



## AAUW-ODC Newsletter December 2020

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### President's Message

December is a time for looking backward and assessing what kind of year 2020 was, and it was an eventful one for our nation. We are living through a raging pandemic with the loss of loved ones. We have witnessed police brutality of an unbelievable type, followed by protests and violence in our large cities, and then a fractious, toxic election campaign in which an unprecedented number of Americans turned out. Whew! Thank goodness, we are still standing and are still unified in our microcosm of AAUW.

On the micro level, here is what we have done and look back upon proudly:

- We remain unified in our mission of educational equity which serves as an inspiration to all of us.
- We have added to our mission statement a commitment to racial justice by forming the nascent social justice interest group. Contact [hoyma@unc.edu](mailto:hoyma@unc.edu), if interested. Barrie Trinkle will be convening us next year.
- Although we had to cancel our in-person fundraiser in April and our meeting in March, we successfully raised enough funds for three fellowships listed here: Schwenning fellowship at UNC-CH, a new fellowship at NCCU, and, most recently, a nearly finished fellowship at Durham Technical Community College, thanks to the work of Donna Wilson.
- Hats off to our treasurer Mary Sipple who contacted all ticket holders when our in-person fundraiser was cancelled, creating extra work for her.
- Congratulations and thanks to our community members who decided to change their ticket purchase into a donation.
- Our substitute event was a YouTube speech by Terri and Joe Graedon of People's Pharmacy. Thanks to Katie Loois and Bea Keller, this speech was viewed by over 500 people, reaching many community members, sharing the Graedons' health tips.
- We went to the air waves on two local radio stations to publicize our AAUW branch!!

- We had two wonderful fall programs spearheaded by Program Chair Gloria Thomas: one on the Elections with a presentation by Valeria Gist of the League of Women Voters and one on the Equal Rights Amendment by Lori Bunton of ERA-NC Alliance .
- Our membership chair Jan Holland recruited the second highest number of new members of any branch in the state. Thanks, Jan!!

Summary: It is difficult to keep a group of dedicated women down... even with a pandemic, policing tragedies, and an all-consuming and bitter election. Thanks to the membership. You are troopers. We thank all of you for your support.

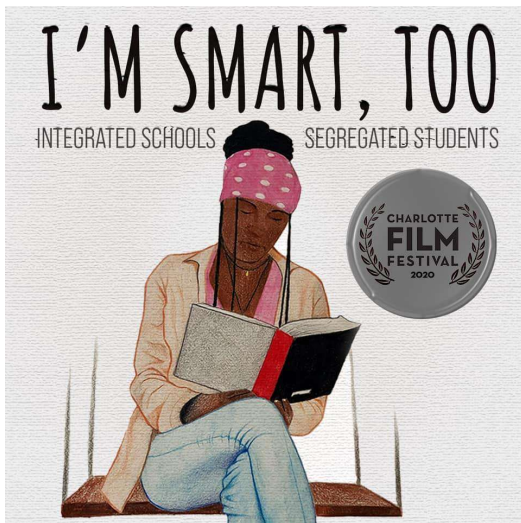
**NOW ON TO THE NEW YEAR...**

- **Jan. 23** at 10:30 *I'm Smart, Too*, a film about the achievement gap will be shown.
- **Feb. 20** at 10:30 Three of the Triangle area fellows will present their research or community action projects. The theme is "Cultivating Community Connections and Collaborations."
- **March 23** *XIX*, an original play about the 19th amendment by a local playwright. Excerpts will be performed.
- **April Fundraiser** date to be determined. It will be attended on Zoom.

News from AAUW-NC: [www.aauwnc.org/news](http://www.aauwnc.org/news)

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## AAUW ODC 2021 Branch Meeting Programs



**Saturday, January 23, 2021**

**10:30 am – noon**

***I'm Smart, Too – Film Viewing and Discussion with Producer***

School districts across the country agonize over racial achievement gaps that remain a staunch reality despite countless programs and initiatives.

*I'm Smart, Too* takes a look at one public school system, Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools (CHCCS), to examine how the practice of sorting and tracking school children, starting in the earliest grades, creates insurmountable disparities in educational opportunities while also shaping all students' perceptions of capability and worth.

In this short documentary, the voices of educational experts, students, and parents sound an alarm about the tremendous damage we do when we squander students' potential and the promise of our public education system.

