

January 2026

DESERT BREEZE



Las Vegas (NV) Branch

American Association of University Women



Saturday, January 17, 2026

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 Speakers
Highlighting our Longtime Members**



**Please bring canned goods to the meeting.
Janis Schoen will deliver items to the local food bank.**



PRESIDENTS' MESSAGE

As we step into a new year, we look forward to reconnecting as a branch and welcoming both familiar and new faces into our shared work.

In 2026, the AAUW Las Vegas Branch is prioritizing connection, collaboration, and community. We are committed to strengthening our committees, expanding partnerships with UNLV, other local universities, sister AAUW branches, and community allies, and creating more opportunities for members to engage in ways that feel meaningful and energizing.

A key focus this year is getting to know one another more deeply. Through our monthly luncheons, happy hours, and member gatherings, we will intentionally create space to learn about the talents, experiences, and passions each member brings. Every member has something valuable to offer, and building these relationships strengthens both our branch and our collective impact.

We are excited to welcome dynamic speakers and fresh programming throughout the year, while also exploring new fundraising ideas to support AAUW's mission of equity and education for women and girls. We invite you to bring your ideas, curiosity, and voice as we move forward together.

Keep an eye on your email for Action Alerts, events from our collaborators, last-minute updates, and other information. We'll be in touch soon!

Happy New Year!

**Afi & Evelyn
Co-Presidents, Las Vegas Branch**



Holiday Party



Please Continue to Support our Scholarship Fund

Donations for scholarships can be made throughout the year.

To make a tax-deductible cash 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. Non-Deductible contributions can also be made by Zelle or Credit Card. Contact Letti for more information.



Public Policy



Dr. Margoth Tello, DPP

Dr. Esther Pla-Cazares, DPP

Happy New Year! It's Election Season in Nevada

As we ring in the new year, Nevada is also heading into a major election cycle. The 2026 elections will bring important races, new voting procedures, and potential changes shaped by the U.S. Supreme Court. Here's what voters should know—and do—now.

What's on the Ballot in 2026

Nevadans will see several high-profile races this year:

- Governor
- Attorney General
- All four U.S. House of Representatives seats

There is no U.S. Senate race this cycle.

Campaign filings officially open March 2, 2026, marking the start of a busy political season.

What to Watch Closely

A pending decision from the U.S. Supreme Court could significantly affect how elections are administered in Nevada and other states.

In *Watson v. Republican National Committee*, the Court is considering whether states may continue counting mail ballots that are cast by Election Day but received afterward. Currently in Nevada:

- Ballots without a postmark may be counted up to three days after Election Day
- Ballots with a postmark may be counted up to four days after Election Day

A ruling—expected by June 2026—could impact mail-in voting rules for the upcoming midterm elections.

What's Different This Year

Clark County has introduced a new voting process that adds paper ballot verification:

- Voters will check in and vote using the same machines as before
- After making selections, voters will receive a printed paper ballot to review
- The ballot is then submitted into new tabulators

According to Clark County, this three-step process makes it easier for voters to confirm their choices. The paper records are securely stored and can be used for audits or recounts, aligning with statewide security standards and national best practices.

Sign Up to Be a Poll Worker

Poll workers play a vital role in protecting the integrity of elections and ensuring every voter can participate.

Who can serve?

- Registered Nevada voters
- Age 18+, or 16+ if enrolled in high school
- Not a candidate (or closely related to one)
- Completion of required training (NRS 293.217)

Responsibilities include:

- Setting up and closing polling locations
- Verifying voter eligibility
- Assisting voters
- Protecting ballots and equipment
- Be prepared for long days—sometimes up to 14 hours.

Learn more or sign up:

- https://www.clarkcountynv.gov/government/departments/elections/services/poll_workers.php

Check Your Mail—and Your Voter Status

The Nevada Secretary of State's Office is mailing a postcard to every active registered voter with key election dates and a voter checklist.

