

JANUARY 2013 ATLANTA BRANCH

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITY WOMEN | VOL. 63 No. 5



2012-2013 Leadership

President

Sharon Bevis-Hoover
president@aauwatlanta.org

Program Vice President

Myra Carmon programs@aauwatlanta.org

Membership Co-Vice Presidents

Billie Collier
Kay Collins
membership@aauwatlanta.org

Board Secretary

TBA
board-secretary@aauwatlanta.org

Branch Meeting Secretaries

Blondie Chitunya Wilson & Betty Slater
member-secretary@aauwatlanta.org

Finance Officer

Huiqing Du treasurer@aauwatlanta.org

College/University Relations

Betty Slater universityrelations@aauwatlanta.org

Diversity

Betty Slater diversity@aauwatlanta.org

Historian

Sarah Rondeau historian@aauwatlanta.org

Hospitality

Dianna Dey, Susan Diffenderfer, &
Barbara Maaskant
hospitality@aauwatlanta.org

Public Policy

Diana Witt publicpolicy@aauwatlanta.org

Public Relations

Betty Slater publicrelations@aauwatlanta.org

Scholarship Co-Chairs

Bea Meyer
Mary Hanson scholarship@aauwatlanta.org

Web Information

Terry Eshenour webmaster@aauwatlanta.org

Contemporary Literature

Kay Collins advisory@aauwatlanta.org

Travel Group

Betty Arden travel@aauwatlanta.org

Advisory Board Chair

Kay Collins advisory@aauwatlanta.org

Publications

Amira Saleh publications@aauwatlanta.org

AAUW Funds

Phyllis Miller aauwfunds@aauwatlanta.org

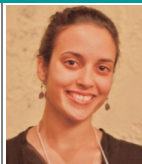
Philanthropy Chair

Mary Lynn Merkle
philanthropy@aauwatlanta.org

Communications Chair

Ruth Yurchuck
communications@aauwatlanta.org

Happy New Year!



Greetings from your Atlanta Branch intern! Happy New Year! I hope this finds you well. I'm excited to see what the new year brings and for more Atlanta Branch activities.

Just around the corner is our February 2nd general meeting at Clark Atlanta University. The meeting will be a joint meeting with the Cobb and North Fulton branches of AAUW and will focus on public policy. We will have four guest speakers: Taifah Butler (Georgia Budget Policy Initiative), Stephanie Davis (Georgia Women for a Change), Cindia Cameron (9 to 5), and Amanda Ptashkin (Healthy Georgia). The luncheon will cost \$8.75 and will include soup, sandwiches, and a beverage. Directions to Clark Atlanta are available on the AAUW Atlanta Branch website or call 404/978-2000. There is no charge for parking but as you enter the campus, tell the person via intercom that you are with AAUW.

I hope to see you at our next AAUW general meeting on February 2nd!

February General Meeting:

Date: Saturday, February 2nd

Time: 11:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Place: Clark Atlanta University – Robert W. Woodruff Atlanta University Center, 111 James P. Brawley Drive SW, Atlanta, GA, 30314

Evites have been sent out for the meeting but if you have not received one, please send an email to hospitality@aauwatlanta.org and indicate you will be attending.

Politics - Make It Local!

By: Sharon Bevis-Hoover



With all the excitement in Washington, D.C. over the last few months, it would be easy to forget that politics is really a local game. We hear again and again that our representatives in Washington are significantly influenced by the input of their constituents at home. Please make sure that your members of Congress hear from you! Email or write

them, participate in their constituent surveys, attend their town hall meetings, and request one-on-one meetings on topics of importance to you. The AAUW web site has some great suggestions for holding an effective meeting with your member of Congress.

