



VIEWPOINTS

North Hills Pittsburgh, (PA) Branch

Vol. 54 FEB 2025

NO FEBRUARY BRANCH MEETING

In past years, due to weather concerns, we have not offered a February meeting.

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

The 2025 Black History Month theme is "**African Americans and Labor**", touching on the invaluable contributions of African Americans in the workforce.

This year's theme highlights the significant contributions of African Americans in the workforce throughout history. From the time of slavery to the present day, Black people have played a crucial role in shaping labor and work experiences in the United States.

The 2025 theme, African Americans and Labor, focuses on the various and profound ways that work and working of all kinds – free and unfree, skilled and unskilled, vocational and voluntary – intersect with the collective experiences of Black people. Indeed, work is at the very center of much of Black history and culture.

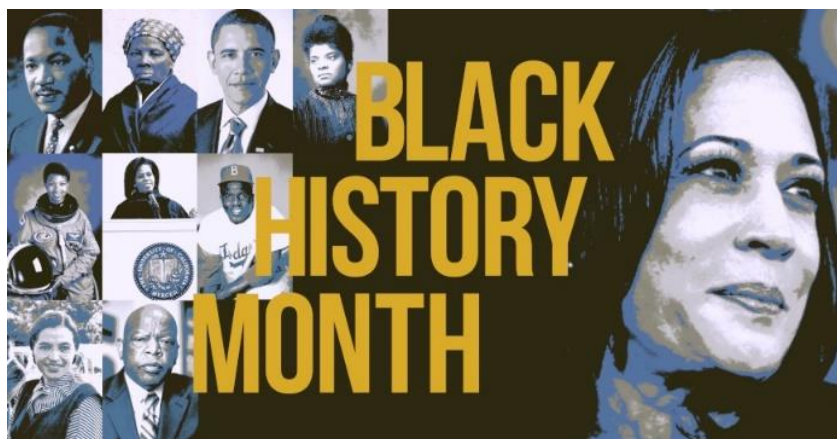
2025 marks the 100-year anniversary of the creation of Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters and Maids by labor organizer and civil rights activist A. Philip Randolph, which was the first Black union to receive a charter in the American Federation of Labor. Martin Luther King Jr. incorporated issues outlined by Randolph's March on Washington Movement, such as economic justice, into the Poor People's Campaign, which he established in 1967. For King, it was a priority for Black people to be considered full citizens.

The theme, "African Americans and Labor," intends to encourage broad reflections on intersections between Black people's work and their workplaces in all their iterations and key moments, themes, and events in Black history and culture across time and space and throughout the U.S. Such new considerations and reconsiderations are even more significant as the historical forces of racial oppression gather new and renewed strength in the 21st century.

Resources for Black History Month 2025

[Black Workers Remember - American Prospect](#)

[The Power in Our Hands: A Curriculum on the History of Work and Workers in the United States](#)



February at a Glance

QUICK REFERENCE CALENDAR

Feb 4, 10:00 a.m. Board Meeting
At June Maier's

Feb 7, 7:00 p.m. La Roche Literary Society
La Roche Ryan room

Feb 11, 9:30 a.m. Morning Book Group
The Heaven & Earth Grocery Store
by **James McBride**
Facilitator: Fran Bogos
Hostess: Marilyn Loichinger

Feb 14, 1:00 p.m. Lunch Bunch
Primanti Brothers
45 McIntyre Square Drive, Pittsburgh, PA 15237

Feb 17, 7:00 p.m. Evening Book Group
The Wager by David Grann
Facilitator: TBD
Hostess: Zoom

Feb 22, 5:00 p.m.-7:00 p.m. IPODs
Hosted by the Anderson's

Save The Dates!

Great Decisions starts Feb 1, 2025

April 30, 2025 Annual Dinner
At Wildwood Golf Club

May 31, 2025 Authors Lunch
For The Love of Books

Viewpoint Articles

We encourage all of our members to submit articles to the Viewpoints. If you have something to include in our newsletter the deadline is the **25th of each Month**. Please send to Debbie Rosenfelder in word format at rosenfelderd@verizon.net



If I do not have it by 5 P.M. on the 25th of the month it may not make the Viewpoints

WEB SITE



Don't Forget Me...
I'm always here!
I'm your Branch AAUW Website:
<https://aauwnorthhillspgh.org>
Stay informed!

