



SPRING FORUM 2025

(Please see details on Page 4.)

OPPORTUNITIES FOR ACTION MARCH 29, 2025 : 9:00AM-3:00PM SCOTTSDALE, AZ

AGENDA (tentative)

- 8:30-9:00: Registration and Coffee
- 9:00-9:30: Welcome; Business Meeting and Officer Elections: Becky Gunn, President
- 9:30-12:00: Morning session (w/coffee break)
- 12:00-1:00: Hot buffet lunch and networking
- 1:00-3:00: Afternoon session (w/coffee break)

SPEAKERS

- Meghan Kissell, Senior Director of Policy and Member Advocacy at AAUW National
- Jodi Liggett, Founder and Managing Director of the Arizona Center for Women's Advancement
- Melinda Iyer, Civic Engagement Beyond Voting Arizona (CEBV)
- Cathy Sigmon, Save Our Schools Arizona (SOS)

REGISTRATION

Open: 2/17 - 3/19

Fee: \$40.00 (lunch included)

Registration via AAUW Arizona website: www.aauwarizona.org
(or through link above)

VENUE

Scottsdale Community College

Indigenous Cultural Center

9000 E Chaparral Road
Scottsdale, Arizona

SCC website: www.scottsdalecc.edu

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

**AZ – AAUW STATE BOARD
2024-2025**

- Becky Gunn, President
- Karen Ramos, Presudebt-Elect
- Sandy Williamson, Treasurer
- Linda Thor, Recording Secretary
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- Ronda Clark, Newsletter Co-Editor
- Joan Jorgenson, College/University Relations
- Karen Ramos, AAUW Funds
- Gail Garrison, Branch Special Projects
- Jane Russ, Webmaster
- Joan Jorgensen, Community Action

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President's Pen

Becky's Musings



This will be my last official column for the Sun as your State President. It has been an eventful two years, but during that time I feel that many of us have acquired an even deeper understanding of AAUW's mission to empower women. While there have been difficult times, there have been constructive, positive events as well. Thank you for selecting me to serve as your President. It has been an honor and privilege. I so appreciate all of you, your intellect, your commitment, your integrity. Our next President, Karen Ramos, is an incredible leader and I know she will do a fantastic job.

How does one feel empowered in these fraught times? I recently read a book about our 'attention economy' and given our limited resource of attention and all of the different avenues grasping for that attention, how difficult it is to focus. I suggest we can empower ourselves by refusing to be distracted by the chaos and instead choosing to focus on one or two issues. While there is a myriad of issues, we can only be effective if we FOCUS.

Our Spring Forum on March 29 offers us an opportunity to choose those issues most relevant to what empowers us as an organization and as women committed to supporting women's issues. We have excellent speakers/panelists – experts in defining opportunities and resources. There is an article in this newsletter about those speakers and the details necessary to register. Please review the information and participate in the event. It will be GREAT! Let us continue to focus on women's rights and education. Education is at severe risk. Women's rights continue to be under stress. Each of us can have an impact albeit small, but together we can further our mission. We are stronger together.

Becky Gunn, President





AAUW Arizona Spring Forum 2025



**AAUW Arizona Spring Forum will be held Saturday, March 29,
at the Scottsdale Community College Indigenous Cultural Center.**

The theme is “**Opportunity for Action**” and will focus on local, state and national perspectives of what can be done individually, as AAUW branches, and through collaboration with other organizations—and how we can be most effective at each of these levels.

We are excited to have as speakers:


- ✚ Meghan Kissell, Senior Director of Policy & Member Advocacy, National AAUW
- ✚ Jodi Liggett, founder of the Arizona’s Center for Woman’s Advancement
- ✚ Cathy Sigmon, Co-founder, Civic Engagement Beyond Voting (CEBV)
- ✚ Melinda Iyer, Co-founder of CEBV & Policy Director, Save Our Schools, Arizona.

