



Las Vegas (NV) Branch

American Association of University Women

May MEETING Saturday, May 17, 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 Shelley Berkley Mayor of Las Vegas

PRESIDENTS' MESSAGE

At our April meeting we heard from Claudia Merrill, one of our members, about the Grace City Opera company that she founded. Claudia also spoke about the importance of the arts in education.

It is time for many members to renew their membership for the 25-26 Membership Year. AAUW sends email notices at the end of the month beginning three months prior to your membership expiring. Be sure to renew on time to be included in the branch membership directory for next year. Expiration dates were included in the membership directory by your name.

Voting is now open for the AAUW election and will end on May 13. AAUW members will be voting on bylaws changes, public policy statements and electing national board members. All members received an email with a link to vote. There is also a link to find out more about the items to be voted on.

We also met with Barbara Wells, the president of the newly reorganized League of Women Voters Nevada. We hope to continue to communicate and collaborate on projects and/or activities that both organizations support.

We have recently selected four scholarship recipients for the 2025-2026 academic year. Our move to have the Public Education Foundation process them has been beneficial. We received 39 applications for our scholarships, more than we have ever received in the past. In addition, the applications we received were stronger and better written than applications when we were accepting them ourselves. The foundation is currently in the process of notifying the awardees, who must accept the award. Once the process is complete we will be reaching out to the awardees and inviting them to our June meeting.

A small number of us had a nice out to lunch at Settebello Pizzeria. Since our attendance at Out to Lunch has been low lately, we decided to not schedule one for May. We will be assessing the interest in the Out to Lunch group for the future.

We must continue to stay aware of the changing policies that impact women in the upcoming months and to be sure we make our voices heard.

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

Guest Speaker Mayor Shelley Berkley



Mayor Shelley Berkley was elected by the people of Las Vegas in November 2024. Prior to taking office as mayor, she served as senior vice president of the Touro University system. Before this, she held the positions of CEO and senior provost at Touro University Western Division for a period of eight-and-a-half years.

Prior to joining Touro, Mayor Berkley served the state of Nevada in the United States House of Representatives from 1999 to 2013. She was the first woman to serve the district and held the position for seven terms.

During her 14 years in Congress, Mayor Berkley served on the Transportation Committee, Small Business Committee, Veterans Affairs Committee, Foreign Affairs Committee and the Ways and Means Committee (healthcare subcommittee).

Among her proudest accomplishments during her time in Congress was building the new Veterans Administration medical complex in Southern Nevada to provide quality healthcare to the veterans in our community. She was a vocal supporter of providing more funding for graduate medical education (residencies), and a vocal advocate of reforming our nation's healthcare system. Mayor Berkley began her career in public service in 1983 as an assemblywoman in the Nevada State Legislature. She worked to strengthen consumer protection laws and to crack down on drunk driving. She created the Senior Law Project and wrote the Lemon Law, which protects new car owners from defective vehicles. Both programs continue to this day.

Mayor Berkley was appointed and twice elected to the Nevada State Board of Regents, serving from 1990 to 1998.

Prior to serving in Congress, Mayor Berkley was a practicing attorney. She was an attorney for the Nevada State Commerce Department, in-house counsel for Southwest Gas Corporation and vice president for government and legal affairs for the Sands Hotel in Las Vegas.

Mayor Berkley is married to Dr. Larry Lehrner, a kidney specialist, and she is the proud mother of two sons, two stepchildren and four grandchildren.

Raised in Las Vegas, Mayor Berkley attended John C. Fremont Junior High School and Valley High School. She was the first person in her family to go to college. She graduated from UNLV in 1973 where she was student body president.

Our Guest Speaker in April, Claudia Merrill

































We are proud of our AAUU scholarship recipient, **JANAI!**

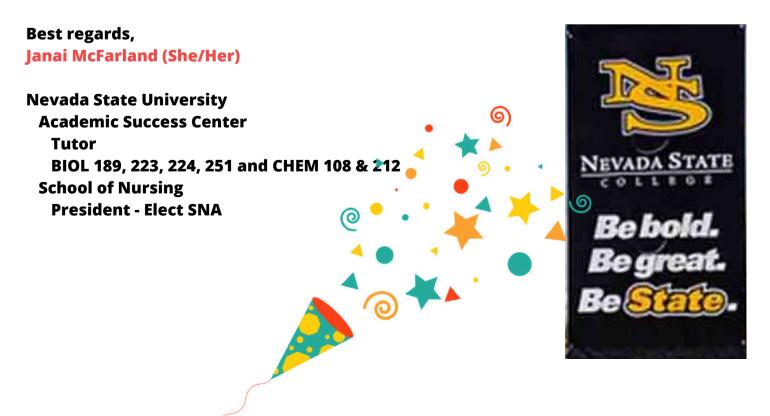
Greetings Community!

