



EMPOWERING WOMEN SINCE 1881

## INDEPENDENCE BRANCH

Empowering women since 1940

Vol. 83 No. 1 September 2022

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

### **President's Message**

Welcome back! I am excited to announce we are beginning the 2022-2023 year of the Independence Branch of AAUW with a party! We will be welcoming prospective members, celebrating the successes of the past, and determining new steps to an even better tomorrow. Over the summer Title IX turned 50. Wow, did that 50 years fly by. It is wonderful to know Title IX is still protecting students and staff in any educational institution or program that receives federal funding. I always considered Title IX to be mainly about women's sports. The more I learned about it, I discovered that it is much more than just sports. It covers recruitment, admissions, housing, pregnancy, parenting, married students, sexual harassment and assault, financial assistance, and gender identity, and more. Although this law has been in place for 50 years, it underwent some alarming changes in 2020. "The new rule narrowed the definition of sexual harassment to potentially exclude many students' experiences and altered when schools must respond to reports of sexual harassment and violence." (AAUW, 2022) This year we will learn more about Title IX and what we can do to protect this important law. In addition, we will take a monthly focus on diversity, equity and inclusion. Our membership continues to decline and therefore this is also going to be an area of focus this year. Last, and certainly not least, we are going to focus on what contribution we make to our community. This can look like volunteering to raise funds while sharing AAUW's mission, supporting our college scholarship recipients with care packages and more, and maybe even offering a self-defense class to our community. Welcome back and get ready for one exciting and meaningful year of AAUW!



*Renee Freers*

## *Celebrating the 50th Anniversary of Title IX*

*Join AAUW Independence  
for a celebration of  
the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Title IX*



*on  
September 27, 2022  
at 6 pm!*



*Members and guests  
will be served pizza and cake  
in the Fellowship Hall at the United Methodist Church.*

### Upcoming Events:

~ September 27 = “Celebrating the 50th Anniversary of Title IX”,  
6 pm, Fellowship Hall, First UMC.

~ October 11 = AAUW Book Club Meeting = The Book Woman’s Daughter by Kim Michele Richardson, led by Doris McCartney.  
Book Club is held at Jane Campbell’s house. Contact Jane at  
[delandjane@comcast.net](mailto:delandjane@comcast.net) for more information.

### Upcoming events...

Hello ladies! Our AAUW Branch fundraiser is scheduled at the Pizza Ranch,  
**Monday, October 17, 5 - 8 pm.** This is a fun volunteer activity which generates needed monies for our Branch. We need 6 or 7 volunteers to adequately cover table service. Please give this opportunity your consideration and let Joyce ( [joyceannegillespie@yahoo.com](mailto:joyceannegillespie@yahoo.com) ) or Renee know soon.

Thanks for sharing your time and talents for this October event.

