



AAUW of Maine Council: Progress Toward a Better Way for AAUW of Maine

By Carolyn MacRae, Interim Administrator

Last spring, when it was time to elect a new state president, the state board of directors discovered once again that nobody was willing to take on this role. Instead of continuing to look for a new president, nine board members decided it was time for a new approach. Current national bylaws give great latitude in structuring the state organization,. We decided to start with a blank slate and imagine what might be possible – a clear purpose for the state organization, a new leadership structure that will work for AAUW of Maine and its branches, and better ways to fulfill AAUW’s mission to promote equity for women and girls. I was asked to become the AAUW of Maine Interim Administrator and lead the planning process.



Courtesy of Betty-Jane Meader

Over the summer and fall, we have been working together and thinking hard about what might be a better organizational structure for AAUW of Maine – one that would support better communications and relations between the state organization and the branches and make AAUW a more successful organization for our members.

What progress has been made?

- Through consensus, we agreed that the main role of the state organization is to act as a resource and provide help and support to the branches.
- The proposed name for our new organization is the AAUW of Maine Council.
- We have also agreed that simpler, more streamlined bylaws and a board structure with fewer elected and appointed positions would function better for everyone – both the state organization and the branches.
- A new draft organizational chart has been developed; it has fewer positions, which, importantly, still includes a board member representing each branch. The draft organizational chart includes three key committees – Program & Policy, Membership, and Communications – that should help the Council to function in a more coordinated way. We envision that the committees will include branch members with particular interests in the areas the committees cover.
- We have started a list of concrete ways the Council can help and support branches and their members. We already have almost a dozen possibilities. We will continue to add to the list and roll out the best ideas over time.
- Work group members are completing short assignments to define and describe board positions and committees. The definitions will provide a basis for drafting new, more streamlined bylaws.
- AAUW of Maine has established a Zoom account, which branches can also use for meetings, and AAUW of Maine now has its own email address.
- The AAUW of Maine website has been updated.
- We are looking into other ways to communicate and collaborate, including Google Docs and related Google applications.

What is the timeline for all this?

Our plan is to complete the draft organizational structure and develop new, simpler draft bylaws by spring. We will then send the draft proposal out to all branch members for their review. Time will be set aside at the state convention for discussion and voting on adopting the draft organization plan and bylaws. If it is approved, it will be implemented beginning July 1, 2023.

What else should you know?

In addition to planning and developing our new state structure, we are continuing to attend to the business of AAUW of Maine, holding regular meetings via Zoom, publishing the *Dawnbreaker*, and planning for the 2023 spring convention and annual meeting.

The nine members of this working group are Martha Arterberry, Mary Ayers, Judy Dinmore, Betsy Eggleston, Janet Givens, Helene Maraghy, Betty-Jane Meader, Kristin Sweeney, and I. We have each shared our individual skills, strengths, and knowledge of AAUW, and I thank you all!

Questions or suggestions?

We will welcome your input, comments, and suggestions. Please contact me at carolynmacrae@gmail.com and I will share your ideas with the group.

Tech Report

By Martha Arterberry

Harnessing of technology has been one outcome of the COVID-19 pandemic, whether you like it or not! At the state level, we have our website, we now have a Zoom account, and we recently created a Google Group so that we may easily community with all Maine AAUW members, whether they have a branch affiliation or not. We plan to continue using technology to bridge the geographic distance among our members and branches. One comment that frequently comes up is how great it is to get together with like-minded women. Now we have many ways to do this!

Our State Website. Martha Arterberry is happy to update content on the state website. Each branch has a page, and some of the pages are very out of date. Please send updated information about your leadership, programming, etc. to Arterberry47@gmail.com. Here is the URL: <https://aauw-me.aauw.net/>.



Our state-level email address. If you want to contact someone at the state level but not sure who to email, use our state email address: aauwofmaine@gmail.com. Also keep your eye out for member-wide announcements, **such as this newsletter**.

Zoom – Free for All!



We have a state AAUW Zoom account, which is free to anyone who would like to use it for AAUW purposes. For more information or help setting up a meeting, please contact Martha Arterberry (Arterberry47@gmail.com).

