



Atlanta Branch News

March Newsletter: Volume 69, Issue 9

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MARCH BRANCH MEETING: WOMEN AND FINANCE

By: Betty Slater

On **March 9th**, celebrate Women’s History Month by inviting a young woman to our branch meeting. The meeting will be held from **11:30am to 2:30pm** at the **57th Fighter Group Restaurant** (3829 Clairmont Road, Brookhaven, GA). There will be a buffet lunch for \$25.00 per person, including tax and tip. A business meeting will precede the speaker’s presentation.

Lee Ann Gregg, Financial Advisor with Ameriprise Financial will be our speaker; she has over 30 years of financial industry experience. Her areas of focus will include women’s financial strategies, investments, retirement, and estate planning.

A financial planner recently explained to me a great way to start developing a plan for financial growth begins with investing in your 30’s and continuing the habit. Invite a friend who can benefit from learning how to build a strong financial future.

Please respond to the evite, email hospitality@aauwatlanta.org, or call Billie Collier. **Reserve by Saturday, March 2, 2019.** We look forward to seeing you at this informative meeting!

CO-PRESIDENT’S ARTICLE: AAUW UPDATE

By: Diana Witt, Co-President

On February 21st, I attended the Women’s Lobby Day at the State Capitol with Deb Karvey from the Cobb County branch. The morning started off with a wonderful list of speakers including Georgia Budget and Policy Institute (GBPI) and several others. Some really interesting statistics were brought forward. Here are a few:

* As of January 2019, there are 72 Georgia women legislators. 15 are in the Senate and 57 are in the House.

* Women now comprise close to 25% of the state legislature, the highest figure in history.

* Georgia ranks 2nd in the rate of women-owned businesses in the US.

United States.

Leadership continued

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* 52% of Georgia women are the primary breadwinners in their household. These statistics sound good, but there's bad news as well.

* Despite women's entrepreneurship and dedication to hard work, 69% of Georgia women live below the poverty line.

* Having children is risky too. Georgia ranks number 1 in the nation for maternal mortality rate. Equal pay, access to affordable healthcare, and access to affordable child care remain pressing issues.

Following the morning program, Deb and I met with our legislators to talk about the issues. However, you don't have to go to the Capitol to advocate! You can take 5 minutes to email your House and Senate members from the comfort of your own home. If you are uncertain who your legislators are, go to www.openstates.org and type in your complete address. Their names will show up and you can then click on their names to email them about your concerns. Personal emails are read by staff and legislators pay attention to them. If you don't want to email, a phone call or a visit to their local office are also very effective strategies. Here are House and Senate bills that are relevant to AAUW's mission and goals:

* HB 5 provisions would reduce the gender pay gap.

* HB 8 repeals the current tax on feminine hygiene products.

* HB 37 would allow expansion of Medicaid.

* HB62 addresses health insurance coverage for dense breast tissue exams. (Dense breast tissue is a sign of increased breast cancer risk).

* HB 234 is a continuation of past success on the sex trafficking issue. It establishes age 18 as the age of consent in prostitution prosecutions. Previously, there was no age limit.

* HB 282 guarantees preservation and analysis of rape kits. A previous practice allowing rape kits to "expire" (letting rapists off the hook), would be abolished.

* HBs 331 and 359 continues and expands protections concerning violence against women and family.

* HB 345 Protects and insures adequate health care for pregnant incarcerated women. SBs, 36, 106 also call for Medicaid expansion; there is legislation in both houses on this.

* SBs 55 and 66 call for ratification of the ERA.

I hope all of you will take the time to contact your House and Senate representatives about at least one of these issues. Support these women legislators!

Please plan to attend the AAUW of Georgia Convention on April 12th and 13th. The State Convention is at the Hilton Garden Inn Wildwood (3045 Windy Hill Road Atlanta, GA 30339; 770-953-8850). The fee is \$40 and covers everything except a hotel room. It's in our back-yard folks, so let's have a good representation from the Atlanta Branch.

