



Atlanta Branch News

January 2020 Newsletter: Volume 70, Issue 6

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PRESIDENT’S LETTER: AAUW UPDATE

By: Diana Witt

Kim Churches, the AAUW CEO, is reaching out to every AAUW branch president. This is a very commendable move on her part and December 18th was my scheduled conversation with her. We had an interesting conversation. She was very cordial, but this conversation raised some concerns in my mind about some divergence between the goals of the national organization and our own branch goals and missions.

As background, Kim Churches is from the corporate world. She was hired by AAUW specifically to rebuild its shrinking endowment and help the organization deal with dwindling and aging membership, while continuing AAUW’s mission and work on behalf of women and girls.

We learned about Coca-Cola’s grant to AAUW’s Work Smart program just prior to our September meeting. Our Branch honored company representatives at that meeting. From Kim Churches’ perspective, Coca-Cola is a global company and the fact it is based in Atlanta was not relevant to her; thus, we were not notified earlier. This is not a perspective that resonates with our branch!

Kim discussed the framework for grants from corporations to AAUW. Corporations want big national projects with high visibility, such as the Job Fair last year and the Work Smart program. Corporate donors are not interested in any branch input or presence in these programs, which is why we were not notified earlier. She did agree that better national to branch communication is important and promised to make sure we are notified when other events occur in our area. As I said, the tone of the conversation was cordial, courteous, and informative.

We also discussed the National AAUW Funds, which have been reconstructed and streamlined to be more attractive to corporate contributions. Our AAUW Funds chair, Dana Gordon, is aware of this and has guided us in choosing wisely when making our national contributions.

I’m not sure where that leaves us or any local branch. It would be interesting to find out what other branches think about this. However, I believe our board made a good decision in November to reduce our

Leadership continued

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national contributions and increase contributions to local projects. We may want to continue that trend in the future, but I leave that to the board and our incoming officers to determine. I simply wanted to share my thoughts about this conversation. If anyone has any further questions, please feel free to contact me.

I hope everyone has a peaceful and restful holiday. Thanks to all of you for a good Bookfair and a successful first half of the AAUW Atlanta Branch 2019-2020 year. See you all in 2020.

Diana Witt,

President, AAUW Atlanta Branch

2019 AAUW HOLIDAY PARTY

By: Dana Gordon

Thanks to Gillian Horsley's generosity in welcoming our members to her lovely home, the holiday party was a success! Board members outdid themselves by providing a great selection of savory dishes and all kinds of sweets. Mimosas added to the merriment of all. Thanks to Betty Slater and Billie Collier, our Hospitality committee, and to Dana Gordon for organizing this special event.



We were pleased to welcome two of the twelve Fellows and Grantees located in Georgia: Mona Tajali (Publication Grant-Gender and Politics, Middle East Studies at Agnes Scott College) and Cassandra Hendrix (Ph.D. Child Clinical Studies, at Emory University).

Members made the silent auction successful with a great variety of items to choose from. In total, our contribution to the AAUW Legal Advocacy Fund was \$471.

GLOBAL VILLAGE SCHOOL: A PERSONAL REFLECTION

By: Cecilia Cantrell, Public Policy Chair

A couple of years ago, Betty Arden arranged for the AAUW travel group to visit the Global Village School for Refugee Girls in Decatur, GA. It is the only school in the US dedicated to educating refugee girls who have had their lives and education interrupted by global

constraints. Since we visited the school, I have been volunteering as a math tutor. I am learning more than I am teaching. The other volunteers and the teacher support my limitations as well as help the students.

Every time I am with these young women from many countries, I marvel at their determination to learn the curriculum taught in all US middle and high school programs. Many have lived in 5 or more countries because of humanitarian conditions and political unrest. They often speak 4 or 5 languages, but do not read because they have had no formal education before arriving in Decatur, GA.

They support each other in so many ways; their encouragement and empathy toward each other regardless of cultural differences warms my heart. They are a wonderful addition to our country.

The school is located in Decatur, Georgia. There are many areas where volunteers are needed, and the time commitment varies according to your schedule.

If you are interested in knowing more about these amazing young women and this vital school, please check it out at www.globalvillageproject.org. Donations of time, materials, and money are welcome.

2019 NAMED GRANT HONOREES

By: Dana Gordon

The Philanthropy Committee is pleased to announce the 2019 Named Grant Honorees. They are:

Terry Eshenour, Atlanta AAUW Webmaster, in recognition of his generous support of the Atlanta Branch by providing indispensable IT assistance to our team

Kim Tamvacakis, Supporter of the Atlanta AAUW, in appreciation of his help with setup and teardown of the Bookfair, and for volunteering to drive to the homes of individual donors to pick up books

Barbara Buchanan, Bookfair Leadership, for all her hard work and outstanding leadership which has been critical to the success of the AAUW Bookfair

Joyce S. Cohrs, in appreciation of her outstanding contribution to the mission of AAUW over the many years through hard work in the Book Room, generously offering her advice and considerable expertise to all volunteers

