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2024-2025 Leadership

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Co-President's Message

By Karen Ludwig

Your Voice Counts: Share Your Perspective

Your Co-presidents of the AAUW Atlanta Affiliate are charged with the responsibility of developing the vision for AAUW Atlanta during their two-year term of office.

As we look forward to AAUW's coming 2025-26 fiscal year as individuals, members of AAUW Atlanta, residents of our respective cities and the State of Georgia, and citizens of the United States – we likely have a variety of concerns, hopes and wishes for our collective future.

We have asked before, and are asking again to hear YOUR voice as to what you think we, as AAUW Atlanta, should be doing to:

- Support the vision, mission and values of AAUW as AAUW Atlanta.
- Create more active engagement amongst existing members.
- Attract more like-minded members to our organization.
- Reach out to our surrounding community to let them know who we are, what we do to support our community today and how we hope to support our community tomorrow.

As your Co-presidents begin to work with your elected / appointed officials to plan for the coming year – we want to hear from you, the members of AAUW Atlanta. Please reach out to us with your thoughts and ideas!

**“Alone, we can do so little,
together, we can do so much.”**

– Helen Keller

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Get Prepared to Vote On Proposed Officers

The following slate of officers for the Atlanta Affiliate's elected positions (determined during 'odd-numbered' years) has been prepared by our current nominating committee members for your review and consideration:

PROPOSED SLATE OF OFFICERS

Co-Presidents Elect

Velma Tilley
Karen Ludwig

Secretaries

Marcy Nader – Affiliate
Kay Collins – Board

Nominating Committee

Betty Arden (Chair)
Rose Cannon
Susan Diffenderfer
Myra Carmon
Dana Gordon

This proposed slate will be voted upon by all members attending our annual year-end meeting on ***Saturday, May 3 at Cross Creek Café at Cross Creek Golf Club.***

We are also seeking a volunteer (or volunteers) to help support the design and development of Affiliate programs for the coming fiscal year.

In the past, the development and execution of our annual Affiliate programs plan has been supported by Co-VPs of Program Development (or with designated supporting roles helping the Program VP). Our current Program VP, Fran Russell, has been handling this role 'solo' and would welcome some help for the second year of her term. We will be asking for volunteers at this May meeting.

If you are someone who loves to plan gatherings and would like to help support a critical role -- as Co-VP with Fran or providing support for one or more designated individual Affiliate programs for the coming 2025-26 fiscal year -- we need you. Your support will be greatly appreciated by all!

End of Year Luncheon and Installation of Officers

Our annual End of the Year Luncheon and Installation of Officers will be held on Saturday, May 3, 2025, at 11:00 am at Cross Creek Café at Cross Creek Golf Club, 1221 Cross Creek Parkway NW, Atlanta 30327.

In addition to the installation of officers, Christine Fleming, Director of Program Development from Friends of Disabled Adults and Children (FODAC) will be our guest speaker. FODAC is one of this year's philanthropy recipients.

Evites will be sent to all members in April, and the Cross Creek Café menu can be accessed at <https://crosscreekcafe.com/>.

Membership Dues Deadline

By Carol Brantley

The deadline to submit Membership Dues is June 30, 2025.

Members it is time for renewals! Most of us have June 30 date but some are earlier. You can check your membership record online and make payments. Thanks for taking care of this!

Editors note: if you do not submit your membership dues by June 30, your information may not appear in the '25 – '26 Handbook.

Working to Make Districts 'Fair' in Georgia

By Julia Leon, FDGA (Fair Districts Georgia) Secretary
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Editor's Note: Julia Leon spoke at our recent Affiliate meeting on March 8, 2025. She has graciously provided the following recap of some of the information shared at that meeting. She has also provided suggestions as to how we can help and stay informed about Fair District GA activities.

