch's accomplishments, install our new officers, and make plans for next year. Box lunches were ordered in advance from Blue Duck in Maplewood, which is owned by the family of one of our STEM scholarship recipients. Charlotte Parsons was installed as co-president with Nancy Hutchins as continuing co-president.



The U.S. is currently ranked 58th when it comes to the gender gap in health and survival. What is driving this? What should be done to close this gap?

"The gender gap in health in the US remains extremely problematic for women. Multiple factors drive the difference between women's and men's health. One major factor is that access to quality healthcare varies significantly by social class, race-ethnicity, and sexual and gender identity...The wealth gap in the United States also plays a major role. Despite having health care more affordable now than ever, the quality of the health care and what insurance will cover varies greatly. This shapes how lower income women and women in poverty access healthcare for themselves and their children. Poor people tend to die from treatable illnesses, while those with more wealth tend to die from chronic illnesses they treat over long periods of time... Many of the changes needed are at the societal level. All people need access to quality healthcare that is not limited by income or occupation (where most people get their health insurance). Quality healthcare also needs to be available in all areas and accessible to those who take public transportation and do not have flexible work schedules. The growing gap between the

rich and the poor in this society also needs to be addressed." Jo Reger – Professor; Department Chair, Department of Sociology, Anthropology, Social Work & Criminal Justice, Oakland University

What policies would prove effective at increasing female representation in senior management roles in the Fortune 500 and other large, multinational corporations?

To increase the number of women in senior management, companies need to focus on every step of the corporate ladder, including the bottom rung. That 'broken rung' is the crucial first promotion in organizations that research shows is the leakiest part of the pipeline for career advancement, especially for women of color, women with disabilities, and LGBTQIA+ people. Effective policies to recruit, retain, and promote women include pay transparency, banning prior salary history questions when hiring, training managers, dealing directly with microaggressions, and supporting flexible work options. Because women still carry the disproportionate burden of care giving responsibilities, companies need to commit to family friendly policies, including paid family leave, paid sick leave, pregnancy and nursing protections, and support for childcare and other caring labor obligations that contribute to burn-out." Jessie B. Ramey, Ph.D. – Director, Women's Institute; Associate Professor, Chatham University



PUBLIC POLICY UPDATE

From Jeanne Webdell

(borrowed from [The Beacon](#)-Missouri)

2025 Education Laws

This summary highlights the new laws signed by Missouri Gov. Mike Kehoe in July. Here are some key changes you can expect in Missouri education law.

Elementary and secondary education

Cellphones. [Senate Bill 68](#) says public schools must prohibit students from using cellphones or other “electronic personal communication devices” at school all day – not just during classes. Exceptions may be made for special education, health needs, emergencies and educational purposes.

Reading. Senate Bill 68 says reading instruction must be primarily based in phonics rather than tactics such as the “three-cueing system” — which encourages students to guess words based on context — or visual memory.

Discipline and safety. Senate Bill 68 prohibits zero-tolerance discipline policies that require an automatic consequence without room to account for circumstances. Other safety issues include improving school door locks, developing plans for emergencies and creating a reporting system for safety incidents.

Religion in schools. [Senate Bill 49](#) allows school districts and charter schools to hire religious chaplains or accept them as volunteers. Chaplains must be a member of a religious group recognized by the Armed Forces Chaplains Board and pass a background check. Chaplains can’t serve in teaching roles unless they are certified teachers. There are no requirements that the chaplains be trained or formally recognized by their religious group. The law leaves open-ended what they will do.

Homeschooled students. [Senate Bill 63](#) allows home-schooled and virtual school students to participate in public school programs such as sports, fine arts and co-curricular activities. Students will participate in normal tryouts and can’t be required to attend classes unless they are directly related to the activity. Schools can require the students to conform to normal attendance, discipline and academic performance policies that other students follow.

