



# ATLANTA BRANCH NEWS

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITY WOMEN  
OCTOBER 2016, Vol. 67 No. 2

## 2016-2017 Leadership

### Co-Presidents

Blondie Chitunya-Wilson  
Mary Lynn Merkle  
president@aauwatlanta.org

### Program Vice Presidents

Betty Arden and Amira Saleh  
programs@aauwatlanta.org

### Membership Vice President

Kay Collins  
membership@aauwatlanta.org

### Board Secretary

Marcy Nader  
secretary-board@aauwatlanta.org

### Branch Meeting Secretaries

Susan Diffenderfer and Sarah Rondeau  
secretary-meeting@aauwatlanta.org

### Finance Officers

Alta Birdsong and Phyllis Miller  
treasurer@aauwatlanta.org

### College/University Relations

Betty Slater and Carol Allain  
universityrelations@aauwatlanta.org

### Diversity

Susan Diffenderfer  
diversity@aauwatlanta.org

### Historian

Wendy Venet historian@aauwatlanta.org

### Hospitality

Betty Arden hospitality@aauwatlanta.org

### Public Policy

Diana Witt publicpolicy@aauwatlanta.org

### Public Relations

Sharon Bevis-Hoover  
publicrelations@aauwatlanta.org

### Scholarship

Wendy Venet 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

Riana Smith publications@aauwatlanta.org

### AAUW Funds

Dana Gordon aauwfunds@aauwatlanta.org

### Philanthropy Chair

Cele Covatta  
philanthropy@aauwatlanta.org

### Communications Chair

Ruth Yurchuck  
communications@aauwatlanta.org

## Co-President's Message

### Blondie Chitunya-Wilson

As we all know education is a basic human right, yet low literacy rates prevail among women in many countries. The challenges and opportunities for the empowerment of women through education is not an easy task. Research demonstrates that investment in women, and more specifically women's education, has numerous positive effects on not only the women but also her children and family. These outcomes not only improve the quality of life of women and families but also combat poverty and foster economic growth. For example, more educated women would improve greater access to the labor market, better earnings, and personal empowerment will be the return.

My co-president Mary Lynn Merkle and I, and members of Atlanta Branch, are working toward removal of the barriers to education and providing opportunities that could empower women and girls for their advancement. While the Atlanta Branch has been providing scholarships to deserving women for many decades, we currently focus on deserving women who are enrolled in our partner colleges and universities and who are trying to complete a degree which has perhaps been interrupted because of other life challenges. The Atlanta Branch scholarship recipients attending our fall membership tea expressed their gratitude for the awards and were happy and enthusiastic about the work of AAUW.

Our 2016-2017 recipients were all juniors or seniors whose financial needs or obligations kept them from doing their best work. What a pleasure it was to hear from them how important our stipend will be in allowing them to continue and, in some cases, complete their undergraduate degree. Our scholarship recipients this year from Georgia State University are: Kidest Adane, an aspiring entrepreneur seeking a business degree; Talia Craig, who is majoring in accounting; Brittany Duggan, a student in biological and managerial science; Sana Malik, a pre-med student; Nicole Ogbomoh, who is majoring in chemistry; and Cheryl Birt-Pillai, whose major is chemistry. Stephani Townes, who attends Agnes Scott College, is seeking a degree in history and Africana Studies. These women join a long list of AAUW scholarship recipients, and we wish them every success in as they continue their education.

The Atlanta Branch supported two students who attended this year's National Conference for College Women Student Leaders (NCCWSL), were Alicia Kovacevic, Mariam Shakeel, and Jenniffer Stetler. Listening to their plans on using what they learned at the Conference, we felt quite sure that our investment in these three women leaders was an excellent one.

The money for scholarship awards is generated by the work of Atlanta Branch members, their friends and families, and other interested persons in several ways: contributing gently used books for our annual Bookfair and working at the event. Bookfair also provides visibility for our Branch and the Cobb and North Fulton branches who collaborate with us for this annual event.





**MARK YOUR CALENDERS FOR THE  
PUBLIC POLICY CONFERENCE AND LEGISLATIVE UPDATE  
SATURDAY OCTOBER 15<sup>TH</sup> 9:30 AM**

**SPEAKERS**

Debbie Karvey, Public Policy Chair, Georgia AAUW  
Kelli Persons, Program and Advocacy Director, The League of Women Voters  
Erica Clemmons, 9 – 5  
Georgia Budget & Policy Institute Representative

**BRANCHES INVITED INCLUDE:**

Atlanta, Cartersville, Cobb, North Fulton Branches  
AAUW Student Organizations from Kennesaw and Georgia State Universities  
Other guests welcome to attend!

