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Orange, Durham, Chatham  
Counties (NC) Branch

## Branch Newsletter

OCTOBER 2021

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*"While we have many voices, all AAUW members share a commitment to advancing gender equity for women and girls through research, education and advocacy. More than ever, we must embrace our values and continue to strive towards diversity, equity and inclusion." (aauw.org)*

### President's Message: by Cindy Parks

Our branch's program theme this year aligns with the DEI mission. There is perhaps no better name to associate with this theme than that of Pauli Murray. **"My Name is Pauli Murray,"** a new 90-minute documentary about the legendary civil rights activist and one of the founders of NOW, will be available for streaming Oct. 1 on Amazon Prime. [The Pauli Murray Center for History and Social Justice](#) in Durham, Pauli's childhood home where some of it was filmed, is offering program tours to explore either on your own this month ([link here to their events calendar](#)) or select the **Sat. November 13, 10AM event** as part of our branch's new interest group, **"Get Outside!"** for a *virtual field trip together*. **NOTE:** Same event offered on **Wed., Dec. 8, 6PM**. Our AAUW-ODC **Book Club** ([email here to join for more info.](#)) has



selected “**Proud Shoes**,” by Pauli Murray, first published in 1956, for discussion in January 2022. Proud Shoes is the remarkable true story of slavery, survival, and miscegenation in the South from the pre-Civil War era through the Reconstruction. **Info.** about the **book** and where to buy it - [click here.](#)



## Dr. Pauli Murray

*"My name is Pauli Murray and my field of concentration has been human rights. My whole personal history has been a struggle to meet standards of excellence in a society which has been dominated by the ideas that Blacks were inherently inferior to whites and women were inherently inferior to men." — Rev. Dr. Pauli Murray - [learn more - click here.](#)*

As we celebrate this unsung hero and the release of this important documentary, we will examine the DEI work ongoing today in our October, February and March programs. Pauli blazed an amazing trail, but we must carry the torch. Whether we meet virtually, in-person, indoors or outside, I'm excited about an informative, fun year as your new branch President.

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## “Sometimes I Sing”

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AWARENESS MONTH

October 16th 10:30 AM – Noon | **Registration Required**

PROGRAMS

**October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month:** Combining the distance of history with emotional immediacy, *Sometimes I Sing* indicts the systems that still keep battered women in abusive environments, even today. Chapel Hill's master storyteller Dr. Milbre Burch presents her one-act monodrama and leads a panel discussion. The panel includes Jenny Lopez, recent AAUW Fellow and immigrant outreach program director in rural western NC, as well as UNC Law Professor Patricia Bryan, Chapel Hill Police Crisis Unit officer Megan Johnson, and Compass Center volunteer and survivor, "Nancy." **The event is FREE, open to the public**, and is co-sponsored with AAUW-NC and the Orange County Arts Commission. **Scroll for more info. about Dr. Milbre Burch.** [REGISTER NOW](#) for this Zoom program.

**February is AAUW Fellows Month:** Triangle area universities, UNC-CH in particular, are very well represented in the AAUW Fellowships and Grants recipients list for 2021-2022. We look forward to hearing from several of them about their work and tying in the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) theme. **Zoom virtual program. Date: Feb. 19, 10:30 - noon.**

**Power of Inclusive History in March:** A conversation with 2 women who work in the field of public history. [Anne Mitchell Whisnant](#) and [Michelle Lanier](#) will discuss the power of inclusiveness at our places of memory. Dr. Whisnant is the principal investigator on a project to enhance documentation of African-American history in the Portsmouth Village National Register nomination. She recently completed a 3-yr. project (published 2021) with the National Park Service at the Carl Sandburg Home National Historic Site in Flat Rock, NC to examine the mountain property's connection to low-country SC slavery prior to its more well-known history as Carl Sandburg's home (1945 until his death in 1967). Ms. Lanier has served as director for the state's historic sites since 2018 and started as a curator with the department in 2006. She uses her background as a folklorist, public historian, documentary educator, oral historian and cultural preservationist to connect communities to the rich and transformative power of North Carolina's African American heritage. **Date: Mar. 19, 10:30 - noon, Zoom.**

No Spring "ticketed event" (i.e. "Tea") this year. Please give birthday dollars, direct donations to the institutions ([you can do this from our website](#)) or "share the love" (\$25 suggested) at our February Fellows meeting when we ask for donations to our branch's local financial aid scholarships at that time. Enjoy the April spring break!

**May:** Inclusive history *experience* at [Stagville Historic Site](#) in Durham on **Saturday, May 21, 10AM - 11:30AM**. This is a Get Outside! interest group opportunity - **open to friends and family members**. Guided tour for our group that is **in person** and **outdoors**.