Girls' Day Celebration at the Blaine House

By Betty-Jane Meader

For 25 years, Girls' Day at the Maine State House has been "changing lives and building leaders." Now, the Maine Women's Lobby Education Fund is expanding the program with the Youth Policy Leadership Forum. Applications opened in November to Maine high school students who want "to learn about gender equity and justice through policy change and legislation." Of those who apply, 50 will be selected in December 2022. For more information, go to: info@mainewomen.org.

Courtesy of Betty-Jane Meader



Governor Janet Mills and Betty-Jane Meader, Waterville Branch.

To celebrate this expansion, Girls' Day alumni supporters, including Betty-Jane Meader, joined Governor Janet Mills for a tea at the Blaine House on September 20, 2022. The speakers were Governor Janet Mills, Senator Matthea Daughtry, Honorable Sara Gideon, and Executive Director of the Maine Women's Lobby Destie Hohman Sprague.

Overturing of Roe v. Wade

Are you shocked, angered, or saddened by the recent Supreme Court decision that overturned Roe v. Wade? Are you worried about women’s access to reproductive health? Do you fear that the rights of women are being rolled back? Are you at a loss as to what to do?

Many feel this way right now. As the implications of the recent decision spread across the country, you may feel the need to act. Marches are good in the short term, but to fight back for reproductive rights and to prevent other rights from eroding, we need long term sustained action. We need lobbyists and legal advocates in the right places. We need strength in numbers. The American Association of University Women (AAUW) has all this and more. The AAUW was founded in 1881, and since day one it has advocated for women and girls, including voting rights, pay equity, opportunities and support for women in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics, Title IX, and reproductive health.

Abortion is still legal in Maine. Groups such as the Maine Women’s Lobby and Maine Family Planning support women’s reproductive rights. The Mabel Wadsworth Center is an independent non-profit that provides abortions. These groups can use your support financially or as a volunteer. Your support of women’s right to choose can also be through letters-to-the-editor to newspapers, communications with your local, state and national leaders, and support of pro-choice non-profits.

Over 170,000 women and men in AAUW make a difference. In Maine, you can join one of the four branches of AAUW, including one in Waterville. For more information, see aauw.org or email aauwofmaine@gmail.com.

On behalf of the AAUW Waterville Branch,
Martha E. Arterberry, President

Some STEM News

Jessica Wade, a 33-year-old British physicist, (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jess_Wade), has become famous for writing more than 1600 Wikipedia entries about little known or unknown women scientists: <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/education/33-year-old-made-1000-wikipedia-bios-unknown-women-scientists-rcna52476>.

AAUW Grant Recipient

By Martha Arterberry

Alejandra (Aleja) Ortiz is an Assistant Professor of Geology at Colby College. She was previously an Assistant Professor of Coastal Engineering in the Department of Civil, Construction, and Environmental Engineering at



North Carolina State University. Her research is focused on coastal geomorphology, the study of coastal landscape change over decades to centuries. She is the principal investigator on several grants related to long-term resiliency of Tropical Atoll Islands, understanding the impact of waves on alum treatments in nearby Belgrade Lakes, and predicting bridge erosion using computer modeling, remote sensing, and fieldwork.

Dr. Ortiz earned her Ph.D. in Marine Geology and a Master’s of Science in Environmental Engineering in the Joint Program in Oceanography at Massachusetts Institute of Technology – Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution (MIT-WHOI). She enjoys cooking, hiking, and living in her tiny house with her wife and pets.



Her AAUW Award is a Research Publication Grant in Engineering, Medicine, and Science. For her fellowship year, Aleja is working on tracking long-term landscape change on Atoll Islands using satellite imagery, Artificial Intelligence (AI), and Python coding. Thanks to her fellowship, she will work with colleagues at CSDMS (Community Surface Dynamics Modeling System) in Colorado University, Boulder, to improve her current computer code to track atoll island characteristics (like the size and shape of each island). From satellite photos of Landsat Missions (freely available since the 1980s), she plans to use AI (thanks to the Colby AI Davis Institute and Sabbatical fellowship) to automate image classification and segmentation (i.e., split a satellite image into land or water or shallow reef), then her python code will track changes to atoll islands over the last 20-40 years by tracking changes in area, perimeter, width, etc. on atolls globally. This analysis should help us pinpoint global hotspots of atoll island change and better predict drivers of future atoll island evolution.