The Program starts at 8:30 a.m. with coffee and registration followed by a short business meeting to elect and install the incoming Board officers.

After a short introduction by Meghan Kissell, the morning session will begin with presentations from Jodi Liggett, Cathy Simon and Melinda Iyer.

The afternoon session will commence with a presentation from Meghan Kissell with ample time for interactive networking round table discussions and activities.

Registration is open through March 19 on either the link in the Constant Contact E-Blast you received or on the state website - www.aauwarizona.org The fee is \$40 which includes a hot buffet lunch.



**This is an exciting opportunity to network with
influential women and organizations at the
national, state and local levels.**



PUBLIC POLICY

by Betsy Flaten and Beverly Byrd
AAUW Arizona Public Policy Co-Chairs

March 2025

It's March and time to prepare for Legislative Day and Spring Forum.

Legislative Day is an opportunity to network, socialize, and advocate with fellow AAUW members throughout the state. Held in the Historic Senate Chamber at the Arizona Capitol Museum, Legislative Day brings together legislators, analysts, and key directors and lobbyists to discuss issues and initiatives that impact us.

This year, **Legislative Day is Tuesday, March 11**, starting at 10 a.m. and concluding at 2 p.m. We encourage representatives from each branch to participate in this annual event.

Following closely behind Legislative Day is the **Spring Forum**, held **Saturday, March 29**, at the Scottsdale Community College Indigenous Cultural Center. The theme is "**Opportunity for Action**" and will focus on local, state and national perspectives of what can be done individually, as AAUW branches, and through collaboration with other organizations—and how we can be most effective at each of these levels.

We are excited to have as speakers: Meghan Kissell, Senior Director of Policy and Member Advocacy at National AAUW and Jodi Liggett, founder of the Arizona's Center for Woman's Advancement. A local government advocacy panel will be led by Cathy Sigmon, Co-Founder, Civic Engagement Beyond Voting (CEBV) and Melinda Iyer, of CEBV and Policy Director, Save Our Schools, Arizona. Watch your email for more information and registration details.

On another topic, the Arizona Legislature is in session and progressive lawmakers are doing a great job, offering amendments to highlight the poor policies of underlying bills, working closely to stop the bad bills—and giving the good ones a fighting chance.

Education is still under attack and underfunded and women's healthcare is again coming under scrutiny. Watch for the following bills:

HCR 2058 abortion; women's health. This bill can be submitted as a referral and skip the governor. It would gut prop 139, disrespecting the will of millions of voters, 800k petition signers, 10,000 signature gatherers, and could pop up on a late agenda or be reassigned and tacked on to an appropriations agenda later.

HB2681 - Abortion-inducing drugs. This bill imposes multiple requirements for medication abortion, likely in violation of prop 139. Arizona citizens voted overwhelmingly to get politicians out of their healthcare decisions, specifically regarding abortion.

HB 2547 - Abortions; public funding. This bill would erode the effectiveness of prop 139 by prohibiting funding for entities which "promote" abortion. By removing the existing statutory language regarding "federally qualified abortions", this bill sweeps all facilities which only provide "medically necessary" abortions under the narrow exceptions of the Hyde amendment.

HB2216 - Pregnancy centers. This bill will waste taxpayer dollars on entities which deliberately seek to steer pregnant folks to one decision, birth, as opposed to presenting complete information and options.

As you can see, the battle continues over women's right to manage their own reproductive rights. Vigilance is required so we can stop these types of bills from being passed and enacted.



AAUW AZ State Community Action Grant

AAUW AZ State Community Action Grant Chair (CAGC)

Dr. Joan Jorgensen | Cell Phone: 520.227.4672

Email: drjoanj@gmail.com | AAUWTucsonMembership@gmail.com

Information about the Community Action Grant

1. Branch President, or designee, should provide the AZ State Community Action Grant Chair (AZ CAGC) the branch’s Community Action Grant Chair contact information.
2. Each AAUW AZ Branch is encouraged to submit a Community Action Grant (CAG).
3. The AZ CAGC can attend community action projects. Please advise the AZ CAGC the location, date, and time of the project for planning purposes.
4. The dates shown below will be used for the application cycle.
 - The two-page application is included in this document and can be used until any update(s) are made.
 - If changes are made, the AZ CAG Chair will update the application and inform the AZ State Board Members; the revised application would be effective the next application cycle.