Webmaster: Susan Banerjee



Membership

Let's Keep Growing Together!

"The future belongs to those who believe in the beauty of their dreams."

Eleanor Roosevelt

First lady of the United States, columnist, diplomat

As I write these words, the world is preparing for the inauguration of our 47th president of the United States – and many are holding their breath.

Donald Trump's first administration as U.S. President attacked women's rights across a broad range of issues including eroding efforts to end the pay gap between men and women, weakening Title IX – the law banning sex discrimination in public education, undermined access to birth control and started the process to greatly hinder access to healthcare. There is much more to lose and many women are wondering how best to address these concerns post-election.

AAUW is one way to address many of these concerns. AAUW is committed to gender equity in all forms: education, economic security, and inclusivity. AAUW has been helping to transform women's lives for more than a century, and the work continues. AAUW is a community of more than 170,000 members standing strong for gender equity and please know **your voice and your membership matters!** We need to continue to raise our collective voices to address some of the most crucial issues of our time. While there will be challenges ahead, AAUW remains steadfast in our fight to ensure full equity of equality that cannot be undermined on account of sex and as always, work together to support women.

PLEASE ask a friend if they would like to know more about AAUW. Guests are welcome to attend our next program on Wednesday, March 19th, when our guest will be Robert Stakely. Robert is the Affiliates Program Manager at the Heinz History Center in association with the Smithsonian Institute. He will be addressing the "A Women's Place: How Women Shaped Pittsburgh" and guests are most welcome to join us for coffee, cookies, conversation, as well as learning more about our role in Pittsburgh history – or her story!

We look forward to seeing you in March,
Francie Cech and Jennifer Schwoebel: Membership V.P.'s, NHP AAUW

February 2025 Financial Report – June Maier

(as of January 23, 2025)

CHECKING		SAVINGS		9-MONTH CD	
Beginning Balance	\$7,561.50	Beginning Balance	\$3,836.56	Beginning Balance	\$3,108.70
Deposits	\$25.00	Transactions	\$0.00		
Expenses	\$340.36	Interest Earned	TBD	Interest Earned	TBD
Ending Balances	\$7,246.14	Ending Balances	\$3,836.56	Ending Balance	\$3,108.70

CHECKING + SAVINGS + CD = \$14,191.40

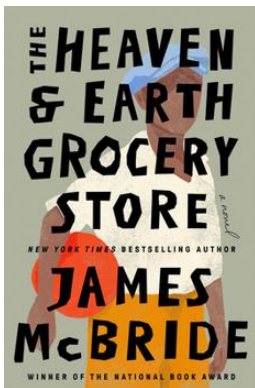
February Happenings

Lunch Bunch

Primanti Bros. [45 McIntyre Square Drive, Pittsburgh, PA 15237](#) is a casual dining chain. Founded in Pittsburgh's historic Strip District in 1933, our Primanti Bros. Pittsburgh location is your go-to for delicious handcrafted sandwiches piled high with house-made coleslaw and perfectly seasoned fresh-cut fries. They have more than just sandwiches.

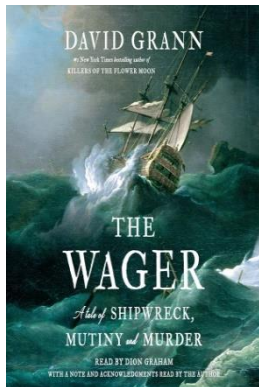


Morning Book Group *THE HEAVEN & EARTH GROCERY STORE* by [James McBride](#)



This is a novel by American writer [James McBride](#). It was released in 2023 to critical success. The novel tells the story of Black and Jewish residents of the Chicken Hill neighborhood of [Pottstown, Pennsylvania](#), in the 1920s and '30s. It's a story about people who are struggling and their ambitions, successes and disappointments. In this compassionate, life-affirming and often funny novel, McBride explores what it means to be in a community and to live at the margins of "white" America".