Georgia's History of Legislative Redistricting (and Impact)

Georgia has a long history of legislative redistricting that unevenly weighs voters across geographic areas with the aim of reducing the voice of Black voters and voters in the minority party. In our last election, only 3% of the races were competitive. Such gerrymandering has entrenched political power by allowing legislators to choose their voters rather than voters choosing their representatives. The result is polarized politics, with legislators who do not accurately reflect their constituents' will. You see the consequences in, for example, Georgia's low ranking in per pupil funding adequacy (34th). Gun safety, health, and reproductive rights are other issues where our legislators are out of step with their constituents.

What Can We Do to Make Districts 'Fair' in Georgia?

We can solve unfair districts by establishing a transparent, nonpartisan redistricting process led by independent commissions rather than partisan legislators. Fair Districts GA (FDGA) is dedicated to achieving this vision by advocating for redistricting reform, educating the public, and engaging in legislative advocacy.

You can help us now with the Legislator Fair District Pledge:

- Find out if your legislators have signed it and if not ...ask them to sign it.
- If they have signed it, thank them for their support.

Want to Know More?

- You can learn more about the pledge from our Pledge Web Page at <https://www.fairdistrictsga.org/candpledge>
- While you're on the Fair Districts GA site, stay informed about Georgia redistricting and FDGA by subscribing to the FDGA newsletter at <https://www.fairdistrictsga.org/emailgetinvolved>

New Communications Intern

AAUW Atlanta Affiliate has a new Communications Intern. Abri Bazemore is a well-qualified candidate who is a student at SCAD. Some of the members met Abri at the March 8, 2025 General Meeting at Nori-Nori Restaurant. We look forward to working with Abri in communications, on the website, and with Public Relations AAUW Atlanta Affiliate.

Abri will take over when Ansley Dyer retires June 30, 2025. Ansley has been with AAUW Atlanta Affiliate since 2020. Ansley will move from Georgia, as she is pursuing her PhD in Communications at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. She hopes to teach at the university level once she completes her degree.

A brief note from Ansley:

I am truly grateful to have spent an amazing five years with this group of incredible women. Your hard work and dedication have been inspirational for me as I hope to become an educator. Thank you for our time together, and I hope to one day return to Georgia and reconnect with the Atlanta Affiliate as Ansley Dyer, PhD. I wish you all well!

Travel Article

AAUW Atlanta Travel Coordinator Betty Arden organized a tour at SCAD FASH Museum of Fashion + Film on Thursday, February 20, 2025. We all met for lunch nearby at Tuk Tuk Thai Food Loft after the tour.

SCAD FASH featured Sandy Powell, a three-time Oscar winner known for her work in *The Favourite* and *Shakespeare in Love*. The exhibit was called "Sandy Powell's DRESSING THE PART: Costume Design for Film." The members enjoyed remembering the movies, the characters, and the costumes from our past cinema experiences.

THIS IS ME!

By Mary Lynn Merkle

In March, I attended a concert with this title. It was presented by the Atlanta Gay Men's Chorus and the Atlanta Women's Chorus performing in concert for the first time in ten years. And there were almost 250 voices on that stage making beautiful music.

The two choruses were definitely diverse. The one attribute they all shared was being part of the large LGBTQI community. However, *all* the “letters” were represented on that stage. Additionally, some were tall and some were short, some had lots of hair and some had no hair. All the other descriptors were there, too—heavy, thin, black-skinned, white-skinned, yellow and brown, some quite young and some not so young. Each of these singers were unique individuals working together to create music with stories. The words to their songs told us (and them) to accept our whole selves as individuals who have gifts and talents to share; to feel joy and satisfaction that we are different from one another in ways that enrich our own lives and the lives of others as well.

As Atlanta Affiliate members we, too, are each unique. Some of us are dealing with bodies that aren’t being cooperative any more, and with memories that fade before they come charging back, and—oh—those wrinkles. Some of us read a lot, some of us exercise a lot. What we do share is a common belief in equity and justice and wanting to do what we can to help women and children achieve that. Think of all that we are able to accomplish by working together! We can rejoice in our individual talents and skills that make it all happen.

May it be so for all people! Can we help make that happen as well?!