



AMERICAN  
ASSOCIATION OF  
UNIVERSITY  
WOMEN

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# ATLANTA BRANCH NEWS

Vol. 60, No. 8 ❖ April 2010

## April Meeting: Mental Health

Please join us for our next meeting on Saturday, April 24, at 11:00 a.m., at:

**Mirage Restaurant**

6631-C Roswell Road, Sandy Springs  
Telephone: 404/843-8300

In observance of Mental Health Month, we will have as our speaker Dr. Bethany Davis, a board-certified psychiatrist, who will speak on treatment for women with depression, including medications and psychotherapy. Dr. Davis will reserve time at the end of her presentation to take questions.

Dr. Davis is currently in private practice and has a special interest in treating women in all stages of pregnancy, including the planning and the postpartum period. She also works part-time as the staff psychiatrist at Metro Atlanta Recovery Residences in the Women's Recovery Center. She participates in clinical pharmaceutical research trials, helping to study new medications in hopes of reaching new levels of patient wellness.

Lunch will consist of beef, lamb, and chicken kabobs, rice, baklava, tea, and coffee. Price per person: \$19.00. To reserve your place, please e-mail Frances Smith at francesjsmith1921@yahoo.com or call her at 404/231-0482.

**The reservation deadline is Monday, April 19.**

Directions: Mirage Restaurant is in Abernathy Square Shopping Center on the southeast corner of Roswell and Abernathy Roads. The restaurant is on the east side. ❖

## Presidents' Column

### Part 1: Save the Date!

by Mary Lynn Merkle

Your co-presidents have chosen their presidential project with great enthusiasm! Our Branch has spent time and energy considering healthy branch culture/organizing to work toward our stated goals at a board meeting, at a general meeting, and in our newsletters. We soon realized that figuring out who we are, what we want to be, and how we should get there were questions we could not answer within the time constraints of these meetings, and the request for input in the newsletter did not produce additional thoughts. Yet both of us thought that the subject was important to our survival as a branch. To give Atlanta Branch the opportunity to move forward, we will have a daylong workshop during which these will be the designated issues to be considered.

The preliminary work was important and most informative. Our post-general-meeting discussion and conversations on March 20 allowed the planning committee to know some current thoughts and directions—even sharing some ideas for future action activities. Those of you who were not in attendance on March 20 are asked to consider the discussion questions

in this newsletter and to send your completed questionnaire to Ruth Yurchuck either by email or regular mail. The input will be invaluable as we continue planning this important workshop.

The most effective outcome for Atlanta Branch will be dependent on the number of members who are willing to give several hours of intense work. We will gather at 9:30 a.m. on Saturday, June 5, under the guidance of Audrey Salgado, part of AAUW's Leadership Corps. Knowing AAUW and its programs and missions well, and yet not being involved in the inner workings of our branch, makes her the ideal person to guide us through this process. There will be a working (and provided) lunch. Adjournment will be no later than 2:00 p.m., with Atlanta Branch well on its way to defining what we want to be.

### Part 2: It's Not Too Late To Contribute Your Ideas

by Ruth Yurchuck

Following our March 20 general meeting, members who attended were asked to remain

*continued on p. 2*

## State Convention Coming—April 16 & 17

### Have You Registered Yet?

by Mary Lynn Merkle

AAUW of Georgia will again hold their State Convention in conjunction with the Siegel Institute at Kennesaw State University's Phenomenal Women Conference (PWC). Those who wish to attend the PWC as well as our State Convention will need to register separately for the two events.

For the PWC go to <http://www.kennesaw.edu/siegelinstitute/PWC2010.htm>. Registration is \$75; however, AAUW of Georgia will reimburse \$30 to attendees of both the PWC and the AAUW of Georgia Convention.

Our State Convention will begin with registration at the Wingate by Wyndham, Kennesaw, from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. The Awards Banquet will be at the Mansour Center with special guest Audrey Salgado of the AAUW Leadership Corps. Saturday's full-day program will feature a panel of university faculty members coordinated by our Branch member Betty Slater.