Joyce Gillespie

# AAUW

## 2021 By the Numbers

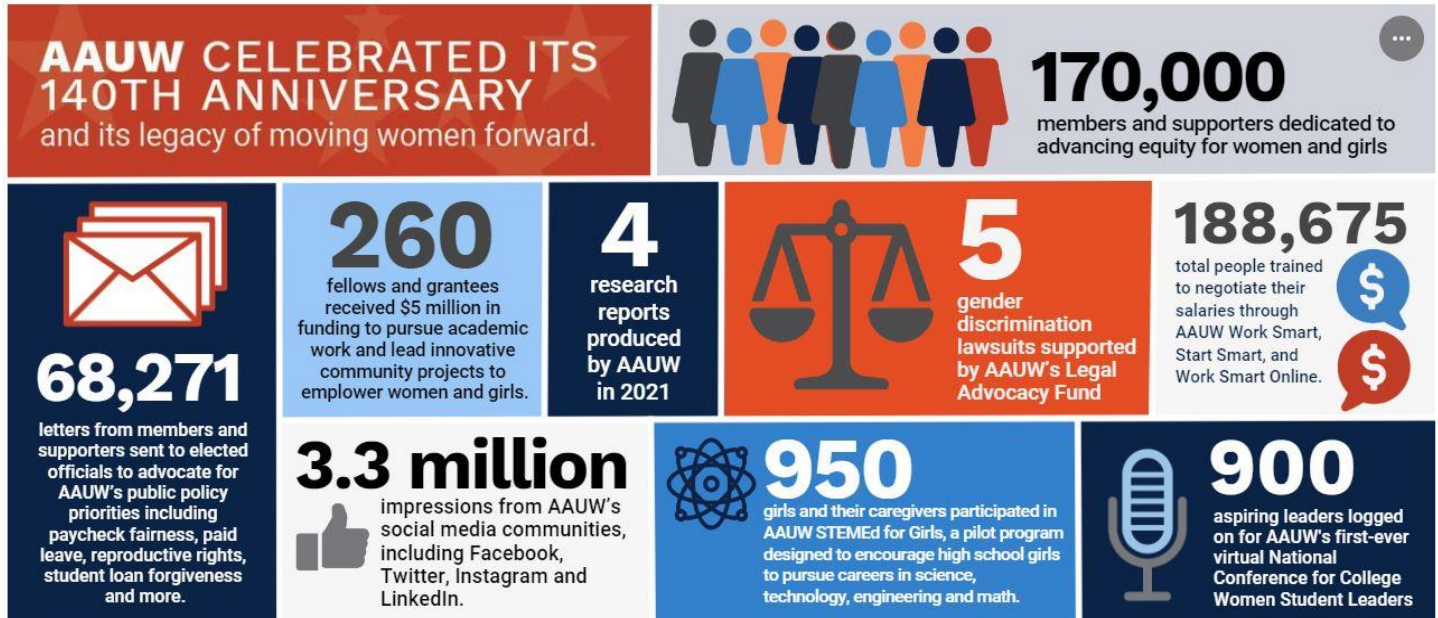


Image: AAUW National, 2022

**MEMBERSHIP:** Invitations have been sent to 25 prospective members. Only five members submitted names. If you think of anyone that would like to become a member of Independence branch of AAUW, please invite them to our September meeting. We will be celebrating **TITLE IX's 50th BIRTHDAY!** There will be pizza and birthday cake. *It will begin at 6:00 PM on Tuesday, September 27th.*

Some members may want to purchase Title IX tee shirts. Amazon has a variety of shirts, if you're interested.

**COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY:** AAUW was well-represented at Blue River on September 13<sup>th</sup>, with 7 members in attendance. Sue Shineman and Barbara Leabo recently made a display board for students to learn what AAUW is and can do for them. Title IX's 50th birthday was celebrated by handing out packs of cookies with 50th birthday stickers on them. A total of 17 new voters were registered.

Barbara Leabo

## **Public Policy ~ Kelley Reetzke, Chair**

### **STUDENT LOAN FORGIVENESS IS A REALITY.**

On August 25, 2022, President Biden unveiled an unprecedented student loan forgiveness plan. The plan has three (3) parts and forgives loans up to \$20,000.

#### **Part 1: Final extension of loan repayment pause.**

During the pandemic, payments on federally held student loans were suspended several times. Repayments will start January 2023.

#### **Part 2: Targeted debt relief to low- and middle-income families.**

To smooth the transition back to repayment and help borrowers at highest risk of delinquencies or default once payments resume.

Also, those borrowers who are employed by non-profits, the military, or federal, state, Tribal, or local government may be eligible to have all their student loans forgiven through the Public Service Loan Forgiveness (PSLF) program.

#### **Part 3: Make the student loan system more manageable for current and future borrowers**

New income-driven repayment plan that will substantially reduce future monthly payments for lower- and middle-income borrowers.

There are more specifics available at <https://studentaid.gov/debt-relief-announcement/>.

AAUW CEO Gloria Blackwell reminds members that this plan is entirely aligned with our mission. However, the student loan forgiveness plan doesn't go far enough to women and their families, especially women of color. Women hold two-thirds of the nation's student-loan debt.

Check out the research conducted by AAUW.