Register here to join the meeting via Zoom: <https://tinyurl.com/AAUWODCJan2021>

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**Saturday, February 20, 2021**

**10:30 am – noon**

***Cultivating Community Connections and Collaborations***

**Featuring: 2020-2021 AAUW Fellows from North Carolina**

February's annual meeting is always a very popular event to introduce our branch members to dissertation fellowship and other grant recipients from AAUW. This year's three grant winners (among 5 spanning North Carolina) are an exceptional group of very talented professionals who have completed graduate work or will finish this year at area or out of state universities. They will discuss their respective grant awards for the 2020-2021 award year and highlight their research or community work, speaking to the topic, "Cultivating Community Connections and Collaborations."

During the 2020-2021 academic year, AAUW awarded more than \$3.5 million dollars to fund dissertation research, community outreach and career development opportunities. Due to the longstanding and generous contributions from AAUW members, a broader and more diverse group of individuals continue to gain access to educational and economic opportunities. Donations from AAUW branch members across North Carolina have definitely contributed to the continuing strong representation statewide.

Joining us on February 20 will be the following recipients:



**American Dissertation Fellowship**

Ms. Barbara Sostaita, Ph.D. candidate, "Religion in the Americas," University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.



### **Community Action Grant**

Mr. Edwin Davis, M.Ed., Knightdale, North Carolina, "Science Happens for Me—Designing, Implementing and Teaching STEM Based Experiments to Students."



### **Career Development Grant**

Ms. Jenny López Alvarado, MSW candidate, Loyola University, Chicago, and Waynesville, North Carolina. "Bilingual Mental Health in Immigrant Populations."

Please join us on Saturday, February 20, for an engaging presentation from these three talented individuals who are among many nationwide educators making a difference in our world through advocacy, connections, and inspirational leadership.

Dr. Donna Wilson  
Vice President, College & University Partnerships

Register here to join the meeting via Zoom: <https://tinyurl.com/AAUWODCFeb2021>

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**Saturday, March 20, 2021**

**10:30 am – noon**

*XIX*, an original a play about the 19th amendment by a local playwright. An excerpt will be read from the play.

Synopsis of the Play

In 1920, while many in North Carolina favored granting women the right to vote, there was fear the 19th Amendment would open the doors to greater rights for the state's Black citizens.

Set in Raleigh, North Carolina, *XIX* follows Adelaide, a black suffragette and newlywed into the wealthy, white Germaine family. With access to the political and social elite of Raleigh, Adelaide plans to use her position for the betterment of the black community. She recruits her best friend, Florence, to enlist black women in the fight for suffrage as states across the country ratify the 19th amendment. On the night of North Carolina's historic (and unsuccessful) vote, Adelaide learns that her sister--and mother-in-law--have been working quietly to undermine her efforts. In the aftermath of this betrayal, Adelaide must choose between her marriage and her activism. Jacqueline E. Lawton's socio-political drama focuses our attention on the women of an early twentieth-century multi-racial family as they navigate the fight for equality, the compromises of coalition building, and the limits of "family" love across racial and class divides.

Register here to join the meeting via Zoom: <https://tinyurl.com/AAUWODCMar2021>

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## AAUW Book Talk--Starting the New Year Off Right



Keeping with tradition, participants in our ad hoc book group have selected a book that is rich in both content and craft. *The Vanishing Half* by Britt Bennett, offers us insights into worlds we may not usually inhabit (at least not at first blush) and asks us to consider ideas and decisions that challenge our perceptions and biases but upon reflection may resonate with our lives in deeper ways that, at first, are not obvious. We hope it will generate robust thought and discussion.

The press on Britt Bennett's *The Vanishing Half* introduces it as a "stunning new novel about twin sisters, inseparable as children, who ultimately choose to live in two very different worlds, one black and one white." NYT's reviewer Ayana Matthis offers questions raised by the book that we may want to consider: What if passing goes unpunished? What if the character is never truly found out? What if [one] doesn't die or repent? What then?

As noted by Ms. Matthis, not only does this multigenerational saga pose provocative questions but the author's craft also echoes past classics and these "are beautiful to behold in a book about suppressed lineages. As old as the story of passing may be, so too is the effort, the history of language and art, to capture its complicated desire and alienating costs. Sometimes only one fiction can untangle another." Our group may wish to consider ways in which this book is evocative of others we have read, both with regard to content and as literature.