CROWN Act. [Senate Bill 160](#), includes the Missouri CROWN Act, aimed at protecting students from discrimination based on hair textures and protective styles that are associated with a specific race or national origin.

Education spending. Kehoe signed the budget bills for [K-12](#) and [higher education](#) at the end of June, though he vetoed certain line items.

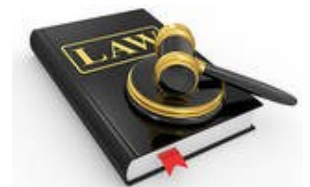
Notable details include an additional \$500 million going toward the foundation formula, which determines how much the state should contribute to public schools. That’s \$300 million more than Kehoe originally recommended.

For the first time, Missouri will send state general revenue — \$50 million — directly to the MOScholars program, which provides scholarships for students to attend religious and other private schools. That part of the budget has [already provoked a lawsuit](#) from a Missouri teachers union.

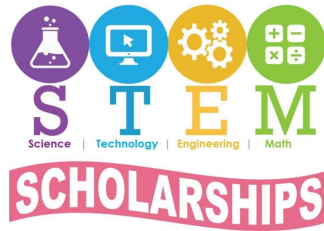
Higher education

Tuition, curriculum and financial aid. Both House Bill 419 and [Senate Bill 71](#) provide free public college tuition to certain first responders and their dependents in certain degree fields. Dependents using the program must additionally promise to stay in the state for five years.

Students eligible for the Access Missouri Financial Assistance Program, based on need, will receive higher awards. Those eligible for Access Missouri who study science, technology, engineering or math can receive an additional STEM grant of \$1,500 per year for up to four years.



2025 K-WG SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS



In our last issue, we introduced **Marlie Duggin** from **Maplewood–Richmond Heights High School** and **Eleanor Livengood** from **Afton High School**. A bio had not yet been received from **Elana Feldman**, a senior at **Valley Park High School**. It arrived shortly after our newsletter was sent out. Elana has a passion for the sciences and for music. Her future plans include attending a four-year university where she will study marine biology. **She was a perfect recipient of our scholarship.**

“When people first meet me, the first thing they’ll learn is that I’ve had a soft spot for dolphins almost my entire life. I have one dolphin in particular to thank for this special interest, Winter, who had her tail amputated. I first learned about Winter from a movie adaptation of her story and how she lost her tail, and from that moment on I was obsessed. I begged my parents to take me to every aquarium on every vacation possible, and they even paid for me to take tours of the facilities every now and then. All my birthday and Christmas presents became dolphin stuffed animals, educational books on dolphins and whales, or both of Winter’s stories, *Dolphin Tale* and *Dolphin Tale 2* on DVD. Nothing compared to the dolphin encounters or visits to see Winter herself. Little me had one big goal: to work with Winter the dolphin as a marine biologist, even if I didn’t always know what that entailed.

As I’ve grown, this goal hasn’t gone away but has rather grown into an even bigger dream: to explore the ocean and understand how life interacts with each other. I want to continue to grow in my goal and develop my love for the ocean in more broad marine focused college education, while still honoring my younger self’s

love for dolphins. After all, there’s so much out there to explore, and we may not even have the chance to see it in our lifetime.

I am currently unsure of where my newfound university home is but I hope to have a decision within the next couple of weeks. The value of my education is something that I do not take lightly, and I intend to fully think through my options when it comes to my future. After selecting either Rollins in Winter Park, Florida, or University of South Florida in St. Petersburg, I plan to submerge myself into opportunities, both academic and social, that will help me become the strongest version of myself, ready to take on the vastness of our oceans and succeed in my dreams. Once I have been in the field conducting research and making incredible discoveries, I intend to go back to university life, this time as an educator. Maybe I can push someone to find that same passion that I did as a child.

No matter where my life leads me, whether conducting groundbreaking research or inspiring the next generation of marine biologists, I know my path will always lead back to the ocean.”

