

March 2025

DESERT BREEZE



Las Vegas (NV) Branch

American Association of University Women

March MEETING

Saturday, March 15, 2025

11:30 AM

THE SUMMIT

2215 Thomas Ryan Blvd.

Las Vegas, NV 89134

Come join us at The Summit. The cost is \$25.00 per person. The price includes the room fee, technical equipment, lunch from the menu, and a drink. Guests are welcome, so bring a friend. No reservations are needed.



Guest Speaker

Janai McFarland

AAUW Las Vegas Branch

Scholarship Recipient

PRESIDENTS' MESSAGE

Our February meeting speaker was Wendi Schweigart, who spoke about Project Marilyn. We are working on setting up a day that a group of at least six members can go to Project Marilyn and help pack period kits for distribution.

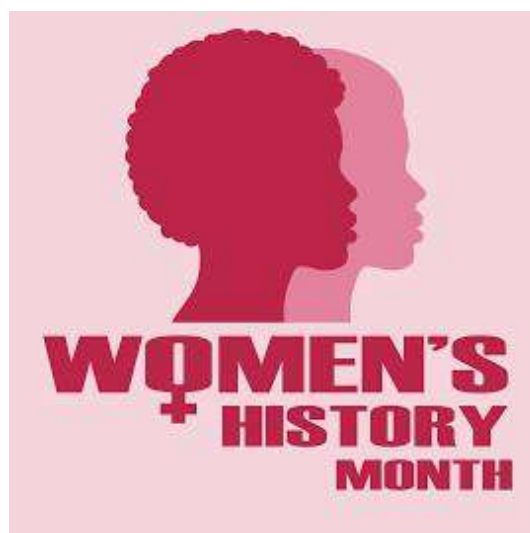
Just a reminder that members receive an email when it is time to renew their membership. Membership now expires at various times during the year. So be sure to renew your membership when you receive that notice.

There will be several proposals regarding membership dues and public policy issues that AAUW members will vote on this spring. Voting will begin April 14 and end on May 13. Members will receive information to vote online prior to April 14.

We need to continue to watch for changing policies that impact women in the upcoming months and be sure we make our voices heard.

We continue to stay focused on our mission of gender equity and economic security.

Janis and Marilyn



GUEST SPEAKER JANAI MCFARLAND



Scholarships

Success Story: Sandwiched yet Strong

Meet Janai McFarland, a tenacious and determined scholar, whose educational journey is marked by resilience and achievement. Janai is a current Bachelor of Science Nursing student at Nevada State University with a minor in Psychology.



Project Marilyn Donations

Project Marilyn is a nonprofit 501(c)3 in Southern Nevada working to end period poverty. Project Marilyn's mission is to provide free period supplies throughout our state of Nevada. Everyone deserves a healthy and dignified period. **They need singly wrapped pads, singly wrapped Tampax tampons, singly wrapped panty liners, and singly wrapped feminine wipes. You can help. Please bring singly wrapped supplies to our March meeting.**

AAUW is in the process of organizing a work party to go to Project Marilyn to help put together period supply bags. We need a team of at least six members, but no more than twelve members to put together the bags. Please let Evelyn Thompson-Hilbert (415-377-0470).



Wendi Schweigart Project Marilyn



MEMBERSHIP RECRUITMENT AND GROWING OUR BRANCH

Let's grow our branch membership. Every member can be a recruiter. Most individuals join AAUW and other organizations because someone they know told them about the organization and invited them to a meeting or activity.

So, we challenge all our members to bring guests to our meetings and activities, so we can grow our membership with individuals who support the mission and work of AAUW.

MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS

Membership renewals now occur throughout the year. Most of our branch members have June 30 membership expiration dates. Newer members and those members who renew after the three-month grace period will have a membership renewal date that occurs in a different month. The Membership Directory includes each member's renewal dates.