At this time, our next meeting is scheduled for Thursday January 28 at noon. Please e mail Mary Kolek at [mmkchnc14@gmail.com](mailto:mmkchnc14@gmail.com), with AAUW Jan Book Talk as the subject if you think you will attend. More information, including a zoom link, will be forthcoming in January.

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## Notice of Dues Adjustment

Jan Holland

We want to make our ODC branch members aware that the AAUW Board of Directors voted in October to increase individual member dues gradually over the next three years, as follows: **The national dues will rise by \$3 for Fiscal Year (FY) 2021-2022, \$5 for FY 2022-2023 and \$5 for FY 2023-2024, making the total dues amount for those years \$62, \$67 and \$72, respectively. All but \$3 of your annual dues remains tax deductible.**

State (\$11) and Local Branch (\$10) annual dues remain the same for the foreseeable future. See chart below for exact amounts.

	Current	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
National	\$59.00	\$62.00	\$67.00	\$72.00
State	\$11.00	\$11.00	\$11.00	\$11.00
Branch	\$10.00	\$10.00	\$10.00	\$10.00
TOTAL	\$80.00	\$83.00	\$88.00	\$93.00

**This decision was not made lightly.** The AAUW national board of directors recognizes that all of us are navigating numerous challenges in these uncertain times. However, in order to preserve the viability of the organization we all love, the board needed to take action. Simply put, this measure is essential for AAUW to continue our mission to achieve gender equity.

Most nonprofits adjust their dues annually or every other year to keep pace with inflation and rising expenses. However, due to prudent budgetary management, AAUW has been able to keep its dues flat since July 2018. That means that, by the time the first scheduled increase takes effect, we will have maintained three years of dues stability.

Moreover, in recognition of the difficult economy we're in, the board planned for the initial adjustment to be the most modest. Over the course of the year, it works out to be only an additional 25 cents per month—what we hope is a small price to pay for maintaining our important work and community.

**Current life members will not be affected by this change. New life memberships acquired after July 1, 2021, will reflect the higher dues' amounts. College and university membership fees will remain unchanged.**

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## Breaking News from National AAUW: Removing the Educational Requirement

An Important vote is coming in June:

In order to increase the diversity of our organization, the National Board of AAUW has recommended to remove the educational requirement for membership. This proposal was presented in the Town Hall webinar which several of us attended a couple months ago. On a personal note, I would like to strongly endorse this change, and I will urge 1) all branches to take a position in favor of this and 2) anyone who will listen to vote yes to this change.

We all know women who wanted to join but were turned away if they did not complete their B.A. or two year associate degree, due to class, race, marital situation, immediate economic distress, or their gender role as caregiver. These women are smart and dedicated who, but for certain circumstances, would have completed

their education.

Will we get to vote? Yes, we will be voting sometime in June. This has been voted on several times in the past, but there was not a high enough percentage of people voting (quorum) for it to pass, although the majority voted to change.

This time we will be voting from home, so we should be able to meet the required number for a quorum, particularly if we spread the word.

PLEASE CONSIDER VOTING YES ON THIS PROPOSAL!!! Michele Hoyman

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## Calling for Officers and Volunteers!!!

We have had an amazing board the past two years, and most of them have agreed to continue. We do have a couple of vacancies. For instance, I have enjoyed being President, but my term is up. So we need a new President. I will stay active on the Board as a nonvoting member (as required by our by Laws) and would love to help where needed with special projects or membership or programming. Further, we need one or two people to help us with communications/publicity. We also need some people for our Fundraiser committee (formerly our Tea) which is in April.

WHAT DOES EACH JOB ENTAIL?

**PRESIDENT** This is a two year term. The main duties of the president are to preside over board meetings and membership meetings (4 membership meetings a year); help organize the fundraising, make sure the newsletters go out about 7-8 times a year, maintain contact with state and national AAUW organizations, organize the nominating committee for the following year, fill any interim vacancies, and do any other duties to ensure the smooth running of the organization.

**COMMUNICATIONS AND PUBLICITY PERSONS** (Two or three people needed)

- We have set up a Facebook page, but we need someone to keep it up, posting our current events and related groups' events and community announcements. Jan Holland had set it up and can orient you.
- We have a website, but it needs constant upkeep also. Bea Keller has set that up and can fill you in.
- We need a publicity person to interface with other nonprofits and networks and social media to spread the word about our meetings and generate attendance at these meetings.