Year Cycle	Application Due	Grant Notification to Branch(es) Approved for Funding	Final Reports Due	Approved Funding Requests Due
2025-2026	March 31, 2025	April 15, 2025	Jun 1, 2026	Jun 1, 2026
2026-2027	March 31, 2026	April 15, 2026	Jun 1, 2027	Jun 1, 2027
2027-2028	March 31, 2027	April 15, 2027	Jun 1, 2028	Jun 1, 2028
2028-2029	March 31, 2028	April 15, 2029	Jun 1, 2029	Jun 1, 2029
2029-2030	March 31, 2029	April 15, 2030	Jun 1, 2030	Jun 1, 2030

Important Dates

- I. Submission for completed applications is **March 31, XXXX**.
 - a. Email notification for approved CAG projects will be sent to Branch Presidents no later than April 15.
 - b. **There will be no replies to emails/ phone calls asking about the status of a CAG while the review committee is in the active review process.**
 - II. Submission of project completion documents is **NLT than June 1 of the following year**.
 - a. The AZ CAG Chair will request the State Treasurer to release the grant funds within 48 hours of receiving project completion documents.
 - III. The completed 2-page application can be submitted:
 - a. Via email to the AZ CAGC
 - b. Contact the AZ CAGC as soon as possible if another method is required
5. Projects must be approved by the selection Committee before starting any branch work on the Community Action Grant project.
 6. Branch President(s) and/or Branch Community Action Grant Chair(s) are encouraged to contact the AZ CAGC with questions at any time before applications are submitted. The AZ CAGC cannot say if an idea will be approved because approval will be decided at the review of application process. However, if you have any ideas for a grant, submit an application for consideration.

Procedures for AAUW AZ Community Action Project Grant Applications

Applications Due: NLT Mar 31, XXXX

Final Reports & Funding Requests Due: NLT Jun 1, XXXX

To: Dr. Joan Jorgensen, AAUW AZ Community Action Grant Chair (CAGC)

The AAUW AZ Board of Directors approved \$2,000 for four (4) qualifying community action projects. Branches may submit as many as two separate proposals if they implement two separate projects and combined, their budgets do not exceed \$500. **The total number of funded projects will be determined by the funds available.**

- ✓ Awarded proposals will be announced in the Spring *AZ Sun* newsletter.
- ✓ Proposals must be received by **March 31, XXXX**
- ✓ Branch President(s) will be notified via email NLT **April 15, XXXX**, if selected for a CAG. **No early approvals will be released before April 15, XXXX.** Please plan accordingly.
- ✓ Completed proposals may be submitted through one of the following ways:
 1. Via email to the Community Action Grant Chair (CAGC)
 2. Contact the CAGC as soon as possible if another method is required.

Important Notes: Handwritten proposals will not be considered. Emailed proposals must include application form including the signatures of the Branch President and Branch Community Action Chair. The CAGC will confirm receipt of proposals received by US mail or email.

Projects must clearly reflect the AAUW mission:

AAUW advances equity for women and girls through advocacy, education, philanthropy, and research.

The Branch project should encourage active member engagement with its implementation.

Points to consider when completing a Community Action Grant (CAG) application:

Answers to these questions will provide the AZ CAGC and committee members information to compare the impact, nature, and value of the other branch proposals. While answers need not be extensive, they should provide sufficient information to guarantee a fair evaluation.