Members will receive email notices from AAUW regarding renewing your membership approximately three months prior to the expiration date. There will be a link to renew, using a credit card, or you may still send a check to our treasurer, Letti Dowell. Her information will be included in the renewal notice as well.

Members will continue to receive them through the grace period, which is three months after the renewal date or until the member renews their membership, if sooner. After the three-month grace period, members that have not renewed their membership are dropped from membership.

Membership dues remain at \$98 for branch members, \$18.81 for student affiliate members and \$17 for Honorary Life Members.

Honorary Life Members should send their membership dues of \$17 to Letti Dowell, Treasurer, at 9633 Gavin Stone Ave., Las Vegas, NV, 89145, by June 30.

SUPPORT OUR SCHOLARSHIP FUND

While we hold our annual fund-raising event at our November meeting, we want to remind you that donations can be made throughout the year.

To make a tax-deductible donation to the Scholarship Fund, checks should be sent to the Public Education Foundation, P.O. Box 26243, Oklahoma City, OK 73126-0243. Be sure to designate that the check is for AAUW Las Vegas Scholarships. The Foundation will acknowledge your gift.

You can also donate online to our Scholarship Fund at www.thepef.org. Again, be sure to indicate that your donation is for AAUW Las Vegas Scholarships.

Non-Deductible contributions can also be made at any time by writing a check payable to AAUW Las Vegas. Checks can be given to our treasurer, Letti Dowell, at any meeting or mailed to her at 9633 Gavin Stone Ave., Las Vegas, NV 89145.

*Together
We Can!*

The Las Vegas Branch needs a President, Vice President for Membership, and Treasurer for the 2025-2027 biennium. If you are thinking about any of these positions, we would love to have you on the Executive Board. Contact a member of the Nominating Committee: Chairman Judy Ingham, Janis Schoen, or Ruth Johnson.



Public Policy
Evelyn Thompson-Hilbert



Hellooo AAUW Vegas Branch!

As we step into March, we transition from honoring Black History Month to celebrating Women’s History Month—a time to reflect on the resilience, achievements, and ongoing struggles of women throughout history. Lately, I’ve been deeply moved and inspired by the women I’ve spoken with—women who, like many of us, are grappling with the unsettling contraction of our rights. If you’re feeling stressed, fearful, or isolated, now is the time to lean into your AAUW sisters and the strength of your personal support system.

A powerful reminder of this came from our longtime member, Ruthe, who sent us Christmas cards with a simple yet urgent call to action: "Come Alive." She sent these in the hopes that the ERA would become the 28th Amendment, urging us to stay engaged. At our February luncheon, I had the privilege of meeting her in person—belated Happy Birthday, Ruthe! Your call to action is exactly what we need in this moment—to direct our energy, stand firm, and shape policies that protect our rights. The road ahead may feel uncertain but let me be clear: we will not go back!

In the spirit of the trailblazers before us, I invite you to get involved in Nevada’s legislative session. This month, my article is dedicated to how you can take action, make your voice heard, and be a force for change in our state’s policies. Now is the time to show up.

Let’s move forward—together.



STATE

If you missed the February email I sent out: As of February 17, 2025, the Nevada Legislature's 83rd Session has introduced several bills pertinent to issues championed by the American Association of University Women (AAUW), including women's rights, pay equity, and Title IX protections. Notable bills include:

- **AB45:** Proposes renaming the Committee on Domestic Violence to the Committee on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault, expanding its duties to address sexual assault issues.
- **AB67:** Establishes the Nevada Baby Bonds Program, aiming to provide financial resources to children from low-income families, potentially reducing long-term economic disparities.
- **AB159:** Introduces the Hope Card Program, facilitating easier enforcement of protection orders for domestic violence survivors.
- **AB176:** Focuses on reproductive health care, though specific details are pending further review.
- **SB171:** Enacts a shield law to protect the transgender community, which may have implications for Title IX protections.

Additionally, Governor Joe Lombardo has emphasized collaboration with the Democratic-controlled Legislature to address pressing issues such as affordable housing and healthcare access, which significantly impact women and families.