The total cost for our convention (including the awards banquet and lunch) is \$66. Go to [aauwga.org](http://aauwga.org) to download a registration form.

Atlanta Branch's membership number allows us three delegates plus a president. Our delegates will be Ruth Yurchuck, Mary Lynn Merkle, Kay Collins, and Diana Witt. ❖

### AAUW calendar: Good News!

Atlanta Branch member Gillian Horsley has won a spot in the AAUW calendar with her photo entitled "Sunset over the Marsh, Edisto Island, South Carolina." This is indeed good news! And I'm sure that all of you who took the time to vote—and vote—and vote helped make it happen! So congratulations to all of us but most especially to Gillian!!

## Presidents' Column *(continued from p. 1)*

for a post-meeting discussion of selected topics in small groups, using the following guide (abbreviated here for space):

**FOCUS:** Improving Branch health through reorganization. However, **we are not interested in simply developing a new organization chart.** The only required Branch officers mandated from AAUW nation are a president and a finance officer. And as a Board member said at our March meeting, **the Branch will die unless we make changes.**

**PURPOSE:** To describe/define the purpose and goals of the Atlanta Branch and to ultimately plan how we can work effectively toward our goals.

- What is your commitment to our branch and to AAUW national? (Please rate each separately)
- What current branch activities are you most passionate about?
- What is happening in the world that you think deserves support from an organization like AAUW? How could our Branch address that issue?
- Based on your experience in our branch, are there activities/roles that could be done differently?
- If the branch was unable to continue, would you miss it? What specifically would you miss?
- Newer members (less than five years) only: why did you join?
- The board wants to hold a one-day retreat to fully explore the passions of this branch and possible ways to reorganize. Would you be interested in participating?

**As a Board member said at our March meeting, the Branch will die unless we make changes.**

Responses to these questions were interesting and varied. Here is a sample of the answers.

- To the question about commitment to the branch and the national organization, virtually every group said they were committed to the Branch and not so much to national. One group cited commitment to equity, mission, and inspiration from others as responses.
- To the question about passion for Branch activities, all groups responded Bookfair; other responses included scholarships, community grants, RFS, women's advocacy, educational opportunities, and pay equity.
- To the questions about support for world issues and how our Branch could address them, responses included illiteracy, hunger, justice, decreasing violence against women, and pay equity; partnering with RFS was identified as a way the Branch could address some of these issues.
- To the questions of Branch activities and roles that could be done differently, responses included concentrating on fewer projects, fewer officers and more delegation, simplifying the organizational structure, and holding evening meetings.
- To the question of what you would miss about the Branch if it was unable to continue, responses included Bookfair, fellowship with other women, and support of women's education.
- To the question for newer members, responses included AAUW reputation and aggressive support of education and women's issues.
- To the question of a retreat, only one group said yes; there was concern about talking too much and taking too little action.

We need YOUR answers to these questions as we prepare for a retreat (yes, we ARE planning for a retreat on June 5) and want to ensure that the right actions will be taken to ensure Branch survival. ❖



## Board Meeting Highlights

by Mary Lynn Merkle

The Atlanta Branch Board met on March 14 with thirteen members present. The meeting was long but very productive, and many important decisions were made.

1. Phyllis Miller brought to our attention a Whole Foods Foundation project, which provides micro credit loans to women in third-world countries. Because Whole Foods Market (Briarcliff at LaVista) has been such a great site for us and the management has been supportive, we voted to give this project \$500 from our general funds (see photos).
2. Approval was given to the recommendations of the Community Action committee for four recipients totaling \$4,800 (not including the award for the RFS Young Women Leaders project).
3. Approval was given to the recommendations of the Scholarship committee. \$7,250 will be distributed to seven women, including \$1,250 of the Esther Davis Scholarship monies.
4. We will continue to improve our website.
5. We nominated Huiping Du for the Emerging Leader award to be given at AAUW of Georgia's convention in April.
6. We are planning our observation of Pay Equity Day on April 20. Watch for more information!
7. The Nominating committee continues to work toward completing the slate of officers which will be voted into office and installed this spring. A discussion ensued about the projected workshop (see co-presidents' column) dedicated to discussion of branch structure and roles and responsibilities of board members.