"The history, as I had lived it, was nowhere in sight — not one minute of it." -  
Betty Reid Soskin, US National Park Service ranger (age 100)

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**TOP OF MIND THIS WEEK:** [Leandro Case Court Order](#)

Governor Cooper and legislative leaders spar over complying with the Leandro plan to fully invest in the state's public schools. They're under a court order to do so by **Oct. 15th**. On Twitter, **Senate leader Phil Berger took to bashing the "Leandro cabal"** and insisted the state should use federal money to fund the public schools instead. This news comes as no surprise to those of us who attended the **Sept. 9th program** with **Lynn Edmonds, Public Schools First NC**. We learned the Judge ruled that the state should have to pay millions of dollars to remedy the underinvestment in schools and also that the Court did have the power to rule the state's behavior as unconstitutional which other judges had been reluctant to articulate.



## Program Highlights by Michele Hoyman:

Edmonds identified one of the culprits as a recent **trend in privatization** of education through expansion of voucher access dramatically to not just poor, but middle class families and raising the amount of the voucher to \$9600.

[Learn More](#)

Our state's rankings on **per pupil expenditure, teacher pay, and funding effort** are very low. Our resources are not low; N.C. is not a poor state. We have a large surplus because of not passing a budget last year. In addition, we had the lowest corporate tax rate of all fifty states in 2020, and it is lower than our surrounding states of Va. and S.C. In fact, this year there is a proposal to go to zero percent corporate tax rate, but it has not passed yet. Edmonds also cited the surge of charter schools several of which were authorized although these schools had a prior performance of only a D when on probation.

**There is some good news:** There is a proposal to re-establish **merit pay for teachers**- a 10% salary increase for a Master's degree (which had been taken away in 2013-2015). There are two proposals for teacher **pay INCREASES**. The House proposed a 5.5% increase. The Senate proposed 3%.

We will have a link to our website soon with more details from Lynn Edmonds, and we will include updates on the state budget and the Leandro Case. The **Learn More** button above will direct you to an **Impact of Privatization Workshop on Oct. 9** that is available from **Public Schools First NC**.

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**AAUW-ODC board has approved a \$1000 annual scholarship at Central Carolina Community College** in Chatham County for a resident of Chatham or Orange Co. The first award is set for Fall 2022. Our annual commitment to local branch scholarships for women is now \$5,000. Thank you for your generous support of [our Fundraisers!](#)

You may donate any time, in any amount. **Tell your friends and family members!** See our [Donate page](#). **Note:** No “ticketed” event this year. Please give as you are able. Your participation is priceless.

[Donate with PayPal](#)

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## October is *Becky's* Birthday Dollars!



### Birthday Dollars

Celebrate birthdays and give to branch scholarships now with our new PayPal page. Help make wishes come true for women students at UNC, NCCU, Durham Tech and coming soon: Central Carolina Community College in Chatham Co.

[Learn More](#)

[Becky Mann \(send her an e-card\)](#), our newsletter editor, has an **October** birthday (Oct. 20). Show her some AAUW-ODC branch love and [make a donation](#) in her honor to our **local** scholarships. Birthday dollars are split evenly among the 4 AAUW-ODC scholarships.

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## **Dr. Milbre Burch, Writer/Performer:**

Dr. Milbre Burch is dedicated to addressing issues of **diversity, equity and inclusion**, to working for peace and justice and reconciliation, and to speaking the truth of women's experiences. She is a GRAMMY-nominated spoken word recording artist, an internationally known Oracle-Award-winning storyteller, and a sought-after teaching artist. The preeminent interpreter of Jane Yolen stories, she has performed and taught across the US, Europe and Asia since 1978.

"Sometimes I Sing" is possible through an Artist Project grant received by Dr. Burch from the Orange County Arts Commission (OCAC).

Her partners in the grant proposal were three Orange County agencies providing direct support to survivors of sexual assault and domestic violence. Please find links to those three agencies below:

[Carolina Women's Center \(UNC\)](#)

[Chapel Hill Police Crisis Unit](#)

[Compass Center for Women and Families](#)

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## **"Sometimes I Sing"**

Send friends the Zoom Registration

link: <https://tinyurl.com/r2emb674>

Panel discussion concerning Domestic Violence. Open to the public. Oct. 16th Zoom

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## Help us grow.

New members may join and **SAVE 30%**. **October 16 - 31**. Know somebody who let their membership lapse for several years? Invite them back! [Sign her up for the Shape The Future promotional offer.](#)

[Sign up -here.](#)

Email an invitation to join to friends with this link: <https://tinyurl.com/join-discount> or forward this newsletter and invite them to sign up for Oct. 16th program!

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## Forgot to Renew? Dues: \$83

Current members who have not yet renewed, please [email our treasurer.](#)

“Re-join” on line, [Click here.](#) Our fiscal year ends June 30th, and AAUW considers memberships “lapsed” on Oct. 1st each year.

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