



AAUW advances gender equity for women and girls through research, education, and advocacy.

Website: <http://marquette-mi.aauw.net> Facebook: [AAUW Marquette Branch](#)

## Convener's Corner

### GREETINGS EVERYONE

For those who may have missed it, our president Judy Puncochar completed her second term as president of our branch, moved to Nebraska, retired from her position at NMU, and is pursuing other activities. We all wish you the very best and

### THANK YOU, Judy!

Since as a board, we were unsuccessful in finding a new president for this year, we decided to share the duties. Five board members will rotate convening the board meetings--**Ruth Ziel, Meg Goodrich, Pat Pellet, Karlyn Rapport, and Carol Steinhaus**. In lieu of a president, Carol also agreed to serve as the contact person for the AAUW state and national organizations while Meg Goodrich and Ruth Ziel develop a list of convener duties.

Carol Steinhaus also agreed to continue as recording secretary, with Karen Rudisill serving as the back-up secretary to take minutes when Carol takes her turn as a convener. All remaining board members and officers will continue in their current roles.

### FIRST GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING – A Potluck

**MONDAY, September 19 at 5:30 pm** at the First Presbyterian Church, 120 N Front St., Marquette our first membership meeting of this fiscal year will be a potluck, so bring a yummy dish to pass.

Our program that evening will be a work bee, **sorting books** for our big used Book Sale fundraiser which will run from Thursday, September 22 through Saturday, September 24, 2022.

Book Sale coordinator, Renee Leow, has been working on this event over the summer, but she needs many helping hands to make this event a success. Please contact Renee either by phone call or text at 906-250-5503. There are opportunities to help *before* the potluck, *at* the potluck, *during* the book sale and *after* the sale. We will also distribute our 2022-23 membership booklets at this meeting.

### NEW MEMBERS

We have 2 new members who have joined our Marquette Branch--Laurie Lotter and Ellen Koski, both transfer members from other AAUW branches. Laurie Lotter received a B.A. in administration from Davenport University and Ellen Koski received a B.A. and MPH from University of Minnesota Twin Cities. Welcome!

### NAMED GRANT AWARD

We have news about our named Grant Award. For years we donated to the national AAUW Educational fund in honor of a member(s) from our branch. AAUW is now requesting that donations be to their Greatest Needs Fund as the other funds are well endowed for many, many years to come. So, this year we decided to make our donation in honor of **all** our resilient members who worked so hard to stay connected and functional during these difficult pandemic years. As a branch, we will continue to honor a member or members locally while making our donation nationally. **Here's to our resilient members!!**

*Ruth Ziel, Treasurer  
and August Convener*

# NMU SCHOLARSHIP CAMPAIGN

## Back to School & Return to School



As we kick-off our NMU Scholarship Campaign in September, we reflect on the incredible response this past year and our AAUW purpose. Through the generosity of our donors, we awarded three scholarships to phenomenal young women. This Fund expresses a core value and legacy of our AAUW-Branch, the value of and access to higher education. Through our NMU Scholarship Fund we seek to assist young women demonstrating financial need, significant barriers, and perseverance.

I am very familiar with the term Back to School and all the implications and even memories associated with that notion. It was only recently that I heard mention of “Return to School” in reference to the higher education population returning after some time away. That struck me as also fitting our NMU Scholarship Campaign candidates and recipients.

It is rewarding to provide a financial gift to young women that results in so many tangible benefits. More on their stories in the upcoming letter that will be shared with this year’s membership Blue Book. Until then, know that because of your support, incredible young women are returning to school.

*Les Bek,  
NMU Scholarship Campaign Co-Chair*

### **P.S. If you would like to get a head start...**

Please make your check payable to AAUW-Marquette. Memo: AAUW Scholarship. Mail to Ruth Ziel, 734 Lakewood Lane, Marquette, MI 49855

## Public Policy News

### *Student Loan Debt: The picture is Changing*

President Biden cancelled \$10,000 in student loan debt for almost 8 million students. Recipients of Pell Grants could see a debt reduction of \$20,000, however, only loans from the Department of Education were eligible for this reduction. Earners earning \$125,000 year were eligible for \$10,000. Couples earning \$250,000 were also eligible. The payment and interest pause on student loans was extended to the end of this year. Biden also wanted to lower the percentage of income a borrower pays per month, but he was not able to sell this to Congress. President Biden’s efforts have been criticized by some, saying it will increase inflation.