Evening Book Group *THE WAGER* by David Grann



On January 28, 1742, a ramshackle vessel of patched-together wood and cloth washed up on the coast of Brazil. Inside were thirty emaciated men, barely alive, and they had an extraordinary tale to tell. They were survivors of His Majesty's Ship the Wager, a British vessel that had left England in 1740 on a secret mission during an imperial war with Spain. While the Wager had been chasing a Spanish treasure-filled galleon known as "the prize of all the oceans," it had wrecked on a desolate island off the coast of Patagonia. The men, after being marooned for months and facing starvation, built the flimsy craft and sailed for more than a hundred days, traversing early 3,000 miles of storm-wracked seas. They were greeted as heroes.

But then...six months later, another, even more decrepit craft landed on the coast of Chile. This boat contained just three castaways, and they told a very different story. The thirty sailors who landed in Brazil were not heroes—they were mutineers. The first group responded with countercharges of their own, of a tyrannical and murderous senior officer and his henchmen. It became clear that while stranded on the island the crew had fallen into anarchy, with warring factions fighting for dominion over the barren wilderness. As accusations of treachery and murder flew, the Admiralty convened a court martial to determine who was telling the truth. The stakes were life-and-death—for whomever the court found guilty could hang.

Public Policy

PA State

2023-2024 Fellowship and Grant Recipients

The link below will connect to a list of those women attending Pennsylvania colleges and universities who were selected for an AAUW National Fellowship or Grant. Also included are recipients of the Community Action Grant. There are three women from the Pittsburgh area. [Click here](#)

Marissa Escada Community Action Grant Strong Women, Strong Girls (Pittsburgh) Curriculum-driven, female centered skills mentoring program for girls in under resourced communities

Shakira Martinez Vasquez Selected Professions Fellowship Carnegie-Mellon University M.S. student in chemical engineering; plans career in cosmetics and personal care products. She spoke at our January 20th, 2024 branch meeting.

Lauren Marsh American Dissertation Scholarship University of Pittsburgh Laboring for Reproductive Justice: Doula Care in Carceral Space

AAUW PA Summer Retreat:

AAUW Pennsylvania holds a one-day Summer Retreat in odd years.

Saturday, June 28, 2025

The retreat will take place at the Wyndham Garden State College
(310 Elks Club Road, Boalsburg)

It will feature a full program, luncheon, and guest speaker(s).

A social reception is planned for Friday evening.

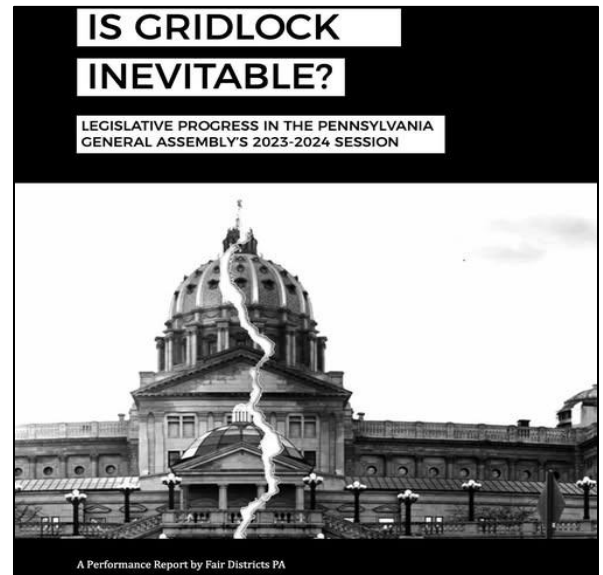
More information will be coming!



Local

Submitted by Peggy Schmiedecke

PA's 2025-2026 General Assembly was sworn in on January 7. The first vote in both House and Senate was for procedural rules that govern how the chambers operate. Past rules have contributed to gridlock and division. Past sessions have accomplished very little when compared to other states.



Leaving Lawmakers Out - Each chamber of the General Assembly is controlled by a handful of caucus leaders and committee chairs that have the power to stop or delay a bill from receiving a committee hearing or a committee vote or from being brought to a floor vote by the full chamber. For various reasons, the vast majority of bills that are introduced in each session never become law.