Editor’s note: AAUW distributed the most-ever funding to AAUW’s 2022-23 AAUW Fellows and Grantees—\$6 million!



Title IX of the Civil Rights Act was signed into law on June 23, 1972 by President Richard M. Nixon. However, Title IX began its journey through all three branches of government when Representative Patsy T. Mink, of Hawaii, who is recognized as the major author and sponsor of the legislation, introduced it in Congress.

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 states: *“No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.”*

In celebration of the 50th anniversary of Title IX on June 23, the Biden Administration proposed new Title IX regulations that would restore protections for student survivors of sexual harassment, clarify protections for LGBTQ+ students, and much more.



US postage stamps issued 3/3/02.

AAUW celebrated the 50th anniversary of Title IX on June 23, 2022

Where AAUW Stands on Title IX:
<https://www.aauw.org/resources/policy/position-title-ix/>.

State Convention June 3, 2023

Save the date for our in-person state convention, tentatively scheduled for June 3, 2023. The theme is Education and Economics, and we plan to meet at Educare Central Maine in Waterville. More details will come as we know them.



The **Maine Women's Lobby Education Fund** (<https://www.mainewomen.org>) is the convener of the Maine Paid Leave Coalition. Find out how to get involved: <https://mainefamilyleave.org>.



Congratulations are in order for Stacy Doore, Waterville Branch member, on her award from the U.S. Department of Transportation's Inclusive Design Challenge. Read all about it here: <https://news.colby.edu/story/computer-science-collaboration-earns-national-prize/>.

Branching Out: News from Our Branches

Aroostook Branch of AAUW

By Carol Pierson, Secretary

Since the last *Dawnbreaker* submission in July, the Aroostook Branch of AAUW hosted an informational talk by Joy Barressi on the services offered by the Aroostook Area Agency on Aging. At our August meeting, Shirley Ayer coordinated a discussion of members' favorite books. September was our program planning meeting for programs for next year. In October, Eliza Townsend gave us an overview of the Appalachian Mountain Club Trails - its founding and its mission.

We do not meet from November through April, but check out the next *Dawnbreaker* for our programs scheduled for next year!

Bath-Brunswick Branch

By Helene Maraghy, Treasurer

The Demise of the Bath-Brunswick Branch

Much has been said and written about how the COVID-19 Pandemic has affected institutions, businesses, and society as a whole since it hit the US in early 2020. In the case of Maine's Bath-Brunswick AAUW branch, it may just have been the final nail in the coffin.

Established in 1930, the branch has seen hundreds of women join its ranks over the years. Its first president, Edith Lansing Koon Sills, was the spouse of Kenneth Sills, President of Bowdoin College, which did not welcome women to its campus until 1971. Despite the school's central location in the community, the Bath-Brunswick branch has seldom been able to garner membership from its professors and students.

However, during its most active years, Bath-Brunswick was instrumental in creating two programs, which continue to serve the community at large to this day.



**HOME
TO HOME**

"Home to Home" was initiated in 1994, following a presentation by Justice Joseph Field of the Family Division of the 6th District Court, who spoke about the desperate need for a program to supervise the exchange of children between

parents in conflict. Working with stakeholders in the legal, health, and broader communities, including the Commanding Officer at Naval Air Station, Brunswick, "Home to Home" was born with a meeting place on the Naval Station campus. Following the closing of the military base in the early years of the 21st century, the new campus of Mid Coast Hospital became the central exchange location for families and, later, supervised visitation, which continues to this day (<https://www.mainehometohome.org>).

The B-B Branch was also instrumental in the restoration and ongoing history program of the one-room Growstown School house on Church Road in Brunswick. Since the mid-1980s the building has served as a "Living History Center" for elementary school students to experience school life of the mid 19th century.

Both Home to Home and Growstown school have seen active participation by many members for decades.

In recent years, the branch has been unsuccessful in drawing in new faces. Many existing members have been around for more than 50 years and several are residents in congregate senior housing communities with no interest in leadership positions or social justice causes. Some, still with energy to spare, have turned their focus to other organizations on the national and international level.

Attendance at branch meetings had been sparse prior to COVID-19 and the same individuals had held the key leadership roles since 2016. Polling was conducted to determine interest by the membership in attending meetings via Zoom. Very few expressed interest. Added to the fact that leaders were not comfortable with using current technology, overall interest in the organization declined.