*Atlanta Branch co-president Mary Lynn Merkle presents a \$500 check to Whole Foods Market manager Tom Fallon.*



8. A report about member participation in "Half the Sky" (the nationally presented program on March 4) resulted in a healthy discussion about our interest in the difficulties faced by women throughout the world. Consideration of Branch involvement in international projects is an area that could be included in our workshop.
9. The Board voted to once again contribute \$250—the cost of two tickets—to the Planned Parenthood Gala on April 15. Sarah Rondeau her husband, Ed, Kay Collins, and Huiping Du will represent Atlanta Branch. ❖

*Members (from left) Bea Meyer, Mary Lynn Merkle, and Phyllis Miller represented Atlanta Branch in supporting the Whole Foods Foundation project. Manager Tom Fallon represented Whole Foods.*

## Seven Scholarships Awarded

by Barbara Buchanan

Reading the applications submitted by students for our local scholarships can be a rewarding task. Many of the applicants have compelling life stories, most of them talk about the value of the education they are pursuing, and a few say "thank you" for AAUW's recognition. Three of this year's students said:

- "I'd like to speak on behalf of women in the Atlanta community and thank American Association of University Women and other charities for your support in our endeavors. Thank you for the time to read through my application."
- "I applaud your organization's efforts to encourage women like me to overcome obstacles in order to pursue their dreams. If chosen, the assistance you provide will be of enormous benefit in bringing me closer to achieving my goals. Thank you for your consideration."
- "I would first like to say how very honored and grateful I am that your organization is recognizing and supporting a minority population of mature women with the desire to further their education."

The Scholarship Committee has selected seven women to receive the Atlanta Branch's local scholarships for 2010. The Board has approved this action and the membership voted to award scholarships to these women:

**Veronica T. Clemons:** \$1,000  
Georgia State University  
Major: Computer Science

**Shawna Floyd:** \$1,000  
Agnes Scott  
Major: English/Creative Writing

**Judy Khan**—2010 Esther Davis Scholar: \$1,250  
Georgia State University  
Major: Education (middle school science & math)

**Ilona Carol Prisacaru:** \$1,000  
Georgia State University  
Major: Nursing

**Amy Rocamora:** \$1,000  
Georgia State University  
Major: History

**Jennifer Sisson:** \$1,000  
Georgia Institute of Technology  
Major: Industrial Engineering

**Kathleen Thompson:** \$1,000  
Emory University  
Major: Nursing

These women were selected from 28 applicants, based on the following criteria: grade point average, age (over 30), major, employment while going to school, level of family responsibilities, and their response to the essay question on the application, as well as factors revealed in their letter of recommendation. One student, Judy Khan, was selected as our first Esther Davis Scholar. Other outstanding Georgia State University undergraduates will be recognized with Esther Davis Scholarships in the future.

Much thanks goes to the scholarship committee for volunteering their time to review the applications and deliberate over the selection from an outstanding pool of applicants. ❖



## Special PR Opportunity

by Mary Lynn Merkle

Our public relations "specialist," Betty Slater, has found an opportunity for us to let people know about our branch. Public Broadcasting of Atlanta (PBA) is looking for a group to help answer the telephones for their fundraiser. We need about ten people. The two dates are April 26, 3:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m., and April 29, 6:30 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. Participating in this will also allow Atlanta Branch to inform the public about the meaning and importance of Pay Equity Day.

Can we do it? Please let Betty Slater know of your availability on either or both of those dates. If we could do both, we'd all deserve a pat on the back. But I surely hope that we can do at least one. Perhaps we could wear the bookfair aprons with the AAUW stamp. Betty's email is [bgslater@mindspring.com](mailto:bgslater@mindspring.com), and her phone is 404/237-6806. She's eagerly awaiting your enthusiastic reply.