Leaving Voters Out - How is this small group of caucus leaders and committee chairs able to retain so much control? Their grip on the legislative process is almost guaranteed to continue, despite their role in blocking constructive legislation for which many Pennsylvanians, regardless of party affiliation, have voiced support. These legislators know that the most effective way to ensure long-term incumbency is through gerrymandering—drawing the boundary lines of legislative districts in ways that are likely to produce the greatest number of votes for them in each election.

Our Future - The 2030 census may seem like an event that's too far in the future to contemplate right now. However, any change in the process requires a constitutional amendment that must be passed by the General Assembly in two consecutive legislative sessions. So, in anticipation of the 2030 census, a constitutional amendment authorizing a fair redistricting process would have to be approved in the Pennsylvania legislature's 2025-26 session and again in the 2027- 28 session. Without a fundamental change in the redistricting process, gerrymandered legislative districts could re-emerge as the norm for Pennsylvania after the 2030 census, once again leaving citizens without the ability to meaningfully choose their legislators. It does not have to be this way.

Read **Fair Districts PA** report and help advocate for change.

https://www.fixharrisburg.com/files/ugd/bc3343_09ae3ecce5e94961b2c79ff340d75f12.pdf

CEDAW 4 Pittsburgh

Submitted by AAUW NH PGH, CEDAW 4 PGH & AC Chair Peggy Schmiedecke

The City of Pittsburgh amends the Gender Equity Commission Ordinance to advance local intersectional Gender Equity Lens. For Press Release and to stay up to date on CEDAW go to <https://aauwnorthhillspgh.org/cedaw/>

CEDAW 4 Pittsburgh set out to rebuild the **Gender Equity Commission** and we succeeded! This is major! Major! This has the potential to change Pittsburgh women and femmes' lives now and into the future at a time when many of the advances that we have made over the decades are under attack. Awesome work by the many organizations that help to make this happen! To serve on the Gender Equity Commission you must be a resident of the City of Pittsburgh.

The City has been recruiting new commissioners for the Gender Equity Commission to relaunch in Q1 2025. If you are interested in becoming a GEC Commissioner, please fill out an application here: <https://engage.pittsburghpa.gov/pittsburgh-volunteer-application> and select "Gender Equity."

AT this time the Pittsburgh Gender Equity Commission has several seats open, including:

1. One member of the community that is actively working on gender equity issues.
2. One member with experience working on economic development, labor unions, and gender-based discrimination in the workplace.
3. One member with experience working on addressing gender-based violence.

To learn more, please explore the Gender Equity Ordinance at: <https://ecode360.com/45432456>

Equal Pay Day – March 5, 2025.

Equal Pay Day is the symbolic day dedicated to raising awareness of the gender pay gap. In the United States, this date symbolizes how far into the year the average median woman must work (in addition to their earnings last year) in order to have earned what the average median man had earned the entire previous year. The exact day differs year by year.

In the United States, the average wage gap for women also varies by demographic and therefore also has different dates to recognize how far into the year an average woman of color needs to work to earn what the average man earned in the previous year without accounting for job type, education, etc.

Check out what our branch will be doing and how to get involved

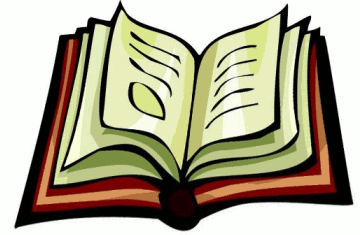
- The General Assembly is not in session during the two weeks around Equal Pay Day in 2025 so AAUW PA is asking members to reach out to the Assembly members in their local offices.
- Peggy Schmiedecke will chair a Branch Equal Pay Day Committee. If you are interested in being part of this, please let Peggy know. A Zoom call is planned for February 11, 2025 at 7:00 p.m.



The Spring La Roche Literary Society

Carleton Young: "Voices from the Attic: The Williamstown Boys in the Civil War"
Feb. 7 at 7 p.m. La Roche University in the Ryan Room of the Zappala Campus Center

Author and historian Carleton Young has spent over a decade unearthing the story of two Civil War soldiers after discovering an enormous collection of letters in his family attic. In his book, "Voices from the Attic: The Williamstown Boys in the Civil War," Dr. Young shares the remarkable story of two brothers who served in the celebrated Vermont Brigade within the 6th Corps of the Army of the Potomac. This presentation will explore the surprisingly detailed and insightful letters that preserved the brothers' personal histories as well as a powerful narrative of the Civil War.