- How does the project carry out the AAUW mission?
- How will the project meet important needs within your community?
- When and where will your activity/project take place?
- How will this project engage branch members?
- How will this project engage the community, build partnerships or connections to sustain the initiative?
- How will the project/activity be evaluated?
- What kind of publicity do you envision before/after the event/project?
- Is this a reoccurring event for your Branch? If so, how many times (also provide the years) has this been awarded the Community Action Grant for this same event?

Important Note: A detailed budget that itemizes how the grant funds will be used is mandatory with the application submitted by NLT March 31, XXXX. Include other sources of funding for the activity in the budget.

Procedures to Request Community Action Grant Funds after Project Completion

On or before June 1, XXXX of the grant cycle, activities covered by the grant must be completed and a final report describing the project, how many people attended, other partners, organizations or special attendees, and the use of funds (including receipts, completed AAUWAZ expense claim form **and 3-6 pictures** (while the project took place).

Required: Include the name and contact information of YOUR Branch treasurer.

Funds will be paid by check from the AAUW AZ State Treasurer to Branch Treasurer.

APPLICATION FOR AAUW-AZ COMMUNITY ACTION GRANT (CAG) FUNDS

SUBMIT BY: March 31, XXXX

Note: While answers on this page do not need be extensive, be sure to provide sufficient information to guarantee a fair evaluation during the evaluation process.

1. How does the project carry out the AAUW mission?
2. How will the project meet important needs within your community?
3. When and where will your activity/project take place?
4. How will this project engage branch members?
5. How will this project engage the community, build partnerships or connections to sustain the initiative?
6. How will the project/activity be evaluated?
7. What kind of publicity do you envision before/after the event/project?
8. Is this a reoccurring event for your Branch? If so, how many times (also provide the years) has this been awarded the Community Action Grant for this same event?

Be sure to answer all 8 questions.

Important Reminder: A detailed budget that itemizes how the grant funds will be used is mandatory with the application submitted by March 31, XXXX. Include other sources of funding for the activity in the budget.

Submit application before March 31, XXXX, **and** final documents after the project is completed before June 1, XXXX to aauw Tucsonmembership@gmail.com

APPLICATION FOR AAUW-AZ COMMUNITY ACTION GRANT (CAG) FUNDS

SUBMIT BY: March 31, XXXX

Branch Name

Amount Requested \$

Project Title

Project Director

Project Director Signature/Date

Project Director Address

Project Director Email Address

Project Director Phone Number

Branch President Signature/Date

Branch Community Chair Signature/Date

Date Submitted: _____



East Mesa

by Janice Dill, President

A Successful Quilt Show

The East Mesa AAUW had a wonderful event on Saturday, March 1.

Penny Boese, an outstanding quilter from Chandler, Arizona gave an amazing presentation on the story of quilting. Penny included the history of quilts, how quilts can make a political statement, and focused on how women have had a tremendous impact on society through quilting.



The quilt at the top left was made for the 100th anniversary of Women’s suffrage. On the quilt were pictures of influential Arizona women who were pioneers fighting for women’s rights.

We asked East Mesa members to bring quilts, and Beverly Byrd, the current Arizona State AAUW Public Policy co-chair, brought a quilt made more than 100 years ago, made by her great grandmother. The quilt was in pristine condition, and an excellent example of a “crazy quilt”.



We invited the Leisure World community to join with our AAUW group, and we had approximately 15-20 community members attend the event.



East Mesa officers stand with Penny and her daughter and partner in front of another of her amazing quilts.

Green Valley

Nancy Puckett, Co-President

The Green Valley Branch held its annual Rally to End Violence Against Women and Girls on February 15. Volunteers have shown up for this important event rain or shine over the years to raise awareness about the prevalence of violence against women and to call for action against it.

It was a strong turnout this year with more than 60 people attending the rally to end violence against women and girls.



They were positioned on a key intersection in Green Valley, holding signs emphasizing that violence against women and girls is an issue that still needs immediate attention! This event is an excellent example of our Branch commitment to advocacy for women's rights are human rights.