**PROGRAM:** Public Policy Conference and Legislative Update:  
Become an Educated Voter and Advocate

**LOCATION:** Hilton Atlanta/Marietta Hotel and Conference Center  
500 Powder Springs Street, Marietta, Ga

**TIME:** 9:30am – 12pm, Breakfast Buffet and Program

**COST:** \$25 Members and Guests  
\$15 Students

**LOOK FOR AN UPCOMING EVITE TO RSVP!  
DEADLINE TO RSVP IS OCTOBER 5<sup>TH</sup>**

## A Retrospective on our September General Meeting

**By: Mary Lynn Merkle**

Our annual membership tea at Agnes Scott College was well attended by Branch members and by women students at local colleges. Three students from the Georgia State University (GSU) student chapter shared a slide show and report of their attendance at the June National Conference of College Women Student Leaders (NCCWSL) held at the University of Maryland in June, 2016. The students were Jenniffer Stetler, President of the GSU chapter; Mariam Shakeel and Alicia Kovaevic. They all stated how much they learned from this experience.

Four students who received Atlanta Branch scholarships also attended. They were Cheryl Birt-Pillai, Talia Craig, Sana Malik, and Kidet Adane, all students at GSU. We also welcomed Dr. Gail Scott, faculty sponsor of the AAUW chapter at Kennesaw State University, and three KSU students: Sydney Saylor, Chapter President; and Kara Smith and Tara Joyce, chapter members.

AAUW has begun a new program of recognizing members who have reached certain levels of membership, from 5 to 40 years. Five year pins were awarded to Cecilia Cantrell, Billie Collier, and Pam Antinori. Twenty year pins were given to Mary Hanson and Mary Lynn Merkle. Thirty year pins were awarded to Penny Bellinger, Pat Bevis, and Ruth Yurchuck.

Thanks to all the committee chairs who helped to make this an informative meeting, with a good program, good food, and good company.

## *It's My Vote: I Will be Heard*

**By: Ruth Yurchuck**

Election 2016 is almost here. AAUW Outlook (Summer 2016) has extensive information about elections. The national campaign *It's My Vote: I Will Be Heard* is designed to encourage AAUW members to register women voters and to educate voters with content to help them feel connected to the upcoming elections at the national, state, and local levels.

While the focus of the 2016 election is clearly on presidential candidates, remember that for each of us electing people at the state and local level has greater impact. A few obvious things for you to do before November 8:

- **Be sure you are registered to vote.** Check the GA Secretary of State website and click on the Elections tab. There have been changes in voting locations and districts. Voter suppression is at work at many levels. Don't take it for granted that since you registered some time ago that you are still officially recognized as a Georgia voter. You should find a page entitled My Voter Page (MVP). Check out voter guides such as those prepared by the non-partisan League of Women Voters ([lwvga.org](http://lwvga.org)).
- Print out a sample ballot for your county (linked to your voter registration information) to review who and what you will be voting for
- Ask questions of candidates and their support or their position on issues of concern to you
- AAUW has prepared a Vote Issue Guide, which you can access at [aauw.org/resource/aauw-voter-guide](http://aauw.org/resource/aauw-voter-guide)

Your vote is valuable—don't forget to use it well!

## Travel Group

By: **Betty Arden**

The AAUW Travel Group will meet at 10 am on October 13th at the Ansley Mall Kroger store to carpool to the Millennium Gate Museum (395 17th Street, Atlanta), located in Atlantic Station. The phone number of the museum is 404.881.0900.

The group will enjoy a docent guided tour of the next exhibit, "The Games: Ancient Olympia to Atlanta to Rio." The exhibit features 2,500 year-old Greek artifacts on loan from the Hearst Castle in San Simeon, CA and the Carlos Museum on the Emory campus. The show's centerpiece is a 3-D printing of the status of Zeus that once stood at Olympia, Greece. Senior admission is \$10.00

Lunch will follow at Amelie's French Bakery and Cafe located at 840 Marietta Street NW, Atlanta. Phone number is 404.921.0276.

Contact Betty Arden for reservations at [travel@aauwatlanta.org](mailto:travel@aauwatlanta.org)

## Contemporary Literature

By: **Kay Collins**

The Contemporary Literature group will meet Monday, October 3 to discuss "The Elephant Company" by Vicki Constantine Croke. We'll meet at Mary Hanson's about 10:30 AM. Everyone is welcome whether you've read the book or want to learn more about it before reading! If you have questions, contact Kay Collins [contemporaryliterature@aauwatlanta.org](mailto:contemporaryliterature@aauwatlanta.org)

## Handbook Updates

Susan Diffenderfer: home telephone number

Jenniffer Stetler: (correction of spelling of first name)

Gillian Horsley: new address

## Table of Contents

- Co-President's Message Pg. 1
- September General Meeting Pg. 3
- It's My Vote: I Will be Heard Pg. 3
- Public Policy Pg. 4
- Travel Group Pg. 4
- Cont. Lit Pg. 4
- Handbook Updates Pg. 4

## Calendar

- Board Meeting— Oct 8 10am at Buckhead Library
- AAUW Public Policy – Oct 15 10am at Hilton Atlanta
- Holiday Celebration— Dec 11 3pm at Womack Home
- Title IX Program— Feb 4 11am at Neiman Marcus Cafe