



Elmhurst Area Branch News

Volume 83, No. 8 • February 2022

Branch Meeting

February 2, 2022 - 7 pm

Zoom Meeting

“Assistance to Immigrants in the Chicago Area”

The February 2, 2022, AAUW general meeting will be hosted by the HALF THE SKY study group which has been studying the plight of immigrants for the past few years.

Patricia Motto, a board member of INTERFAITH COMMUNITY FOR DETAINED IMMIGRANTS (ICDI), will speak about its mission to assist immigrants placed in detention in northern Illinois, those traveling through Chicago via the Greyhound Bus system and unaccompanied minors in the Heartland Facilities.

Chicago-based, ICDI supports a variety of programs to assist immigrants in our area. Recent milestones:

- 8,000 jail visits in 4 detention centers
- 3,000 people being deported received support
- 200 families of people being deported supported
- 2,000 immigration hearings monitored
- Spiritual aid for 1,500 unaccompanied children
- Assisted 600 people upon release from detention
- 350 volunteers
- Assisted people from over 26 countries of origin

The presentation will be offered via ZOOM. Hope to “see” you there.



Branch Meeting

February 2, 2022

7:00 pm

Zoom Meeting

“Assistance to Immigrants in the Chicago Area”

Board Meeting

February 23, 2022 - 7 pm

via Zoom and in person at the Elmhurst Public Library Gathering Room

Book Group

February 24, 2022 - 1 pm

You Never Forget Your First

by Alexis Coe

Discussion Leader: Janet Hodge via Zoom

Half the Sky

February 25, 2022

7:00 pm

Zoom Meeting

“Afghan Immigrant and Immigrants in Elmhurst”



AAUW Hotline 1-800-326-2289
Email: info@aauwelmhurst.org

Mission

To advance gender equity for women and girls through research, education and advocacy.

Values

Nonpartisan. Fact-based Integrity. Inclusion and Intersectionality.

Vision

Equity for all.

Membership

The American Association of University Women is open to any graduate holding an associate or equivalent, baccalaureate, or higher degree from a regionally accredited institution.

AAUW FUNDS

The AAUW Funds support educational fellowships and grants, legal advocacy, public policy, leadership programs and research reports.

ELMHURST AREA BRANCH

NEWS is published ten times a year (August/September through May) by the American Association of University Women - Elmhurst Area Branch.

FINANCIAL REPORT

December 31, 2021

Jennifer Jordan

Director of Finance

Fundraiser Fund	\$12,962.08
Conferences Fund	1,933.84
General Fund	<u>7,996.58</u>
Total	\$22,892.50

AAUW Funds Committee

The AAUW Funds Committee met on January 19, 2022, via Zoom to begin its work for the 2022 Returning Student Scholarships. For the first time ever, we are offering three \$3,000 scholarships to local women going back to school.

The application deadline is April 15, 2022. The application form and requirements have been updated on our website and the Facebook page thanks to Sally Schuster and Sarah Caltvedt, respectively. The flyers will be placed at local establishments in the next few weeks. Newspaper articles, electronic signs, and communications with local schools and libraries are some of the publicity work planned by the Committee. Please check the website yourself and encourage women who meet the requirements to apply.

At the same meeting, the Funds Committee spent some time discussing the Ad Hoc Committee’s Recommendations received earlier this month. The Ad Hoc Committee appointed by the Funds Committee back in early December met twice and submitted the following recommendations on changes to be made to the Funds Policy:

1. The Committee recommends that the phrase “\$25 per member” be eliminated from the Statement of Branch Policies because if we raise a very small amount in a year, \$25 per person would leave little or no funds left for local scholarships.
2. The Committee further recommends that one of the following two options be instituted:
 - a. National Giving 40% and Local Giving 60% or
 - b. National 50% and Local 50%

The Funds Committee accepted the recommendation under item (1) and chose the second option of (b) National 50% and Local 50% under item (2).

The Ad Hoc Committee consisted of Carolyn Heiney its chair, and Judy Ekblad, Sheila Hope, Deb Markello, and Darlene Van Meir. The work performed by the Committee is much appreciated.

The Funds Committee will submit these recommendations to the Branch Board at its next meeting.

-Tsue Ostermann, Director

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE – February 2022

It is already February and the days are getting visibly longer, and we are closer to Spring. I hope you all are doing well.