We continue to enjoy and benefit from excellent programming. Our February speaker was **Jean Fedigin of Sister José Women's Center in Tucson.**

The very picture of a strong woman, Jean held the mic in her hand and walked up to the attendee tables.

She told her story and the stories of the women she has helped over the past 15 years—homeless women, many of whom suffered violence and abuse. But there were also stories of success and recovery. Members were inspired by Jean's story

and her message of women uplifting women: "that's what we do," she said. The presentation resonated with the attendees, and Jean received a standing ovation.

The Branch is currently in the final stages of preparing for our annual fundraising event. In support of Women's History Month and in anticipation of International Women's Day, FundFest will be held on March 1. The entertainment, Celebrating Women in Song and Words, will feature local performing artists, Regina Ford and Tamara Kahrimanis. This event is an all-hands-on-deck effort and, from vision to operations to a ton of tiny details, the success of FundFest is due to the many extensive volunteer efforts of our dedicated members. We are also grateful for the support of local businesses. Proceeds from the FundFest go to support Branch scholarships to Pima Community College.

Action Steps You Can Take: End Violence Against Women and Girls

1. Go to www.globalgiving.org or www.kiva.org, open an account and start "microloaning."
2. Sponsor a girl or a women through Plan International, Women for Women International, World Vision, or American Jewish World Service.
3. Sign up for email updates on www.womensenews.org or a similar service, www.worldpulse.com. Both distribute information about abuses of women and sometimes advise on actions that readers can take.
4. Join the CARE Action Network at <https://careaction.org>, which will assist you in speaking out, educating policy makers, and underscoring that the public wants action against poverty and injustice.
5. Donate to an agency that provides services to victims of sexual assault, sex and human trafficking, or domestic violence.

*The first 4 suggestions are from "*Half the Sky: Turing Oppression into Opportunity for Women Worldwide*" by Nicholas D. Kristof and Sheryl WuDunn. Other ideas are found pages 255-258 of that work. *Further information from the World Health Organization: <https://www.who.int/news-room/factsheets/detail/violence-against-women>

Northwest Valley

by Rosemary Dougherty, President

“Top of the Morning to You”

Happy St. Patrick’s Day to all our wonderful members. We have had a very busy season---Our wonderful Christmas Meeting with the White Elephant, the Ukulele Club having us tapping our toes, our fabulous Fashion Show/Fundraiser in January that grossed more money for our Scholarship Winners than ever.

I have scheduled the Installation of New Officers/Scholarship Recipients, 50-year members at Briarwood Country Club on Thursday, April 17, 2025. There were flyers per email plus they will be at all the meetings. We will have a private room, and Briarwood has given us a pretty good deal.

More news is that our Fashion Show/Scholarship Fundraiser has been scheduled for January 24th, 2026, with Calle Rose at Briarwood Country Club. Surprises are going to come with this!

The bylaws have been amended for Public Policy to be made an elected position. Eblasts have gone out and I will be asking for a vote to approve them.

Please continue with bringing your non-perishable goods for Rio Salado Student Pantry, one of our Outreach Programs. They are very appreciative.

Irish Wishes:

May the luck of the Irish chase you down as you chase your rainbows this St. Patty's Day!

Wishing you lots of cheer, beer, and Irish blessings this St. Patrick's Day!

Scottsdale

by Alice Buck, President

Scottsdale Branch continues our active meeting schedule: In January we were delighted to host Debbie Hansen who presented her **We Made History!** program to us. So many of us wished we had longer with her that day but we were restricted by the time allotted by Mustang Library, our venue for the morning.

We are now working on forming a writing workshop to continue the We Made History! writing. Our member Nadine Schwartz, who has taught just this form of writing, will be the facilitator for this new special interest group.

Our February meeting was our annual Author’s Luncheon at the Scottsdale Community College Artichoke Grill where we enjoyed both our author for the day, Jennifer Ashley, and the delicious food prepared by the SCC Culinary Arts students.