Dr. Young has undergraduate degrees in economics from Westminster College and in English from Point Park University, a Master of Arts in history from Ohio University and his Ph.D. in the history of education from the University of Pittsburgh. For 37 years he taught AP American history at Thomas Jefferson High School in Pittsburgh. He also has taught classes as an adjunct professor at the Community College of Allegheny County, the University of Pittsburgh, Eastern Gateway Community College and in the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at Carnegie Mellon University.

THE AAUW 5 STAR PROGRAM

The 5 Star National Recognition Program rewards affiliates (states, branches, other organizations) for aligning their work with the AAUW strategic plan and other initiatives that foster the organization's mission of advancing gender equity for women and girls. The program is designed to promote cohesion between AAUW national and affiliates and increase understanding and implementation of the strategic plan goals. *Successful completion of each area of focus listed below results in receipt of a star.*

- *ADVANCEMENT: By maintaining a branch membership that financially supports AAUW priorities.
- *COMMUNICATIONS & EXTERNAL RELATIONS: By utilizing media, including the branch website, newsletter, email updates and Facebook page, as portals to our beliefs/values, programs, activities and events.
- *PROGRAMS: By consistently focusing programs on AAUW's mission, vision and values.
- *PUBLIC POLICY & RESEARCH: By offering programs and events featuring our public officials and supporting the 2-minute activist program.
- *GOVERNANCE & SUSTAINABILITY: By working as a team to update the strategic plan for the branch and to develop the future leadership pool, with a focus on DEI.

At this time our branch is in the process of submitting documentation as we feel we meet four of these stars. We will keep the branch posted.



Great Decisions 2025

Our North Hills Pittsburgh Branch of AAUW is so pleased to once again be sponsoring the Great Decisions discussion program in 2025! We are so hoping that you will be able to join us, and here are the answers to the top five questions you may have at this time.

- 1- What is Great Decisions? This non-partisan program developed by the Foreign Policy Association in 1954 has become America's largest discussion program, and our branch has been sponsoring this valuable program for over forty years! Great Decisions offers the opportunity to take a closer look at the most critical issues facing our country through a group experience of viewing a documentary, reading an article, (Optional) listening to a speaker, and engaging in a discussion focused on the information shared by both the Foreign Policy Association and the speaker. Our sessions also offer the opportunity to ask questions that our speakers answer to the best of their ability, which raises our level of understanding.
- 2- When will this program take place? Saturday mornings in February and March:
Session 1 - Saturday, February 1st, 2025 – "US China Relations" featured speaker is Dr. Mark Haas, Duquesne University
Session 2 - Saturday, February 8th, 2025 – "International Cooperation on Climate Change" featured speaker is Dr. Danielle Falzon, Rutgers University
Session 3 - Saturday, February 15th, 2025 – "American Foreign Policy in the Middle East: Taking Stock and Looking Ahead" featured speaker Professor Ross Harrison, University of Pittsburgh
Session 4 - Saturday, February 22nd, 2025 – "The Future of NATO and European Security" featured speaker Dr. Soren Fanning, Robert Morris University
(March – Information forthcoming)
- 3- Where will this program take place? Our Great Decisions programs will take place both in-person at La Roche University, Room 101 in the Palumbo Science Center and on Zoom. Our website will be updated every week with the information to access the Zoom link for the upcoming session. Covid threw us many curve balls, but one of the better things it left in its wake was the ability, and value, of connecting through Zoom! We are offering our speakers the option of joining us on Zoom as well.
- 4- What is the cost of attending this amazing program? Once again, our North Hills Pittsburgh Branch is pleased and proud to be offering this valuable educational outreach program to the community at no cost to the attendees. We will, however, be most appreciative of donations to the cause. We will have a donation box available at each of the Great Decisions sessions.
- 5- Wondering about the availability of books for the 2025 season of Great Decisions?
If you wish to purchase a book for the 2025 season, (optional) they are once again available to purchase at the La Roche University Library.
The books are \$30.00 and payable by check only. Checks should be made payable to: AAUW North Hills Pittsburgh.
Please check the AAUW North Hills Pittsburgh website for additional or updated information and to register if you will be Zooming in for a session. We look forward to having you join us, with or without a book, in person or via Zoom, for Great Decisions 2025!