I am pleased to announce that I have been awarded the 2025 Foundation of the National Student Nurses' Association's, Rosa and Lemiel Black Memorial Scholarship! This is a HUGE HONOR to receive this particular endowment because of its source. Deborah Lewis established this scholarship to honor her grandparents, Rosa and Lemiel Black, who were farmers in Arkansas and migrated to Chicago for a better life.

To me, this scholarship means that people who share my roots believe in my journey and want to invest in my future. It highlights that my efforts to improve healthcare access and education are valued, by viewing me as someone who can make a lasting difference. This scholarship is a bridge between the past and future!

Therefore, I invite YOU, as part of my community, to participate in the FNSNA Virtual Awards Ceremony on Thursday, May 8th at 5:30 PM EDT. Register and place on your calendar today! I will be sure to update you all after the 73rd Annual National Student Nurses Convention this week in Seattle, WA, where I will have the opportunity to meet my scholarship donor!

To register for the Virtual event please visit - 2025 Virtual Awards Ceremony at... https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/cJADmAKaToW--Y158kzpXA#/registration



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 \$100 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 <u>www.thepef.org</u>. 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.



The Nominating Committee (Chairman Judy Ingham, Janis Schoen, and Ruth Johnson) is announcing the following candidates for the 2025 - 2027 biennium:

Co-Presidents: Dr. Afi Bruce and Dr. Evelyn Thompson-Hilbert Vice President for Membership: Claudia Merrill Treasurer: Letti Dowell

Public Policy Evelyn Thompson-Hilbert



According to the Farmer's Almanac, May is named after the Greek goddess Maia goddess of nature and growth—later known in Roman mythology as Bona Dea, the goddess of fertility. Maia represents motherhood, midwifery, and renewal.

As we step into May 2025, I invite you to meet our challenges with the spirit of this month. Metaphorically, we are poised to birth a new era. While it may feel like our rights are under attack, we can choose to learn from the wisdom and resilience of our foremothers—I choose the latter.

With just two months remaining in Nevada's biennial legislative session, I've heard from many of you since November—your voices full of concern, frustration, and urgency. As Las Vegas continues to grow, many residents remain unfamiliar with Nevada's legislative process. That's where AAUW shines—our advocacy succeeds at every level.

This article highlights our local efforts and closes with everything you need to stay engaged—from navigating the legislature to strengthening collaborations with local partners like Barbara, President of the Las Vegas League of Women Voters.

Here are remaining Important dates for the 2025 Nevada Legislature:



In case you missed it!

Here's the Nevada State Council Legislative Action Plan. Although it was sent to all branches, we understand these emails can be easy to overlook.

Many of you have asked how to get involved beyond attending protests. Below are links to the March recordings and PowerPoint presentations hosted by the Las Vegas Chapter. They offer practical guidance on how to participate in the legislative process—whether in person, by phone, email, or through NELIS (Nevada Electronic Legislative Information System).

STATE

The following Legislative Communication Plan was emailed to the branches for immediate action. Please check your email for an extensive list. We aligned the top three Nevada Bills with AAUW's mission:

🛞 AAUW Nevada Campaign Overview: "Equity in Action: Nevada 2025"

Bill	Focus	Why It Matters to AAUW	Status
AB176	Reproductive Health Care	Ensures access to reproductive health services - a cornerstone of gender equity and bodily autonomy.	Apr 22, 2025 Read third time. Passed, as amended. Title approved, as amended. (Yeas: 42, Nays: None.) To Senate. NELIS link: NELIS AB176
AB250	Debt Collection from Economic Abuse	Addresses financial abuse, strengthening economic justice for survivors, especially women.	Apr 22, 2025 Assembly Final passage (1 st reprint) TO PRINT (Yeas: 33, Nays 9) NELIS link: NELIS ABS250
SB171	Shield Law for Transgender Protections	Upholds civil rights for transgender Nevadans, advancing inclusive protections.	Apr 22, 2025 Read third time. Passed. Title approved. (Yeas: 13, Nays: 8) To Assembly. NELIS link: NELIS SB171