Assembly Bill 48 (AB48):

This bill addresses the reassignment of students involved in bullying incidents. It authorizes school district boards to reassign a student who has committed acts of discrimination, bullying, or cyber-bullying to a different school within the district upon the request of the student's parent or guardian. Additionally, if both the victim and the perpetrator are reassigned, the bill mandates that they not be placed in the same school. The bill was introduced on February 4, 2025, and is currently under review by the Assembly Education Committee.

STATE

Assembly Bill 49 (AB49):

This bill focuses on the licensure and employment of educational personnel. Key provisions include:

- **Reciprocal Licensing:** The Commission on Professional Standards in Education is required to compile a list of states with teacher licensure requirements equivalent to Nevada's. Individuals holding valid teaching licenses from these states may be provisionally employed in Nevada for up to one year while their application for a Nevada license is processed.
- **Alternative Route to Licensure:** The bill permits individuals to enroll in multiple alternative licensure programs simultaneously, providing flexibility for those seeking teaching credentials through non-traditional pathways.
- **School Nurses and Social Workers:** Applicants for endorsements as school nurses or social workers may serve in these roles while their applications are pending, provided they hold the necessary state licenses.

Some legislation that **The Progressive Leadership Alliance of Nevada PLAN** (<https://planevada.org/>) members are prioritizing that may fall in our areas are the following:

Make it Work Nevada: <https://www.makeitworknevada.org/>

- Either AB112 or BDR 1027 which both have to do with paid family leave and SB 58- Universal Pre-K

Nevada Coalition to End Domestic Violence (NCEDSV):

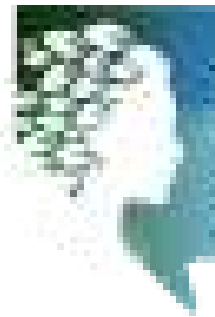
- AB250 - Economic Abuse / of DV victims and BDR 925 - Nevada Safe Bill - protections in schools. They will have a lobby day on April 30th which is Denim Day

Nevada Immigrant Coalition: <https://www.nvimmigrantcoalition>

- **Know Your Rights** training and has 15K red cards for distribution. They may need bilingual volunteers to handle questions on an emergency text line they are setting up.
- **Link to Nevada Attorney General, Know Your Rights document:**
[https://ag.nv.gov/uploadedFiles/agnv.gov/Content/Issues/Nevada%20Know%20Your%20Rights%20Immigration%20\(Individuals.pdf](https://ag.nv.gov/uploadedFiles/agnv.gov/Content/Issues/Nevada%20Know%20Your%20Rights%20Immigration%20(Individuals.pdf)

Progressive Leadership Alliance of Nevada PLAN (<https://planevada.org/>) is organizing workgroups for several things if we have anyone who can support

- Governance Group/Board Building Succession Planning & Review of Bylaws
- Organizing around building a new base



LEGISLATIVE TRAININGS & LOBBY DAYS

Silver State Equity:

<https://www.mobilize.us/planevada/event/757209/>

- They are hosting an online virtual legislative boot camp on Saturday, March 1 from 1:30-3:30 and everyone is welcome. RSVP to above link.

Planned Parenthood:

<https://www.weareplannedparenthoodaction.org/a/ppvny-2025-repro-health-fertility-lobby-day?emci=d45d8135-e0ef-ef11-90cb-0022482a94f4&emdi=323bbbbe-e4ef-ef11-90cb-0022482a94f4&ceid=15332929>

- 2025 Reproductive Health & Fertility Lobby Day
Thursday, March 20, 2025, 7:00 AM - 6:00 PM

Nevada Women's Lobby:

<https://nevadawomenslobby.org/grassroots-lobby-days-registration-is-open/>

- **Grass Roots Lobby Days**, April 2 and April 3, registration is now open

MEDICAID

Battle Born Progress: <https://battlebornprogress.co/>

- If you know someone that will be impacted by cuts to Medicaid or if you know a provider that will be impacted, reach out to Shelby Swartz, email: shelbie@battlebornprogress.org, phone: 702-419-9410. If there are cuts to Medicaid (which there will be) It will hurt Nevada in a big way and so far, the Governor is doing nothing.