Mary E. Womack, in recognition of her contribution to AAUW through her work in the Book Room, and for opening her lovely home for many years to welcome our members for our Holiday Parties

Corol W. Bevier, in recognition of her contribution to the mission of AAUW over many years, through hard work in the Book Room, generously offering her expertise on foreign language books, classical literature, performing arts and music

Allen Venet, Supporter of the Atlanta AAUW, for his significant assistance with the setup and tear down at the annual Atlanta AAUW Bookfair

Chris Karvey, Supporter of the Atlanta AAUW, for his assistance with the setup and tear down at the Georgia Book and Paper Fair and at the annual Atlanta AAUW Bookfair, including transporting leftover books to Thrift Books

CONTEMPORARY LITERATURE MEETING

By: Kay Collins

The group will meet Monday, January 6th at 10:30 am. We will meet at the Sandy Springs Library in **Room C**. This is the very large room at the back of the library, past the reception area, to the right, and near the men's room. We will discuss "Before We Were Yours" by Lisa Wingate.

Please contact Kay Collins for specific information at contemporaryliterature@aauwatlanta.org

TRAVEL GROUP

By: Betty Arden

The AAUW Travel Group will meet at 10 am on January 9th at the Ansley Mall Kroger Store. We will then carpool to the High Museum of Art (1280 Peachtree Street NE) to view the Shouky and Doris Shaheen Art Collection. The collection of impressionist and post-impressionist art was donated to the museum last November. It includes paintings by Monet, Pissaro, Renoir, Matisse and others.

The normal senior admission is \$14.50, but the Travel Group has access to guest passes. Lunch will follow at the museum restaurant. Please call Betty Arden travel@aauwatlanta.org if you have any questions.

RETURNING HOME FROM LIVING ABROAD

By: Keresa Richards

Many of you may know me as the intern for the AAUW'S Communication Team. Some may even know me from my last article describing my experience in Spain. As a background, I am a business major at Emory University concentrating in marketing and business strategy. I studied abroad in Madrid, Spain for the past four months and I am now back home in Georgia. I still can't believe I'm not living in Madrid anymore. It was an amazing experience I will cherish.

Studying abroad taught me so much about not only the world, but myself. I've gained new interests, pushed myself to new limits, learned how to interact with different cultures, and much more. I became a more patient individual with an increasingly global view. The more I traveled while abroad, the more I learned how much there is out there that I know nothing about. For example, I knew nothing about a whole city painted in blue (Chefchaouen, Morocco) before taking a trip to Morocco with friends. I knew nothing of the delicious chicken tagine sold in many restaurants and never heard loud city bells that signal prayer time for Muslims.



I believe studying abroad was one of those life changing moments for me. While there, I had a change of perspective several times and learned some life lessons. Below are 5 lessons I learned while abroad.

1. Mental health care is for everyone: I truly thought the average person didn't need to worry about issues concerning mental health. However, for a few weeks while abroad I felt depressed. I missed home and wasn't finding happiness in the everyday things. It was important that I acknowledged this emotion and then took steps to feel more like myself. Taking care of my mental health in that moment was critical.

2. America is not the center of the universe: I thought I knew this, but it became clearer while abroad. Not everyone aspires to live in America and every country is not worse off than America. There are lifestyles that exist outside of the USA that are great in their own regards. I believe the USA has a thing or two it could learn from other countries, similar to how others could learn from us.
3. Money comes and goes but experiences last forever: It is important to budget and be financially savvy. However, it's just as important to place in your budget experiences that expand your horizons.
4. Relationships are everything: The relationships I have with others and myself is what makes life special. I remember how important calls home were while abroad. Hearing the sound of my family and friends always brightened my spirits. No matter where I traveled, the experience was heightened 10-fold by the people I shared the trip with.
5. Learning a new language should be taken seriously: I always believed it was 'cool' to learn a new language, but never made it a priority. The Spanish I learned in my childhood education is what made communicating abroad easier. Many individuals I met abroad knew several languages and it was impressive. Speaking several languages opens many doors when traveling and when local. It allows one to make deeper connections to a larger variety of people.



The one word I take from living abroad is gratitude. I am so grateful for the opportunity to study abroad and travel to 5 countries in Europe and Africa while there. Sadly, not everyone gets to experience this. During my time abroad, I felt so much gratitude for my friends and family; distance truly made the heart grow fonder! Every time I set foot in a new place, I was grateful God made the world so beautiful and diverse. Now I feel more comfortable living in and exploring new places. I am excited for my next travel adventure, there is a new passion in me to explore the world.

SAVE THE DATE: FEBRUARY 8TH, 2020

Our February Program will be held from 1:30 pm to 4 pm at the newly renovated Sandy Springs Library. The program will focus on heart health for women, and there will be Valentine surprises! Look for an evite next month.

UPCOMING EVENTS

January 6th: Contemporary Literature Meeting

January 9th: Travel Group Meeting

February 8th: February Program

“May your walls know joy, may every room hold laughter, and every window open to great possibility.”

~Mary Anne Radmacher

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