### **Lowering student debt has been a long-standing concern for AAUW.**

Its recommendations to accomplish this are:

1. Protect and expand Pell grants for low-income students thus lowering the amount of student loans they take on to obtain a college degree
2. Increase funding for public colleges and universities and support efforts to move toward tuition-free and debt-free options.
3. Protect students from abusive and fraudulent practices by schools, lenders, and loan services.
4. Address other financial needs of students like childcare and non-tuition related expenses.
5. Provide matches for employers and other supports for student loan debt payment

**Tuition costs have increased over 200% between 2001-2022.** This is four times the rate of inflation during this period. Tuition aid has decreased during this same period. Now the average debt from Michigan colleges is \$36,000.

**There is good news in Michigan’s 2022-2023 state budget.** Twenty -five million dollars have been allocated for state-funded college scholarships. Pell grants have increased to \$6895. However, the rising

cost of college tuition results in low-income students racking up more debt or opting out of finishing college. Biden wanted to increase Pell Grants to \$13,000 but Congress would not pass this provision.

**Another way to reduce debt is to graduate in fewer semesters.** At the very least, we are seeing efforts addressing the burden of student loan debt.

**Dates to put on your calendar:**

**Thursday, September 15, 7 PM**

AAUW MI will have a ZOOM presentation on two ballot proposals--**Promote the Vote** and **Reproductive Freedom for All**. You can register for this at [aauwmi.org](http://aauwmi.org). This will be recorded and available on the AAUWMI website. AAUW Michigan endorses both proposals.

There is a real effort to keep the proposals off the **November 8** ballot. Attorneys for Promote the Vote and Reproductive Freedoms for All must submit their rebuttals to the challenges by **August 31**. The Board of Canvassers will make their decision whether to certify these petitions for the November ballot by **Friday, September 9**.


Will the Board of Canvassers turn their backs on 670,000 signers of the Promote the Vote petition and 753,739 signatures submitted for the Reproductive Freedom for All petition? All signers are registered voters in Michigan. If these petitions are rejected by the Board of Canvassers, the courts will have to decide.

- Give some thought to ways to make sure people vote.
- Make it a point to talk with your friends and neighbors about voting.
- Is there anything you think our branch could be doing to GOTV [Get Out the Vote]?

***Send me your ideas.***

***In my lifetime I have never known an election of such critical importance!***

***Karlyn Rapport,  
Public Policy Representative***





FRIENDS OF PETER WHITE PUBLIC LIBRARY & MARQUETTE CHAPTER OF AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITY WOMEN

**THURSDAY SEPTEMBER 22**  
PRESALE  
5:00 PM - 8:00 PM  
\$5.00 ADMISSION

**FRIDAY SEPTEMBER 23**  
9:30 AM - 5:00 PM  
NO ADMISSION CHARGE

**SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 24**  
1/2 PRICE SALE  
9:30 AM - 1:30 PM  
BAG SALE  
1:45 PM - 4:00 PM  
\$5.00/BAG  
NO ADMISSION CHARGE

**Friends of PWPL Book Sale**  
**PWPL Community Room, 217 N. Front St.**  
Proceeds to benefit the PWPL's programs, services & materials  
**Marquette Chapter of American Association of University Women Book Sale**  
**First Presbyterian Church, 120 N. Front St.**

2022 PWPL Poster



THANK YOU for continuing to collect receipts. We can still turn in receipts that say Econo, although new ones say **Tadych MarketPlace**. The new owners are continuing the generous tradition of allowing groups such as AAUW to earn money by collecting and turning in their receipts.

So please keep old receipts and continue to KEEP SAVING NEW RECEIPTS and bring them all to any in-person meeting you can attend, or you can mail or drop them off to me at 617 W Hampton St, Marquette 49855.

*Meredith Kulisheck*