I replayed an AAUW webinar recently that occurred in November during AAUW's 140 year anniversary celebration. It was inspiring to me. In it, Dr. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, director general of the World Trade Organization and one of Time magazine's 100 most influential people of 2021, received the 2021 AAUW Alumnae Recognition Award. This award is given to women who have previously received an educational fellowship or grant from AAUW and have risen to prominence in their field. Dr. Okonjo-Iweala received a grant for graduate work at Harvard in the 70's that paid for half of her tuition at the time. She was interviewed by Gloria Blackwell and has had a stellar career. If you have a chance to view the webinar, I'm sure you will be impressed.

This past year 260 recipients received an unprecedented \$5 million in fellowships and grants from the American Association of University Women (AAUW) for the 2021-22 academic year. The awards advance educational and professional opportunities for women and girls in the United States and globally.

AAUW National will soon be upgrading its data systems to better serve their members. To complete the implementation, there will be a blackout period from February 4th through February 15th, during which no one will be able to access the Member Services Database and won't be able to process dues or donations online. AAUW can still receive checks and other forms by mail and staff will be available to assist with any request that doesn't require database access. You'll still be able to access the AAUW website.

Respectfully,
Moira Murray

HALF THE SKY - ACTION ITEMS

Whether or not you attend meetings of our Half the Sky Group, we invite all AAUW members to join in our efforts, which currently include the following:

1. Do you have gently used bras that you don't wear? Some bras seem perfect when purchased and then are not quite comfortable when worn. If you have bras that you have not worn often, are in new or gently used condition, please consider donating them to FREE THE GIRLS, an organization that supports women coming away from sexual trafficking. Treasure House in Glen Ellyn collects the bras. If you would like to donate some, contact Betty Laliberte 630 832 9010 and leave a message.

2. Half the Sky has assembled 179 snack bags for immigrants traveling through the Greyhound Bus terminal in Chicago. Let us know if you are interested in joining us with our next set of snack bags.

3. Afghan families are resettling in Illinois. There is a 17 member family living in a hotel temporarily in Lisle. If you are interested in helping, please visit:

GO FUND ME page for an Afghan family living in a hotel in Lisle.

<https://gofund.me/3b4eec7c>

Governor Pritzker has offered a welcome to 1,500 families with a 3 month support for each family. The refugee organizations are concerned that there is a need for additional funding. After listening to Pat Motto, you might want to contact your Illinois General Assembly rep, or the governor. Please make your voices heard.

4. Do you have items, or furniture that you want to donate to immigrant families? We have been working with World Relief, and Repeat Boutique <https://repeatboutiquecenter.com>. If you have items, you might consider these Carol Stream based organizations.

Following is a letter the Elmhurst Branch received earlier this month from National in response to our donation of \$10,109.49.

Gloria L. Blackwell
Chief Executive Officer
American Association of University Women (AAUW)

A warm hello from AAUW National--though it's quite chilly here and snow is on the way! It has been an exciting first few months as CEO and I am so grateful for our national staff who continue to focus on the most pressing issues facing women and girls as the pandemic continues to dictate so much of our lives. We remain working from home productively, and I'm proud of how readily we've adapted to new ways of work and life—and how we not only continue advancing our mission, but are growing it, with creativity and tenacity. As always, keeping the AAUW community informed and engaged is paramount. I hope you were able to join our virtual Member Gathering this month—if not, the recording will be available soon.

I just learned from my team that the AAUW Elmhurst Area Branch made a very generous donation to support our greatest needs. Thank you so much! Please share my deep personal thanks with all those whose passion for AAUW's mission made this gift possible. Your support is especially important as COVID19 has exacerbated and highlighted inequities that run deep, and we have many challenges to address in every sector in our society. And, as we all know from the news, these challenges arise each and every day, bolstering our conviction for our mission and our work.

Again, thank you so very much on behalf of all of us for your generosity. You are making a difference. Please stay well and stay connected with AAUW National (through our webinars, our national newsletters, our Two-Minute Activist appeals and more!) and with your fellow AAUW Elmhurst Area Branch members.

And, I hope to “see” many of you on an AAUW Zoom webinar soon!