In addition, our Georgia General Assembly is back in session and is expected to consider about 3,200 bills

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Celebrating Our Holiday Stars

By: Mary Lynn Merkle



Host Darwin Womack

Branch members gathered this holiday season at the home of Mary and Darwin Womack to socialize, enjoy delicious treats contributed by members of the Executive Board, and conduct some important end-of-year business such as approving the General Fund budget for 2013. Our

traditional Silent Auction raised more than \$700 that will be added to our Branch contribution to the AAUW Legal Advocacy Fund. The Board voted at their December meeting that these funds would be submitted in honor of the Womacks, our gracious Holiday Party hosts for the past several years.

One of the highlights of the afternoon was the announcement of the Branch's designated Name Grant Honorees. In addition to the **Womacks** they include:

1. The **Millholland family** (Ellen, Jim and Joe). Joe and Jim were honored for their many hours in the summer of 2012 picking up books from several of the drops and Ellen contributed her many hours in the bookroom to our Branch.

2. **Alta Birdsong** for her previous four years as treasurer and for her many years of branch leadership and mentoring.

3. **Barbara Buchanan** for her many hours of service toward the success of our Bookfair but especially for her superb management of securing and managing Bookfair volunteers prior to and during Bookfair week.

4. **Ruth Yurchuck** and **Mary Lynn Merkle** for enthusiastically serving as branch co-presidents for three years and leading the Atlanta Branch in new directions.

5. **Dot Ransom** for serving as membership vice-president for five years and helping Atlanta Branch become more vibrant through our new members.

6. **Pam Antinori** for initiating our Cool Scholars Signature Project and continuing her successful leadership in that program.



Holiday Party silent auction

We were honored that an amazing nine AAUW Funds recipients accepted invitations to attend. Nanette Napier and Darlene Nazaire are Community Action grantees. Doris Kieh, Maud Mundava, Calandra Togba-Doya, and LaTonya McClain are Career Development grantees. Maureen Mpairwe received an International Fellowship, and Jessica Marcinkevage received an American Fellowship. Paula Braun is studying computer and information sciences with her Fellowship. It was most inspiring to hear about their studies and their plans for the future—all made possible through having received AAUW funding. Meeting these women and hearing their stories gives meaning to the hours and energies spent raising our AAUW Funds contributions.

Everyone left full of holiday spirit and excited about our upcoming activities for 2013.



2012-2013 AAUW Funds recipients

Interviewing for Teach for America

By: Amira Saleh



Two months ago, I began an intensive interview experience with Teach for America (TFA). TFA is a national program that recruits recent college graduates from all majors to teach for two years in underserved public schools in rural or urban areas around the United States that are often characterized by high poverty, low academic performance, and lack of qualified teachers. TFA seeks to close the achievement gap that exists between kids in low income areas who often fall far behind their more affluent peers.

“Why TFA?” It was a question I was asked a lot from TFA interviewers, friends and family, coworkers, and quite a few random cashiers politely enquiring about life after college. I chose to interview with TFA for many reasons. I really value education and the doors it can open. I like working with kids from low income areas partly because I come from a similar background, and I know I wouldn’t have gotten anywhere in my education without the support and encouragement of people who cared. Being able to provide opportunities to kids that need them is something I really feel drawn to.

My final interview day began by participating in a group interview with 11 other candidates. As we went around the room introducing ourselves and addressing that familiar question, “Why TFA?”, I recognized my own “change the world idealism” staring back at me in the faces of the other candidates and in the answers we gave. We then each got up and presented our 5 minute teaching lesson to the group that we had prepared ahead of time. The interview continued with problem solving group tasks, and wrapped up with an hour and a half individual interview. By the end, I left feeling mentally and physically tired, but it was a good tired feeling the kind you get when you’ve had a long discussion about things you really care about.

As I discuss motivating factors that got me to that final interview, I cannot leave out how grateful I am to what I like to call my TFA support system, the people in my life who kept encouraging me to pursue this opportunity. Ruth Yurchuck is one of these peo-

ple. I can not thank her enough for not only writing my recommendation, but for offering such sincere support and encouragement when I needed it.