## Program Notes

by Diana Witt

I hope all of you have been enjoying our programs this year. We have all learned a lot and met some really interesting people. Our January program with Stephanie Davis, our presentation from St. Joseph's Heart Clinic, and this month's discussion about the White House Project all offer our branch a chance to become more engaged in our community, heighten the visibility of AAUW, and improve our health at the same time! I hope all of you will try to attend the State Convention, April 16–17, where many of these topics will be continued. Angela Walton and I have been talking about some program ideas for next year, and the entire Program Committee will meet in the late spring to set next year's program. Please let me know if you have program ideas for next year. ❖



# !! SAVE THE DATES !!

## Bookfair 2010

September 26 through October 2

Set-up: Sunday evening, 9/26

Opening nite sale: Tuesday, 9/28

Sale continues: Wednesday, 9/29–Sunday, 10/2

Tear-down: Sunday evening, 10/2

## Aauwatlanta.org— What Do You Think???

Have you checked out our website lately? We want to make our website easier to navigate, more informative, and interesting enough that people will want to navigate it!

Co-president Mary Lynn Merkle is asking board members to send a paragraph about themselves and their passion for the position they have agreed to fill specifically and AAUW Atlanta Branch in general. Huiping Du will be taking photos to accompany these paragraphs and to be used elsewhere on the website and in our newsletter.

Send paragraphs to the co-presidents Ruth Yurchuck or Mary Lynn Merkle and to our webmaster, Terry Eshenour. AND—share ideas for improvement! ♦

## Travel Group Gets Around!

Last month, the Travel Group toured the Trees Atlanta Kendenda Center. Among those attending were (from left) Toni Larson, Anne Habersetzer, and Betty Arden, Travel Group chair. Other outings this season have included a tour of Grady Hospital; a visit to the High Museum of Art to view the John Portman and Leonardo da Vinci exhibits; a docent-guided tour of the Wren's Nest House Museum; and a visit to the Manuscript Archive and Rare Book Library at Emory University. This month, the group will tour the "Diana: A Celebration," exhibit at the Atlanta Civic Center. The group usually shares a luncheon out after their adventure.

If you've been missing out on these interesting opportunities and want to get in on getting around, contact Betty Arden at 770/955-6381. ♦



# Calendar

- April**
- 7 Book Group meets
  - 8 Travel Group meets
  - 16 AAUW State Convention begins
  - 24 Branch meeting
  - 29 Newsletter deadline
- May**
- 5 Book Group meets
  - 9 Mothers' Day
  - 13 Travel Group meets
  - 15 Branch meeting
- June**
- 5 Branch workshop/retreat
  - 14 Flag Day

# Book Group

The Book Group will meet Wednesday, May 5, at the home of Carol Fetters: 1271 Verdon Drive, Dunwoody, 30338; 770/399-5656. The discussion will be about *The Story of Edgar Sawtelle: A Novel* by David Wroblewski. We start gathering about 7:30 p.m. Remember to bring suggestions for next year's reading list! ❖

# Travel Group

The AAUW Travel Group will meet on April 8, at 9:30 a.m., at the Ansley Mall Kroger store to tour the exhibit "Diana: A Celebration," which is located in the Atlanta Civic Center. Lunch will follow. RSVP to Betty Arden at 770/955-6381. ❖

# Board Meeting

The Atlanta Branch 2009–2010 leadership team will meet on Sunday, May 2, 2010, at 3:00 p.m., at the home of Frances Smith. ❖

# Contents

April Meeting: Mental Health .....	1
Presidents' Column .....	1
State Convention Coming—April 16 & 17 .....	2
Board Meeting Highlights .....	3
Seven Scholarships Awarded .....	4
Special PR Opportunity .....	4
Program Notes .....	4
Aauwatlanta.org—What Do You Think? .....	5
Travel Group Gets Around! .....	5
Book Group .....	6
Travel Group .....	6

## ATLANTA NEWS

Atlanta Branch AAUW  
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