Your 2026 Voter Checklist:

- Update your registration at VOTE.NV.gov
- Ensure your ID is current
- Rely on trusted sources: NVSOS.gov, your County Clerk, or Registrar
- Make a voting plan: research candidates and decide how you'll vote

Official election mail will always include the “**Official Election Mail**” logo.

Staying informed and engaged is one of the most powerful ways to protect our democracy—start now!

Elections Timeline

<https://www.nvsos.gov/sos/elections/election-information/2026-election-information/-fsiteid-1>

Election

**2026 Nevada Primary
Election**

Election Day

**Tuesday, June 9th
7a.m. - 7p.m.**

Early Voting

**Saturday, May 23rd
through Friday, June 5th**

2026 Nevada General Election

**Tuesday, November 3rd
7a.m. - 7p.m.**

Saturday, Oct 17th

through Friday, Oct 30th

Membership Corner

Happy New Year to All,



I hope you all had a wonderful holiday season and I am trusting that your New Year is going well.

Welcome to our New Members:

Barbara Williams

Jessica Parker

We are delighted to have you join us. We look forward to getting to know you and to have you serve on one of our many committees.

We are looking forward to an exciting 2026, with our Member Spotlight Series, Social Hour and an array of inspiring guest speakers.

Thank You to Marilyn Zimmerman for keeping us posted on membership renewals and how that process is being streamlined this coming year. Marilyn has also been keeping the membership directory updated. I will also be calling our new members whom we may not have seen recently and inviting them to our upcoming meetings and events for the new year.

Thank you to our Co President Afi Bruce, who attended the Premiere Performance at the Smith Center, with my Opera Company *Grace City Opera Theatre*.

Consider joining the Membership Committee. Share your gifts and your experiences with us. Help us grow and serve our community and continue the mission of Gender Equity, Advocacy and Education for Women.

I wish everyone a Happy New Year!

Claudia Merrill, D.D., M.Ed., QMHP

Vice President Membership





NEW MEMBERS

BARBARA MORROW WILLIAMS

JESSICA PARKER

Membership Renewals

Membership renewals now occur throughout the year. While most of our branch members have June 30 membership expiration dates, our newer members may have a membership renewal date that occurs in a different month. The Membership Directory included each member's renewal dates this year.

You should receive an email notice from AAUW regarding renewing your membership. There will be a link to renew, using a credit card, or you may still send a check to our treasurer, Letti Dowell (see Letti's address below).

Members will begin receiving renewal notices approximately one month prior to their renewal date and will continue to receive them through the grace period, which is three months after the renewal date or until the member renews their membership. After the three-month grace period, members that have not renewed their membership are dropped from the 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. Renewing members may also send a check to Letti to renew their membership. Letti's address is: 9633 Gavin Stone Ave., Las Vegas, NV 89145.

INTEREST GROUPS

- **Bridge & Sunshine: Marian Stanton (951-529-1203)**
- **Out to Lunch Bunch: Janis Schoen (516-376-9856)**



OUT TO LUNCH

Thursday, January 22, 2026

at

1:00 PM

TBA



Special Announcements

Birthdays

Carol Stark 1/23
Afi Bruce 1/24
Martha Wood 2/2
Dana Roseman 2/7
Amber Burkett 2/18
Elaine Wells 2/18



Next AAUW Meeting

January 17 Summit Restaurant

Board Meeting

January 23

Officers & Committee Chairs 2025 - 2027

Co-Presidents: Afi Bruce & Evelyn Thompson-Hilbert
Vice President Membership: Claudia Merrill
Vice President Programs: Shared Board Leadership
Secretary: Shared Board Leadership
Treasurer: Letti Dowell
Immediate Past Co-Presidents: Janis Schoen & Marilyn Zimmerman
Public Policy: Esther Pla-Cazares & Margoth Tello
Newsletter: Judy Ingham
Scholarships: Shirley Hills & Marilyn Zimmerman
Sunshine: Marian Stanton
Scholarship Fundraiser: Marian Stanton

Mission

Gender Equity
Economic Security

Values

Intersectional
Inclusive
Intergenerational
Empowering

Focus

Economic Security
Education
Advocacy