With gratitude,
~Gloria

NEW ILLINOIS LAWS for 2022

This year turned out to be a very busy one for Illinois lawmakers and Gov. Pritzker – they passed more than 280 measures that were signed into law taking effect in 2022. Here are a couple that I found interesting:

- Statewide, the minimum wage increased by \$1 to \$12 per hour.
- The state’s definition of a hate crime is being expanded to include acts of violence, theft, or many other offenses against another person because of their immigration or citizenship status.
- Police will be forbidden from using deceptive tactics when interrogating minors, making Illinois the first state in the nation to ban a practice that advocates of the law say can lead to false confessions and, ultimately, wrongful convictions.
- Private and public schools will no longer be allowed to ban braids, locks, twists, or other hairstyles associated with race or ethnicity.
- In the wake of increased anti-Asian violence during the corona virus pandemic, Illinois became the first state to require Asian American history to be taught in public schools.
- Restaurants offering kids’ meals now will be required to serve low-fat or nonfat milk or other unsweetened beverages, such as water or 100% juice as the default option.
- The state’s Department of Children and Family Services will now be required to prepare an annual report that examines the racial disparities in the child welfare system.
- The Illinois Secretary of State’s office now incorporates how motorists should interact with police officers who pull them over in its Rules of the Road manual.
- Some insurance plans in Illinois will be required to provide coverage for infertility treatments for LGBTQ people, prospective single parents, and women with certain health conditions.
- Pharmacists will be able to dispense hormonal birth control – including pills, patches, and vaginal rings – for up to 12 months without a doctor’s prescription.
- The Illinois Department of Human Services will be required to apply for a waiver from the federal government to allow food stamps and other benefits to pay for menstrual hygiene products and diapers.

Jane Jegerski
Public Policy

Soles of Hope Report

At the last Half the Sky meeting, Deb Markello shared the story of Soles of Hope, a not-for-profit group that was founded by Fred Opokua and his wife Opie. The couple formed the organization several years ago as part of their personal mission to help children in Kpandai, a remote village in northern Ghana.

Fred started by collecting and delivering shoes and school supplies from donors in Chicago to the small town. As told on the website SolesOfHope.org, “Growing up in Ghana, Fred had lived the reality they’d seen. He’d owned one pair of shoes, if you can really call them that. They were torn with holes in them, but it was all he had. Providing what little comfort he could find, he vividly remembers putting cardboard in the bottom to protect his feet. If that wasn’t enough, he’d been so poor that he recalls eating dirt for dinner, just so his stomach wouldn’t ache from hunger.”

The program eventually was expanded to help improve the delivery of safe water to the residents of Kpandai and local school improvements, including a library for the children.

“Jeanne Reder and I have the privilege of calling Fred and Opie our good friends,” Deb says. “We were amazed by their selfless work for the children of Ghana. Fred shared with us their dream of starting a library. We were delighted to donate several boxes of children and young adult books, which we purchased from our AAUW Branch Used Book Sale.

“We are so touched to see them filling the bookshelves of the new library that Opie and Fred have created for the children of the village. We wish to thank our sister branch members for all the help in selecting these treasures, that are now in the deserving hands of the Ghanaian children.”

See solesofhope.org for further information.



Coming Your Way on March 2 “Understanding the Difference Between Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DEI)”

I hope you'll attend the AAUW meeting on Wednesday, March 2nd, at 7 p.m. when I will facilitate a workshop on understanding the difference between diversity, equity, and inclusion. The program won't be a lecture or presentation. Instead, you the audience will be the program!

This program is a continuation of the work we did when we considered unconscious bias. In fact, most of the workshop will be thinking, reporting and discussion. Be sure to have a pencil and paper handy because I'll start by asking you to write down your own definitions of the three words in the title: diversity, equity, and inclusion. I'll then break you up into small groups and ask you to share and discuss your responses with the others in your group. I'll ask each group to select a reporter, and when we come out of the small groups, I'll ask for reports.

In preparation for this program, I'd like to recommend viewing some YouTube videos:

- Understanding Microaggressions (from the Wisconsin Technical College System):
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e4N50b76cZc>
- Responding to Microaggressions (Wisconsin Technical College System):
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HrCgBLoMxTQ>

If we have time, we'll also talk a little bit about “Allyship” and how to be a good ally. I'd like to recommend two videos that I think do a good job of introducing the concept of creating allyship:

- Allyship is the Key to Social Justice (Whitney Parnell)
- What if White People Led the Charge to End Racism? (Dwinita Mosley Taylor)

Another video, on “Creating Inclusive Spaces,” on the National AAUW website, has valuable insights on that topic.

I'm recommending these videos because I think they will enhance our discussion. It's not required; it's not homework, and there won't be a test! There are more videos on diversity, equity, inclusion, allyship, and creating inclusive spaces on the AAUW National website, and many more on YouTube which you may enjoy exploring.

Because this workshop is about learning together, it's important to create a safe space where everyone can speak freely. For that reason, I'll ask you to keep the participants' responses confidential.

Due to the Omicron variant, this will be a Zoom meeting, which will originate from one of the meeting rooms at Elmhurst Public Library, where staff will help me with breaking everyone out in small group rooms.

--Elizabeth Neill