Elana’s education and activities include at Valley Park High School, Class of 2025: GPA: 4.604 (weighted) and class rank: 1 of 58. She has participated in many activities and clubs, including National Honor Society (president), Equality Club (co-president), Mu Alpha Theta (treasurer), the school’s band, jazz band, theater program; International Thespian Society Troupe, High Honor Roll Student (2021-current), Tri-M Music Honor Society, and swimming team (not VPHS-sponsored).

Awards and achievements earned include a score of 5 on AP Psychology and AP Statistics Exams; Academic Excellence Awards in World History, Physical Science, AP Statistics, Biology, and AP Psychology; STEM Girls of Promise Award Recipient (2024); Seal of Biliteracy in Spanish (2024); and several music competition awards. She also has been involved in the community as a volunteer youth swim coach and for her church music program and youth program.

CALENDAR

Aug 25 Movie Club discussion, 7 pm, Zoom
Aug 26 IBC meeting, 12 N, Grand Glaize County Library, mtg room 1, 1010 Meramec Station Rd
Aug 26 International Women’s Equality Day
Sep 8 KWG board meeting and budget proposal, Zoom
Sep 14 Combined branch meeting, 2 pm, Brentwood Community Center

Sep 22 Movie Club discussion, 7 pm, Zoom
Sep 25 Adelante Book Group, 1:30 pm, Zoom
Oct 6 KWG board meeting
Oct 12 Combined branch meeting, 1:00 pm, Mid-County Branch Library, 7821 Maryland Ave., Clayton
Oct 23 Adelante Book Group, 1:30 pm, Zoom
Nov 25 National Ending Violence Against Women Day

AAUW METRO ST LOUIS INTERBRANCH COUNCIL (IBC)

KWG is **one of the five branches** that form the AAUW Metro St. Louis Interbranch Council, more commonly known as IBC. They meet 4 times a year, some virtually and some in person. Each branch is allowed 3 voting delegates, and historically the officers of each branch have served as those delegates.

The purpose of IBC is to foster cooperation among member branches and to financially support programs and projects and to open channels of communication among branches for the sharing of ideas and interests.

The next quarterly meeting will be on Tuesday, Aug 26, 2025, 12:00N, Grand Glaize County Library. The website is <https://stlouis-ibc.aauw.net/>. All AAUW members are welcome to attend.

Metro St. Louis Branch Programs

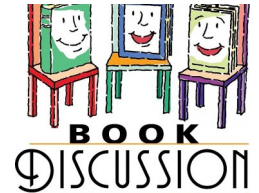
Ballwin-Chesterfield Branch—On Sept. 11, a welcome-back kick-off for 2025-26 is planned at the Ballwin Golf Course Events Center, 333 Holloway Rd. After the meetings in Sept, Oct, Nov, Feb, March, and April, members are invited to explore the mind-body experience of tai chi with member Janet Sloey for a suggested \$5+ for their Dollars-for-Scholars (DFS) program. DFS will also sponsor a visit to the Ulysses S Grant National Historic Site on Oct. 10 and a visit to the Moonrise Hotel in the Loop on Oct. 3 that will include breakfast, a talk by the events manager, a trolley ride, and a stopover at the MO History Museum.

Ferguson-Florissant Branch—Contact [Joyce Bluett](#) for meeting information, 314-800-8979.

Saint Charles Branch—Meets the first Thursday at 1 p.m. at First St. Charles UMC, 801 First Capitol Drive, St. Charles 63301. Sept 4: Judge Rachel Bringer-Shepherd—Reflections on a Judge's Career.

St. Louis Branch—Kirkwood-Webster Groves and St. Louis branches will combine their meetings for the 2025-2026 AAUW year (see page 1).

IBC ¡ADELANTE! BOOK GROUP



This group, started in 1996 as a component of AAUW's diversity outreach program, discusses books written from diverse perspectives. It currently is meeting virtually.