[Deeper in Debt: Women and Student Loans.](#)

[The Perfect Storm: How the Confluence of Generational Wealth Gaps, Gender, And Gender Pay Gaps and The Covid-19 Pandemic Exacerbated Student Loan Debt for Women of Color](#)

***Biden's student debt forgiveness does very little to help Black women***  
***Opinion by Gloria Blackwell, AAUW National CEO***  
***August 30, 2022***

The student loan forgiveness plan announced by the White House last week is an important and welcome step in the right direction. But we need more. The current plan does not go far enough in addressing the most troublesome aspect of the student loan crisis: The fact that Black women shoulder a disproportionate share of student debt.

Forgiving \$10,000 or \$20,000 of student debt will make a huge difference in the lives of many borrowers. But the average Black woman borrower will still be responsible for substantial debt. Forgiving \$50,000 would put a larger dent in the burden many Black women struggle with. What's more, it would help to reduce the racial wealth gap, which is why so many Black students are more likely to take on educational debt in the first place.

Over the past several decades, the number of Black students, especially women, getting college, graduate and post-graduate degrees has increased dramatically. At the same time, so has the cost of higher education. Because the average Black family has less than 13% of the wealth that the average white family does, Black students are much less likely to get help from their families in paying for college.

**New Survey: How Student Debt Ties to Racial Equity**

Our new [survey](#) of more than 1,500 women in New York City found that white women who attend college are much more likely to receive financial help from family than Black or Hispanic women who attend college. Moreover, Black women and Hispanic women are far more likely to pay for school with federal student loans than white women (43%, 41% and 28%, respectively).

Overall, more than 70% of Black students go into debt to pay for college, compared to 56% of white students.

**July-August 2022 AAUW Financial Report**  
**CHECKING ACCOUNT**

<b>BALANCE ON HAND 6/30/2022</b>		<b>\$5092.56</b>
<b>RECEIPTS</b>		
7/13/2022 AAUW direct pay 2 mbrshps		32
7/27/2022 AAUW direct pay 3 mbrshps		48
8/22/2022 Deposit 1 mbrshp		93
<b>TOTAL RECEIPTS</b>	<b>\$173</b>	
<b>DISBURSEMENTS</b>		
4656 7/1/2022 Kirkwood-Webster Groves - 10 VOTE signs	40	
<b>TOTAL DISBURSEMENTS</b>	<b>\$40</b>	
<b>BALANCE ON HAND 8/31/2022</b>		<b>\$5225.56</b>

**SAVINGS ACCOUNT**

<b>BALANCE ON HAND 6/30/2022</b>		<b>\$3340.26</b>
<b>RECEIPTS</b>		
7/31/2022 Dividend July	0.07	
8/31/2022 Dividend August	0.07	
<b>TOTAL RECEIPTS</b>		<b>\$0.14</b>
<b>DISBURSEMENTS</b>		
<b>TOTAL DISBURSEMENTS</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	
<b>BALANCE ON HAND 8/31/2022</b>		<b>\$3340.40</b>

**TOTAL ASSETS 8/31/2022: Checking \$5225.56 + Savings \$3340.40 = \$8565.96**

**ISDF Temporarily Restricted Account**

Statement 5/27/2022 **\$14326.55**

**Stewardship Capitol, Ltd INVESTMENT ACCOUNT**

8/31/2022 Balance **\$4835.29**



## **Inclusion Infusion' to start each branch meeting (Submitted by Sue Shineman)**

The AAUW MO State DEI (Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion) Committee is asking each branch to start every meeting with a 10-minute 'Inclusion Infusion.'

**The purpose of 'Inclusion Infusion'** is to introduce in small segments, various elements of DEI (diversity, equity, and inclusion) to members at every opportunity. Often just raising the topic of diversity brings negative feelings. By slowly introducing you to thoughts and ideas relating to DEI, the hope is that we will then be able to delve deeper into more meaningful activities and membership outreach all while keeping DEI at the forefront of everything we do.