Great Decisions team: Francie Cech, Fran Bogos, Sister Rita Yeasted

Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) What's Next

The **Equal Rights Amendment (ERA)** is a proposed amendment to the United States Constitution that would explicitly prohibit sex discrimination. It is not currently a part of the Constitution, though its ratification status has long been debated.

President Joe Biden announced Friday January 17, 2025 that the Equal Rights Amendment should be considered a ratified addition to the U.S. Constitution, making a symbolic statement that's unlikely to alter a decades-long push for gender equality.

It is long past time to recognize the will of the American people," Biden said. "In keeping with my oath and duty to Constitution and country, I affirm what I believe and what three-fourths of the states have ratified: the 28th Amendment is the law of the land, guaranteeing all Americans equal rights and protections under the law regardless of their sex."

Presidents do not have any role in the amendment process. The leader of the National Archives had previously said that the amendment cannot be certified because it wasn't ratified before a deadline set by Congress.

The Equal Rights Amendment, which would prohibit discrimination based on gender, was sent to the states for ratification in 1972. Congress set a deadline of 1979 for three-quarters of state legislatures to ratify the amendment, and then extended it to 1982.

But it wasn't until 2020, when Virginia lawmakers passed the amendment, that 38 states had ratified it. The archivist said Congress or the courts must change the deadline to consider the amendment as certified. It is now up to the courts and congress.

We still have a long way to go. I would like to thank all members that called, texted, send emails, letters or post cards to President Biden in regards to the ERA



GO RED

February is celebrated as American Heart Month. The first Friday of February is celebrated as National Woman's Heart Day. The first week of February from February 1 to 7 is celebrated as Women's Heart Week. These initiatives aim to spread awareness about women's cardiovascular health, educate, raise awareness, and teach the symptoms and preventions of serious heart diseases in women. People are encouraged to wear red to show their support.

Heart Care for Women

It's time to take women's heart health seriously. Do you?

Cardiovascular disease is the number 1 killer of women, [according to the American Heart Association \(AHA\)](#). Yet only 44% of women know that heart disease is the leading cause of death for women in the United States. Nearly 45% of females age 20 and older have some form of cardiovascular disease, according to the AHA. But many people don't know they are at risk for heart disease.

Know Your Numbers

These numbers can provide a glimpse of your health status and risk for certain diseases and conditions, including heart disease, diabetes, obesity, and more.

BLOOD PRESSURE

120/80
or less

Blood pressure is a measurement of the force on the walls of your arteries as your heart pumps blood through your body.

BLOOD SUGAR

Less than
100
(fasting)

Blood sugar, or glucose, is the main sugar found in your blood. It comes from the food you eat, and is your body's main source of energy.

BLOOD CHOLESTEROL

Less than
200

Cholesterol is a waxy, fat-like substance that occurs naturally in all parts of the body.

BODY MASS INDEX (BMI)

18.5 - 24.9

Body mass index (BMI) is a measure of body fat based on height and weight.

Diversity

Three Cheers for the ERA! Submitted by Barbara Matthews

AAUW applauds President Joe Biden's historic affirmation of the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) as the 28th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution.

In light of the recent change in the U. S. Presidency and the executive orders signed, "AAUW is committed to holding all elected officials accountable about women's rights, bodily autonomy, and access to education and economic opportunity, particularly for women of color", says Gloria Blackwell, CEO, AAUW.

She continues to say in her January 23 email to all members: "AAUW's foundation is unwavering and rooted in strength, courage, and purpose. Side by side, we will continue the fight—for the women, girls and communities we cherish, the impact we elevate, and the legacies we create."

Branch Bylaws Update

The updated branch Bylaws are ready to be reviewed and voted on by the branch. An electronic copy showing major/significant deletions and additions, along with a brief explanation for the change, will be emailed to all members in the coming weeks.