@ Top 3 Legislative Priorities



🐱 Sample Member Email (Editable) - CALL TO ACTION

Subject: Take Action: 3 Bills That Impact Women and Girls in Nevada

Body: Dear AAUW Nevada Members, This legislative session, we have a powerful opportunity to put our values into action by supporting three critical bills:

- AB176: Protects reproductive freedom and ensures access to essential care.
- AB250: Confronts economic abuse and gives survivors a fighting chance to reclaim their financial freedom.
- SB171: Shields transgender Nevadans from targeted legal action—because equity includes everyone.

Join us in amplifying our voices. Let's remind our lawmakers that gender equity is not optional—it's essential.

Click here to find your legislator: Who is my legislator?

🖾 Sample Member Email (Editable) - CALL TO ACTION

Join us in amplifying our voices. Let's remind our lawmakers that gender equity is not optional—it's essential.

Click here to find your legislator: Who is my legislator?

In solidarity, Evelyn Thompson-Hilbert, DPP [Your Name] AAUW Nevada Public Policy Chair [Your AAUW Branch and title if you have one]

Social Media - CALL TO ACTION

Post on social media: Hashtags: #EquityInActionNV #AAUWAdvocates #NevadaPolicy2025

Sample Posts:

1 Nevada, it's time to act! Support #AB176 to ensure access to reproductive care for all. #EquityInActionNV #AAUWAdvocates

2 💸 Economic abuse traps survivors. #AB250 helps them break free. Call your legislators today! #AAUWAdvocates

3 == Trans rights are human rights. Help us pass #SB171 to protect our LGBTQ+ community from legal harm. #EquityForAll

🗣 Talking Points for Advocacy

• AB176: "AAUW stands firmly for reproductive freedom. This bill protects access to care that allows women to make decisions about their bodies and futures."

• AB250: "Economic abuse is a form of domestic violence. Protecting survivors' credit and economic mobility is urgent."

• SB171: "We cannot claim to advance gender equity without defending transgender rights. SB171 is a civil rights issue."

Second Stript for Legislator Calls

"Hello, my name is [Your Name] and I'm a member of AAUW Nevada. I'm calling to urge you to support [AB176/ AB250/SB171] because this bill is essential for gender equity in our state. These issues directly affect women, girls, and marginalized communities across Nevada. I hope we can count on your leadership. Thank you."

NATIONAL

AAUW's First 100 Days Fact Sheet highlights key actions and legislative priorities focused on advancing gender equity through education, economic security, and workplace protections during the early days of a new administration.

Use this link for a summary of AAUW-National's:

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1U1Bmw_szbCk9DPHMHDyXCD02etxGgY1ZAhG2wZ 58yN0/edit?usp=sharing

Dr. Evelyn Thompson-Hilbert (she, her, hers) AAUW, Las Vegas Public Policy Chair & Program VP Nevada State Public Policy Chair email: <u>evelyn.aauw@gmail.com</u> phone: 415.377.0470



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 Next lunch will be in June.

Save the date: Thursday, June 26, 2025 at 1:00 PM Restaurant: TBA

Contact Janis Schoen by Tuesday, June 24, 2025 516-376-9856 (call or text) AAUWSCH@gmail.com (email)



SAVE THE DATES

AAUW Schedule for 2025-2026

September 20, 2025	Saturday	The Summit
October 18, 2025	Saturday	The Summit
November 15, 2025	Saturday	The Summit
December 14, 2025	Sunday	ТВА
January 17, 2026	Saturday	The Summit
February 21, 2026	Saturday	The Summit
March 21, 2026	Saturday	The Summit
April 18, 2026	Saturday	The Summit
May 16, 2026	Saturday	The Summit
June 20, 2026	Saturday	The Summit

Special Announcements



Birthdays

Sharon Edwins	5/27
Carol Chestnut	6/16
Judy Ingham	6/22
Mary Williams	6/30

AAUW Meetings

May	17	The Summit
June	21	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