Finally, please plan to attend our upcoming meeting on March 9, at 57th Fighter Group Restaurant from 11:30am to 2:30pm. This will be an important meeting on women and finance. One of the facts that stood out at the Capitol meeting was the link between the gender pay gap, wealth building, and tax policy. All women of any age need to attend this meeting. Look forward to seeing you there!

~ Diana Witt and Huiping Du, Atlanta Branch Co-Presidents.

FINANCE UPDATE

By: Marge Anderson and Phyllis Miller

Because of recurring health issues, Susan Diffenderfer has resigned as Atlanta Branch Financial Officer. The Board thanks her very much for her wonderful service to the Branch and is hopeful that she will be able resume participation in Branch activities in the future. Our co-president, Huiping Du, will serve as acting treasurer for now. The nominations committee is searching for a new financial officer to fulfill the remainder of Susan's term. If anyone is interested, please contact Betty Arden or Mary Lynn Merkle.

The board met on February 23, 2019 and approved the 2019 Community Fund Budget. The Community Fund Budget and the Treasurers' Report will be available for members at the March meeting. The Board appreciates your patience as we organize our financial management and responsibilities during this transition.

The AAUW Atlanta Branch Board will reinstate the full branch dues of \$18.00 for the upcoming AAUW Branch fiscal year. The dues are \$87.00 total to renew your membership or for a new membership. The breakdown of dues is \$59.00 for National, \$10.00 for State, and \$18.00 for Branch membership. Dues for E-Student members will be \$8.00. National dues are free, State dues are \$5.00, and Branch dues are \$3.00. Students may attend Branch and State meetings as guests. The membership opportunity begins in April with the new fiscal year beginning July 1, 2019 and ending June 30, 2020. Members will be able to join and renew their membership electronically.

THE MODIFIER DILEMMA

By: Mary Lynn Merkle

I recently read a "Letter to the Editor" in the ACLU magazine winter 2019 issue, and I've been pondering the message ever since. The writer calls out the magazine for using the word "felon" as a noun. The letter writer suggests that the proper way to describe the true value of the person is "a person who has been convicted of committing a felony." The reason is that "a person" is so much more than "a felon."

Using this argument, I began thinking of all the nouns by which we name people: a criminal (a man/woman who has committed a crime); a cop (a man/woman who is employed as a police officer); a super-star (an actor who has achieved superior notoriety status). You get the picture, right?!

I then thought about the modifiers that might fit me (and you) as members of AAUW Atlanta Branch. We are women who may be mothers, aunts, sisters, nieces, environmentalists, teachers, learners, activists, advocates, equity seekers, readers, leaders, team members--and more. Some of us can be described as several of these nouns; but to limit someone to one is stifling—because we are diverse!

As we think of people we may describe as diverse we must continue to remember that each one is so much more than his/her diversity modifier. My sons are gay, but they are both so much more than that. My co-president for the prior two years is an African-American, but we know how gifted and generous Blondie is. The blind or hearing-impaired, the paraplegic, the Sikh (or other religious people who are a minority in America), Latinos—all deserve more than one noun to describe them.

And, we do, too!

CONTEMPORARY LITERATURE MARCH MEETING

By: Kay Collins

We will meet 10:30am on Monday, March 4 at the home of Mary Hanson. We'll discuss "Little Fires Everywhere" by Celeste Ng. All are welcome. Come whether you've read the book or not!

Questions? Contact Kay Collins

TRAVEL GROUP UPDATE

By: Betty Arden

There will be no meeting for the Travel Group in March; the next meeting will be April 11th.

Contact Betty Arden if you have questions.

UPCOMING EVENTS

March 2nd : RSVP due for March Branch Meeting

March 9th: Branch Meeting at 57th Fighter Group Restaurant

11:30am – 2:30pm

April 12th and 13th : AAUW of Georgia Convention

MEMBER UPDATE:

Change of address for Sally Byers (Honorary Life Member) c/o Donald Byers

Quote of the month

A woman with a voice is, by definition a strong woman

-Melinda Gates

aauwatlanta.org