At a well-attended final meeting in spring of this year, many expressed gratitude for the many friends they had made and praised the hard work that had taken place during the prior 90 years. Ultimately the vote was unanimous to close out the branch and continue existing friendships beyond the organization's structure.

Historical records from the branch were hand-delivered for preservation to the University of Maine Fogler Library in Orono. Remaining financial assets were disbursed: \$1,747 to University of Maine Augusta for the annual donation to two non-traditional student scholarships; \$750 to Growstown School; \$1,250 to Home to Home; and the balance of \$3,857 to the national AAUW.

Hancock County Branch

By Louise Storer, Secretary

The Hancock County Branch met in late July for a combined book sharing and program planning session. In August, we had a lunch meeting where the conversation centered around the problems of public education.

Our September program was shared with the Retired Teachers group where we heard a speaker discuss gender issues in both schools and the workplace. The October meeting was held again in conjunction with the Retired Teachers and we enjoyed a guided tour of the newly-opened Hancock Historical Museum.

Penobscot Valley Branch

By Janet Givens, Liaison

The Penobscot Valley Branch's Fall meeting was held on Zoom on October 26, 2022. Climate change activist, Cloe Chun, presented an inspiring program "Our Legacy for our Grandchildren." She shared her desire to help people understand our connection to the earth and her enjoyment of exploring wild places. Cloe Chun is a co-founder of the Maine Naturalist Program and the Penobscot River Paddling Trail. She helped start the Belfast Bay Watershed Coalition. A registered Maine guide, she is the author of "50 Hikes in the Maine Mountains." A business meeting followed the program. The branch has 23 members.

Editor's Addendum

The December 7 meeting will also be on Zoom at 7 PM. Sondra Siegal, volunteer coordinator for Welcoming Immigrant Neighbors (WIN), will discuss "Welcoming Immigrant Women and Their Families."

Waterville Branch

By Martha Arterberry, President

The Waterville Branch is hosting monthly hybrid meetings with participants in the room and on Zoom. Our calendar of events is listed on our branch website, including the Zoom link. All are welcome. Our meeting in October featured Evelyn Kieltyka, Senior Vice President of Program Services at Maine Family Planning. Kieltyka covered a 50-year history of reproductive rights, at both the state and national level, and showed how her organization continues to refocus

their mission and services as the legal landscaped changes. Our spring programming includes programs pertaining to women in business, women in STEM, and the Girl Scouts of Maine: <https://aauw-me.aauw.net/branches/waterville/>.

Members of the branch's Pizza and Politics Group also prepared a Reproductive Rights Score Card in advance of the November 8 election, focusing on central Maine candidates. The information was shared at the October meeting and via ColbyNow, Colby College's internal newsletter. Here is a snapshot.

**Reproductive Rights Score Card
Election 2022**

Position	Candidates	Reproductive Health
Governor	Janet Mills Paul LePage Sam Hunkler	Pro-Choice ¹ Pro-Life ² Pro-Choice ⁷
US House of Rep, 2 nd District	Jared Golden Bruce Poliquin Tiffany Bond	Pro-Choice ⁴ Pro-Life ⁸ Pro-Choice ⁵
US House of Rep, 1 st District	Chellie Pingree Ed Thelander	Pro-Choice ³ "respects the sanctity of life" ⁶
State House District 65 (part of Waterville)	Bruce White Tammy Brown	Pro-Life ^{9,14} ?
State House District 64 (Winslow, part of Waterville)	Colleen Madigan Ruth Malcolm	Pro-Choice; endorsed by Planned Parenthood ¹⁰ ?
State Senate District 16 (Albion, Fairfield, Oakland, Winslow, Waterville)	David LaFontaine Mike Perkins	Pro-Choice ³ ; endorsed by Planned Parenthood ¹¹ Pro-Life; rated 100% by Maine Right to Life Committee ¹²

The full score card, with sources, is available from Martha Arterberry (Arterberry47@gmail.com).



- March 2023 Women's History Month
- March 8, 2023 International Women's Day
- March 15, 2023 Equal Pay Day
- May 31 – June 3 NCCWSL
University of Maryland
College Park, MD
- June 3, 2023 AAUW Maine State Convention
Waterville

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