Where: Join Zoom meeting:

When: 1:30 pm the 4th Thursday of the month in September, October, January, February, March, April, May

Contact: PattyMurrayAAUW@gmail.com

Zoom access: Join Zoom Meeting at <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87393625222?pwd=Z8LmoZpCgqVwS6wAZmPoNEcUa0b2Pq.1>

Meeting ID: 873 9362 5222

Passcode: 922338

Dial by your location 312 626 6799 US

Upcoming selections:

Sep 25 Oath and Honor: A Memoir and a Warning, by Liz Cheney, 384 pages, published 12-5-2023. Kay Meyer, facilitator. A gripping first-hand account of the January 6th, 2021, insurrection from inside the halls of Congress, from origins to aftermath

Oct 23 The Sentence, by Louise Erdrich, 400 pages, 1-9-2021. Lynne Roney, facilitator. Asks what we owe to the living, the dead, to the reader and to the book. Mystery haunting of a small, independent book store.

MOVIE CLUB

Each of us watches a selected movie on Netflix. The movie is then discussed by the group on the 4th Monday of the month at 7 p.m. via Zoom.



Upcoming movies:

Mon. Aug 25: Moderator, Jo Taylor
Mon. Sept 22: Moderator, Diane Sher
Mon. Oct. 27: Moderator, Roz Marx
Mon. Nov. 24: Moderator, TBD

The Storied Life of A.J. Fikry
Procession
Between the Temples
Maria

Join Zoom Meeting: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81582657369?pwd=aqAklCdAvoieBbFwc1t97u8UNDYjua.1>

Meeting ID: 815 8265 7369 Passcode: 168308

National Conference for College Women Student Leaders (NCCWSL)

Update, by Pat Shores, Ballwin-Chesterfield Branch

This was the first year that NCCWSL was organized and administered by NASPA (Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education) instead of AAUW. Over two hundred student leaders gathered at the University of Maryland from May 28 through May 30 to build leadership skills, foster authentic connections, and ignite a drive to lead change on their campus and beyond.

Our **AAUW Metropolitan St. Louis Interbranch Council** knew that Sophie Price was the ideal candidate for us to send to NCCWSL after we learned what she is doing now to help marginalized communities, read about her plan to earn a master's in social work so she can work as a defense mitigation specialist, and understood that her intent to earn a doctorate in criminology will enable her to teach and conduct research that will help her continue to advocate for neglected communities.



Thank You Note from Sophie Price

I was lucky enough to be sponsored by the AAUW to attend the annual National Conference for College Women Student Leaders (NCCWSL) conference hosted by the University of Maryland. I want to take a moment to thank my sponsor, Pat Shores, for making sure I was prepared for this conference and walking me through the application process. I also want to say a huge thank you to my Webster faculty who recommended me for this scholarship and conference. Professor Clint Johnson wrote my letter of recommendation, and I believe that I would not have been chosen if it were not for his kind and honest words about his experience working with me in the GLITTER (Gender and Sexuality Lab Investigating Theories, Trends, and Empirical Research) Lab. Professor Johnson and I would not have been aware of this amazing opportunity if it were not for Dr. Elizabeth Hoover at Webster University and her connection with the AAUW association.

Attending this conference was an incredible opportunity that allowed me to meet and interact with so many different women from all over the country. I was able to learn about how other female leaders are making a difference in the world, and I came up with new ideas that would be interesting to implement in the future. One of the best things about this conference was the friends that I made with the women who attended along with me. Everyone at the conference was welcoming and had a lot of impressive leadership experience during their college experience. I would not have been able to have these valuable and impacting experiences if it were not for the American Association of University Women and their outstanding dedication to empowering the future generations of scholarly women. Without their organization, I would not have known about this incredible event. I want to say a huge thank you to the American Association of University Women for the scholarship that they awarded me, because I would not have been able to attend this conference without their support.



Sophie Price, left, in orange sweater, and on right with another attendee: Our IBC NCCWSL scholarship award-ee for 2025.