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS FOR THE FUNDRAISER EVENT** The job entails publicizing the fundraiser and helping with set-up either by Zoom or in person. This event is usually held in April.

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS FOR THE PROGRAM COMMITTEE.** Do you have ideas or contacts which would help us put together a good program? Join this committee. It meets once in summer and only when needed after that.

IF INTERESTED, CONTACT **MICHELE HOYMAN** (919) 619-8898 OR [hoyman@unc.edu](mailto:hoyman@unc.edu). We are a really friendly group of women and you will find friends by becoming active.

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## WELCOME OUR NEW MEMBERS:



### **Faith M. Brodie**

Faith lives in Durham and works in Chapel Hill in the Public Housing Department. She received a Masters Degree in Public Administration from UNC-Chapel Hill; Juris Doctorate from the University of San Francisco; BA from Mills College in Oakland California and an Associate degree from Laney College in Oakland California. She served in the United States Army as a Military Police Officer and was stationed in three countries and two states. Her life has been one devoted to public service. She married her best friend, Wayne Brodie, in August of 2019.



### **Joan Widdifield**

A North Carolina native, Joan is a former psychotherapist who practiced in Chicago and San Francisco, and an award-winning social justice documentary filmmaker. As a psychotherapist with expertise in trauma, she recognized the connection between movement and improved mental health, leading to her career as a group fitness instructor and personal trainer. Joan has her doctorate in clinical psychology from The Chicago School and her B.A. in psychology from Meredith College. She is an ACE certified Health Coach and Personal Trainer. Joan specializes in functional training and core strength. Her upbeat sessions focus on improving strength, balance, mobility, and overall health and well-being.

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## The Social Justice Interest Group Is Forming! Are You Interested?

Anyone interested in being active in the Social Justice Interest group, please contact the convener, Barrie Trinkle, [barrietrinkle@gmail.com](mailto:barrietrinkle@gmail.com). We will be trying to implement our mission statement of eliminating discrimination and racism. Depending on the group's interests, our focus could be on education, consciousness raising, and individual growth, or more active pursuits with already established nonprofits within the community. Please join us if you are inclined and let your voice be heard! We hope to convene by early January.

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## 'Tis the Season to Give

As the year comes to a close, please consider contributing to the AAUW-ODC scholarships. These scholarships go to deserving students who have shown academic talent and leadership. The thank you notes from these recipients are unbelievably poignant.



AAUW-ODC supports scholarships at UNC-CH and NCCU for female graduate students, and we have recently initiated a scholarship at Durham Technical Community College.

Please consider donating to support women scholars!

Checks can be made out to AAUW-ODC, but are not tax deductible. If you want your donation to be tax deductible, please make out checks to:

- NCCU scholarship
  - Make the check out to "**North Carolina Central University Foundation, Inc.**".
  - In the memo line, put "**AAUW-ODC**".
- UNC-CH Schwenning scholarship
  - Make the check out to "**University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill**".
  - In the memo line, put "**Schwenning (Fund 656725)**".
- Durham Technical Community College scholarship
  - Make the check out to "**Durham Tech Foundation**".
  - In the memo line, put "**AAUW-ODC**".

Send checks to our treasurer who will log them and forward them on to the institution(s):

Mary Sipple  
2512 Millwood Ct.  
Chapel Hill, NC 27514

If you'd prefer to give online:

- UNC-CH Schwenning: <https://give.unc.edu/donate>
  - Use the Search box to search for our fund (Schwenning).
  - Select "Carrie Heath Schwenning Endowment Fund (656725)"
- Other scholarships: TBD.
  - Please email our treasurer at [aauw.odc.treasurer@gmail.com](mailto:aauw.odc.treasurer@gmail.com) for further information.

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## Recommended Viewing

On Amazon Prime: *What the Constitution Means to me*, by Heidi Schreck, through the voice of herself as a 15 year old girl.



Schreck includes a deep dive into the Fourteenth Amendment of the Constitution which discusses citizenship rights and what it means to be "American". She argues that "the Constitution doesn't protect all Americans because it was not created to protect all Americans, just wealthy white men." One of the areas where women lack constitutional rights is protection from domestic abuse, making a

strong case for the ERA.

You will laugh! You will cry, but you won't be able to stop watching.

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