Our March general meeting will be held in conjunction with AAUW AZ’s Spring Forum which will be at Scottsdale Community College, our usual home base.

Our favorite annual project—Adopt-A-Book—has just about reached its goal of 450 books for our Title 1 elementary school. We will be meeting in a few months to sort and ready them for delivery.

All our Special Interest Groups are in full swing: we are reading, discussing, eating and just plain enjoying each other as usual.

About AAUW

We are tenacious and trailblazing —
advocating for women and girls since 1881
and into the future!

Southeast Valley

by Mary Kenney, Sr Co-President

The Southeast Valley Branch kicked off the new year in January with a presentation by AAUW Arizona Public Policy Co-chairs Beverly Byrd and Betsy Flaten. They spoke to our members about the Policy Center that is a recent addition to the AAUW National website.

With the creation of the Policy Center on the AAUW National website, there is an increased focus on public policy with a dedicated staff. Beverly and Betsy discussed how AAUW National's focus fits with AAUW Arizona's priorities, and our next steps as a branch to strengthen state and national advocacy as we transition to a changing and challenging political environment.

At our February general meeting, we welcomed leaders from Save Our Schools (SOS) to speak about the work of their organization in Arizona. Our two speakers, Leda Devlieger and Lisa Calderon, are both Leads with the East Valley SOS Community Action Team. They spoke about how the ESA Voucher program is completely unregulated and draining nearly \$1B per year from Arizona's local public schools.

SOS is a non-partisan, community-based organization supporting strong public schools to build a better Arizona. They:

- ✚ Research public education issues affecting our state in an objective, fact-based manner.
- ✚ Engage Arizonans around the topic of public education by sharing research and initiating dialogues around the state.
- ✚ Collaborate with other local and national education and community groups, business partners, and other leaders to build support for public education in Arizona.

Members were engaged in this important presentation and grateful to the SOS volunteers for the information they shared.

We are especially proud of our generous members, who are dedicated to public education. Between raffling a Thanksgiving basket at the November branch meeting and raffling two baskets at the Holiday Funds Brunch along with proceeds from the purchasing of the donated Christmas Village centerpieces, enough money was raised to purchase eleven teacher manuals to support the San Marcos Elementary School's reading curriculum. Carey Paulo, the reading specialist at San Marcos, a Title 1 school, shared the amazing news with the teachers, her principal, and even the office staff.

To quote Carey, “

“We appreciate all of you at the Southeast Valley Branch of AAUW, and your efforts to raise the money for our teachers and students. You are amazing!”

The UFLI (University of Florida Literacy Institute) manuals will provide the San Marcos teachers with lesson plans, assessment profiles, center activities, apps, and decodable passages.

We wrapped up February by hosting our annual Scholarship Fundraiser, *Party Like It's Mardi Gras*.

Our Mardi Gras happy hour was attended by 185 people who were entertained with the music provided by the Chandler's Hamilton High School Maroon Jazz.

Justina Burks, Student Services Analyst Senior at Chandler-Gilbert Community College, spoke about the importance of the collaboration between the College and AAUW.

(Southeast Valley continued)

Guests enjoyed the specialty drinks, and the room was filled with colorful decorations and lively chatter.

The many generously donated raffle baskets, amazing silent auction items, and a 25/75% cash raffle helped us successfully raise funds for scholarships!



Kudos go out to all our members who volunteered many hours to present this special event.

Thanks also to members who created lovely baskets and donated money, wine, and gift cards.

ARIZONA SUN

Four issues—September, November, January, and March—of The Sun are published each year.

Newsletter Co-editors

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Please submit all articles to both emails.

Please format in Microsoft Word and photos as Jpeg.

**USEFUL LINKS**

AAUW Arizona State <https://www.aauwarizona.org/>

AAUW National <https://www.aauw.org/>