Diversity means variety and is all about what makes us unique. What are some dimensions of diversity? They can be anything that has been historically used to differentiate groups, such as ethnicity, gender, religious beliefs, or socio-economic status.

Some of these dimensions are more visible than others, and some are more salient in the United States than in other parts of the world, given our history of discrimination and exclusion.

The beauty of diversity — and the thing that makes it so powerful — is learning to appreciate it and creating an environment where it can grow and thrive. Diversity can be a great source of strength. Our aim is to create an environment where we can explore our differences in a safe and respectful way that helps each person understand their value and celebrates what diversity brings to AAUW.

### **Diversity**

- Includes everyone: all ages, gender, language, race, national origin, religious beliefs, physical ability / disability, sexual orientation, skills, thinking styles, ethnic and cultural differences
- Characteristics that make each of us unique
- It's not about 'them' – it is about each person coming to terms with his or her attitudes, beliefs and experiences about others and gaining comfort with differences



### **Optional Reading Resource – What is Organizational Diversity? What are the benefits?**

Copy and paste this link into your browser.

[https://r.search.yahoo.com/\\_ylt=AwEofzMdBZjpB4No.1XNyoA;\\_ylu=Y29sbwNiZjEEcG9zAzQEdnRpZAMEc2VjA3Ny/RV=2/RE=1662444876/RO=10/RU=https%3a%2f%2fpeopledynamics.co%2forganizational-diversity%2f/RK=2/RS=jjoY4xWrlZV85a3n3bRmqBPbYrE-](https://r.search.yahoo.com/_ylt=AwEofzMdBZjpB4No.1XNyoA;_ylu=Y29sbwNiZjEEcG9zAzQEdnRpZAMEc2VjA3Ny/RV=2/RE=1662444876/RO=10/RU=https%3a%2f%2fpeopledynamics.co%2forganizational-diversity%2f/RK=2/RS=jjoY4xWrlZV85a3n3bRmqBPbYrE-)



Image: AAUW National, 2022

## **50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Title IX – June 23, 1972**

As you know, the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Title IX was June 23, 2022. Many celebrations and commemorative events took place. Though the law passed 50 years ago, there is still much more work to do. Title IX is so much more than just athletics!

Title IX prohibits federally funded educational institutions from discriminating against students or employees based on sex.

AAUW is a nonpartisan organization – but nonpartisan does not mean ‘non-political’. Since its first meeting in 1881, AAUW has been a catalyst for change. Together, through our coordinated and strategic advocacy, we’ve enacted invaluable legislation at the federal, state, and local levels. The current AAUW Public Policy priorities directly identify strengthening and vigorously enforcing Title IX.

AAUW started studying the impact of sex discrimination on college campuses in 1945, long before Title IX became part of the national conversation. AAUW began issuing surveys to colleges and universities inquiring about the status of women on their campuses to measure the sex discrimination happening on campuses

A 1970 letter from our General Director states: “We are hearing rumblings of discontent from many different directions at the higher education level – from faculty and administrative women, women graduate students and undergraduate women who are finding courage to express their views.”

AAUW formalized the effort by passing a resolution at the 1969 National Convention and creating the “Committee on Standards in Higher Education” publishing “Campus 1970: Where do Women Stand?”, which documents the widespread sex discrimination against women at all levels of higher education, from students to trustees.

By 1971, 250 institutions of higher learning were facing charges of sex discrimination, and AAUW made national news by distributing a set of guidelines to the presidents of all four-year institutions in the country, titled AAUW’s Standards for Women in Higher Education: Affirmative Policy in Achieving Sex Equality in the Academic Community.

The following year, Title IX passed through Congress; however, “federal enforcement regulations were not written until 1974 and did not become effective until 1975.

In 2022, AAUW Missouri’s own research revealed that 2/3 of college students experience sexual harassment. Studies have also found that approximately 26% of all female undergraduate students and nearly 7% of all male undergraduate students have experienced sexual assault.

Additionally, AAUW research found that 56% of girls and 40% of boys in grades 7 – 12 face sexual harassment.

There is still much more work to do!

**(Submitted by Sue Shineman)**