I learned recently that I did not get accepted into the Teach for America program. While this news was disappointing, there is a truth that sticks out to me: Even though I didn’t get into Teach for America, I still care about helping children and working to solve the problem of education inequity. Eventually, my response to “Why TFA?” evolved into an understanding of what I want to do with my life. The question I ask myself now, isn’t “Why TFA?”, but why do such disparaging levels of education inequity exist in one of the most developed countries in the world? Can we be proud of an educational system that views access to a quality education through a racial or classist lens? How can we ignore a problem that robs children of their futures?

TFA is one program in a sea of many organizations trying to tackle these problems. This past December I graduated from the Georgia Institute of Technology, and for now I’m in search of my niche in the real world so to speak. I am motivated by the sixteen million children living in poverty in the United States many without access to the quality education they deserve. I will find a way to help.

**About
50%**

of students growing up in low-income communities won't graduate from high school.

**TEACH FOR
CHANGING THIS.**

TEACHFORAMERICA
www.teachforamerica.org

(Source: National Assessment of Educational Progress, 2003)

For more information on the Teach for America program visit: <http://www.teachforamerica.org>

Welcome New Members!

By: Billie Collier

The AAUW Atlanta Branch is so pleased to welcome three new members. They are Melanie Crowder from Stone Mountain, Carol Allain from Decatur, and Louise Mitchell from Atlanta. We are all looking forward to getting to know them as they become more involved in some of our many activities. Please add the following information to the Atlanta Branch Member Directory in your 2012-2013 Handbook.

Address Change

We have a new address for one of our members who has relocated to California. Mary Ruth Lynch notified some of our members that she and her daughter have bought a house and moved in before the holidays.

AAUW National Convention

Best Value Rates End February 3rd

Register now for the 2013 AAUW National Convention in New Orleans to be held June 9-12. Convention rates are discounted through February 3 to \$425 for members, \$219 for students, and \$250 for guests. This year's theme is **Leading across Generations**. We will celebrate our successes and learn how to be more effective in the future. The Convention includes excellent speakers, interactive workshops, and panel discussions. Learn more at [AAUW National Convention, Leading across Generations](#). *"Laissez les bons temps rouler!"*

Call for Nominations!

By: Phyllis Miller

Atlanta Branch will need to fill three vacant positions on the Executive Committee in the coming months. They are **Board Secretary**, **President-elect**, and **Recording Secretary** for the General Meetings. Nominations are being requested from the membership to fill these very important areas of our branch leadership. Please send your suggestions to Nominating Committee members: Ruth Yurchuck, Betty Arden, Frances Smith, Pat Bevis or Phyllis Miller.

Thank you for helping guide members to these leadership roles, or please step up to these positions yourself.

Politics - Make It Local! ...Continued

By: Sharon Bevis-Hoover

in the next several months. In our February meeting we will have the opportunity to learn about many of those bills that would impact women and girls – for better or worse. I hope that you will join us. I also encourage you to follow the action in Georgia and make sure that your voice is heard throughout the legislative session. The people who represent you in Georgia are your neighbors and need to know your priorities for our state. There are many opportunities to lobby the Assembly, and our Atlanta Branch is fortunate to be close to the action. Don't miss the chance to be part of the conversation!

Travel Group Update

By: **Betty Arden**

The AAUW Travel Group will meet at the Ansley Mall Kroger store on February 14th at 10:00 a.m. Car pools will take the group to the new Goat Farm Arts Center on Foster Street in Atlanta. Lunch and shopping will follow at the Westside shopping area.

Contact Betty Arden with any travel group questions.

Contemporary Lit Group

By: **Kay Collins**

The Marriage Plot by Jeffrey Eugenides is our discussion book for the February 4th meeting. We will continue to meet at the home of Frances Smith at 4:00 p.m. on the first Monday of the month.

Questions? Contact Kay Collins.

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Calendar

AAUW General Meeting- February 2nd

Book Group Meeting – February 4th

February News Article Deadline – February 11th

Travel Group Outing – February 14th

Cool Girls Activity – February 23rd

AAUW Board Meeting – February 24th

AAUW National Convention – June 9th – 12th