

Co-Presidents' Message



Dear Cherished Members of the AAUW Greater Naples Branch,

In these final days of December 2021, we have reflected on the successes of our branch as our members tackle goals and action plans. So much has been accomplished since this past September! As we wind up the calendar year, we are excited about the opportunities that 2022 will provide to our branch and its members.

The Board continues its work on a new strategic plan that aligns with the goals of AAUW National and AAUW Florida. Branch goals include: (1) a Leadership Model to illustrate the leadership opportunities our branch provides to its members and others in the community; (2) a leadership succession plan; (3) a diversity, equity and inclusion plan incorporating the goals of AAUW national; and (4) a collaboration with Florida Gulf Coast University to archive the historical records of our branch since its inception. We are planning on the Branch participating in the “Five Star” Recognition program sponsored by AAUW national. AAUW’s Five-Star National Recognition Program rewards affiliates (states, branches and other organizations) for aligning their work with the AAUW strategic plan and other initiatives that foster the organization’s mission of advancing gender equity for women and girls.

Our Membership Committee, led by Elaine Wade, has developed a membership survey which some of you have completed. We plan to have the survey online sometime in January so all members are able to complete it in the near future. We want to use the results of this survey to identify, recognize, utilize and support the leadership skills of current and new members for the good of the branch. We hope to encourage each and every one of you to bring your talents and gifts to forwarding our mission and vision.

Our Public Policy Committee, led by Carol Light, met earlier this month, and is developing an action plan that fosters membership engagement and meets AAUW national goals. We ask that you circle **January 15, 2022** on your calendar and join our branch members at the **TRUTH & DEMOCRACY March, Rally & Social Justice Fair** sponsored by Collier Freedom. We will have a table at the event where we hope to gain the interest of potential branch members who support the AAUW Mission and Vision.

Our Vice-President, Julie Olander, arranged for Lynda Waterhouse, an inspiring speaker and President of Keiser University, to speak about her experience running for public office at our most recent branch meeting. Additionally, our first “talk and tour” since the beginning of the pandemic, was held at FGCU, which included a wine and cheese reception, followed by a special guided tour of the University archives and Collections. In early December, our members feasted and sang and shopped a silent auction at the annual branch Holiday Luncheon organized by Susan Becker, Laura Candris and Janet Ankiel. A warm thank you to all of you for using your gifts and talents to further our Branch mission.

We are excited that our SIG groups are starting to meet on a regular basis, virtually and, in person. Check out the branch website, if you haven’t already done so, to identify a “Special Interest Group” that sparks your interest.

We hope that you are experiencing a joyous holiday season. We look forward to seeing you at the January Branch meeting which will be held on **January 8th**.

Happy New Year!
Your co-presidents,
Jacky & Karen