We will have a special branch meeting via Zoom in March (This will be a separate meeting not our regular March branch meeting.) to discuss and vote on the updated Bylaws.

Date and time TBD

After you receive the document if you have question please reach out to Katherine Keith.



Why Vote In Municipal Elections? Voter Collaboration - LWV of Greater Pittsburgh with AAUW North Hills Pittsburgh and La Roche University

AAUW North Hills Pittsburgh Branch collaborated with the League of Women Voters of Greater Pittsburgh to have a *Why Vote In Municipal Elections? Local and Municipal Elections Affect you the Most!* voter table at La Roche University's Spring Activities Fair on January 28, 2025. Judy Clack, VP Voter Services and Peggy Schmiedecke, Civic Education, College/University Committee and AAUW North Hills Pittsburgh's Board Public Policy Chair created a Volunteer Script with a slant towards an Elevator Pitch. We had registration ballots and supporting flyers with a focus on giving the *Voting Resource You Need* card. This would enable the person to check their voter registration status in case they needed to make a change since they will be off campus for the PA May 20, 2025 Primary Election. Also to remind them that the Primary is a closed election and that you must be registered as a Republican or Democrat to vote in the Primary. We provide over 25 students with information. Also, the Student Government is going to add discussing the importance of voting in the May 20th Primary at one of their things you need to know tabling efforts. Student Development is making copies of the flyer *Why Vote in Municipal Elections?* to place around campus along with a pile of the *Voting Resources You Need* card.



January in Pictures

25th Annual Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Unity Breakfast

January 20, 2025, at La Roche University in the Zappala Campus Center
Speaker: Angela Reynolds, PhD, Chief Executive Officer, YWCA Greater Pittsburgh
10 of our branch members braved the cold to attend this event.



Speaker: Angela Reynolds, PhD,
Chief Executive Officer, YWCA Greater Pittsburgh



Chistina A Clark, PhD
President at La Roche University



Sarah White M.A
Executive Director for
Inclusion Belonging at La Roche University





Lunch Bunch



MISSION STATEMENT OF AAUW LEGAL ADVOCACY FUND

LAF provides funding and a support system for women seeking judicial redress for sex discrimination.

AAUW MEMBERSHIP

AAUW, founded in 1881, is open to all graduates who hold an associate's or higher degree from a regionally accredited college or university.

AAUW DIVERSITY STATEMENT

In principle and practice AAUW values and seeks a diverse membership. There shall be no barriers to full participation in this organization on the basis of gender, race, age, sexual orientation, national origin, disability, or class.

BRANCH CONTACT INFORMATION

President: Deborah Rosenfelder	412-916-9073 or rosenfelderd@verizon.net
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Branch Website: aauwnorthhillspgh.org

Branch Email: aauwfam@gmail.com

Facebook Page: AAUW North Hills Pittsburgh branch

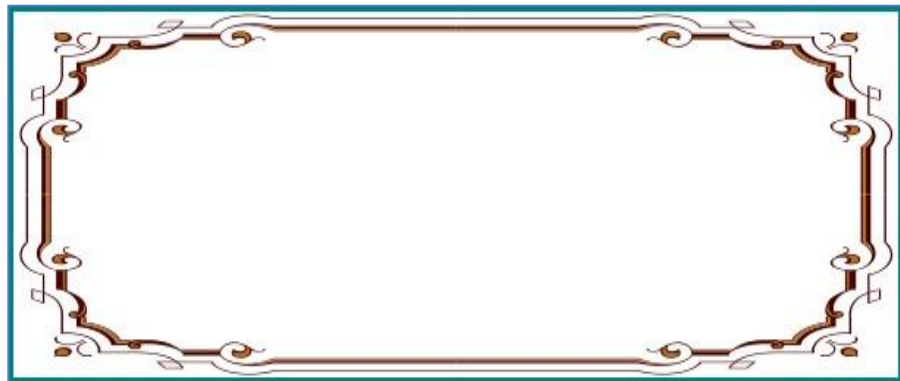
CONNECT2AAUW: 800-326-2289 or connect@aauw.org

National Website: www.aauw.org

State Website: www.aauw-pa.org

Viewpoints

AAUW North Hills Pittsburgh Branch
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Because Equity is still an issue