Medicaid facts according to Congresswoman Susie Lee:

More than 811,000 Nevadans rely on Medicaid for their health care. That includes:

- Nearly 40% of our kids.
- More than half of our nursing home residents.
- One in three Nevadans with disabilities.

These folks need Medicaid to live, work, and fully participate in our community.

NATIONAL

There has been a lot of communication about the Department of Education, AAUW National Public Policy Director, Meghan Kissell shared this:

The ***Dear Colleague letter*** (<https://www.ed.gov/media/document/dear-colleague-letter-sffa-v-harvard-109506.pdf>) sent last week from Acting Secretary of the Office of Civil Rights of the U.S. Department of Education. The letter concerns discrimination based on race, color, and national origin in K-12 and higher education (Title VI) and provides the Department's current interpretation of **the U.S. Supreme Court's decision in Students for Fair Admissions (SFFA) v. Harvard/University of North Carolina (UNC)**.

The **Legal Defense Fund (LDF)** (<https://www.naacpldf.org/education-department-anti-opportunity-letter-federal-funding/>) has released a fact sheet which includes several key points worth sharing:

- The letter is designed to instill fear and sow confusion.
- Barriers to educational success still exist.
- Educational institutions can – and should - lawfully address barriers to equal opportunity.
- This letter does not change existing law. Federal law currently prohibits educational institutions that receive federal funding from discriminating based on race, gender, and other characteristics.
- While we are seeing a lot of threats to terminate funding to schools (and states!), this has rarely happened and if it were to happen, the Courts would have the final say.

I hope you feel uplifted and empowered by all the incredible work happening to protect and advance our rights! Even if you're unable to participate directly, you can still make a difference by sharing this information with someone who can.

Exciting news! Dr. Tello and I will soon be leading a legislative training for AAUW Las Vegas Branch members. Stay tuned—watch your emails for details! In the meantime, stay positive, stay engaged, and don't forget to prioritize self-care. Together, we are stronger!



Dr. Evelyn Thompson-Hilbert
evelyn.AAUW@gmail.com

INTEREST GROUPS

- **Bridge: Cam Usher (702-456-0702)**
- **Book Club: Kathryn Robinson (702-458-1747)**
- **Out to Lunch Bunch: Janis Schoen (516-376-9856)**

*You're Invited!
Join Us!*

OUT TO LUNCH

THURSDAY, MARCH 27, 2025

1:00 PM

TBA

**CONTACT JANIS SCHOEN
BY TUESDAY, MARCH 25, 2025
516-376-9856 (CALL OR TEXT)
AAUWSCH@GMAIL.COM (EMAIL)**



New Members

**Helen Bather
Andrea Clark**

Special Announcements



Birthdays

Ruth Johnson	3/10
Tammy Vaaler	3/14
Shirley Hills	3/22
Teddie Brewer	4/13

AAUW Meetings

March 15	The Summit
April 19	The Summit

Officers & Committee Chairs 2024 - 2025

- Co-Presidents: Janis Schoen & Marilyn Zimmerman
- Vice President Membership: Shirley Hills
- Vice President Programs : Evelyn Thompson-Hilbert
- Secretary: Afi Bruce
- Treasurer: Letti Dowell
- Immediate Past Co-Presidents: Shirley Hills & Judy Ingham
- Public Policy: Evelyn Thompson-Hilbert
- Newsletter: Judy Ingham
- Scholarships: Marilyn Zimmerman & Shirley Hills
- Sunshine: Marian Stanton

Mission

Gender Equity
Economic Security

Values

Intersectional
Inclusive
Intergenerational
Empowering

Focus

Economic Security
Education
Advocacy