



# Synthesis

AAUW Sarasota Branch

**November 2023**

Location: Women's Resource Center 340 S. Tuttle Ave. Sarasota, FL 34237

Welcome our Speakers from the Sarasota League of Women Voters  
**Current Challenges for Sarasota County Voters—and what we can do to help!**



Kathleen McEachran was born and raised in Minneapolis, Minnesota. She attended the College of St. Catherine and the Univ. of Minnesota. After her marriage to Robert McEachran and several military moves, they settled in Fairfax County Virginia where she held sales management positions for home builders. They relocated to Sarasota in 1983 where she also held sales management positions for developers and banks. In 1989 she started her own residential building company, building in Manatee County. Kathy volunteers with the Literacy Council of Sarasota, and she is Co-Chair of Voter Services for the League of Women Voters of Sarasota County. As Co-Chair she is responsible for voter registration drives concentrating on outreach to underserved communities by collaborating with likeminded organizations, outreach to returning citizens, and Get Out the Vote Drives.



Tracy Geannopoulos has been a board member with the League of Women Voters for over five years. She served as the Treasurer for four years and currently serves as Chair for the Vote411.org/Voter Guide, Voter Forums, and Speakers Bureau committees. Tracy also manages accounting and human resources responsibilities for a local restaurant group. Previously she worked in the fields of financial options and derivatives and was a Vice President in asset and liability management at a major banking corporation. She also worked as a Controller at a local international software company. Other volunteer experiences have included Special Olympics and Literacy Council of Sarasota. She

has been a resident of Sarasota for 16 years. She has a BS in Finance from Indiana University and an MBA in Management and Organizational Behavior from the Kellogg School of Management at Northwestern University.

*Submitted by Martha Lindberg, Program Director*



## *November 2023*

### **President's Message**

It's that time of year again (already!), and the holidays will soon be upon us. My message will be brief. I can't tell you how critically important it is to have as many of you as possible attending our monthly membership meetings. It is a time to reconnect with those you may not otherwise get to see. It is equally important to support the members of our community who volunteer to come and address the issues and opportunities of our time and our community. This month's meeting is just one example of the importance of our being there. Having said that, I will admit to being someone who will not be able to come to the October meeting. Many of you may know that I am fulfilling one of my bucket list items, and I will be in France—a trip I have planned for in my mind for a very long time.

We give thanks to all our members for all that you contribute that makes Sarasota AAUW so special. May we all give thanks for our friendships, and may the season bring joy and fulfillment to each one of you. Here's to a beautiful holiday season.

*Sue Casey, President*



Hi members--Did you know that national AAUW has a new membership incentive program called the **How to Shape the Future** campaign? This campaign allows us to reduce national dues by 50% for any prospective member who joins at an event or meeting. This means anyone who joins "on

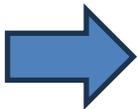
the spot” will only pay dues of \$69 (rather than \$105) for the first year of membership. This is particularly timely for us in light of our January 16 fundraising event at UUC, presenting Sheryl Faye interpreting Ruth Bader Ginsburg (RBG). Please keep this in mind as you reach out to family and friends to attend the fundraiser in January! This is a great opportunity to save a little money (always welcome!) for any prospective member. And surely, anyone who is a fan of RGB clearly is a great fit for AAUW. For further information on the How to Shape the Future campaign, contact Nancy Brennan at [aauwsrqbrennan@gmail.com](mailto:aauwsrqbrennan@gmail.com).

*Submitted by Nancy Brennan, Membership*



## Build our AAUW Sarasota Scholarship Fund

Our branch has a scholarship fund that supports women who need financial help to finish their college degrees. The Fund is managed by the Community Foundation of Sarasota County (CFSC). We welcome donations to this fund so we can continue to support local women. If you plan to make a donation, please make your check payable to CFSC with this on the memo line: “AAUW Sarasota Scholarship Fund.” You may mail a check to CFSC at 2635 Fruitville Road, Sarasota FL 34237. Let me know if you have other questions.



## DIRECTORY UPDATE

We are revising and updating our Branch Directory for the coming year. Please renew your membership to be included in the directory. If you have changes to your address or phone number, please contact Ellen Roche at [Ellen.Roche.AAUW@gmail.com](mailto:Ellen.Roche.AAUW@gmail.com).

*Submitted by Ellen Roche (ellen.roche.AAUW@gmail.com).*

Kathy Schoenhals, a long-time member of our Branch, has died of complications while ill with Covid. She was a participant in both the Film Group and the Gulf Gate Book Group who enlivened our meetings with her insightful comments. Of all of her accomplishments – and there were many – she was most proud of the fact that she and her two children all earned PhD degrees in their fields. She’ll be sadly missed by all who knew her.



# Public Policy



## The AAUW Florida Public Policy Issue Forums

Wouldn't you like more in-depth information on the important issues facing Florida from a nonpartisan but equity-focused viewpoint? Would you like to be able to ask your own questions of experts regarding these issues? Then be sure to attend as many AAUW Florida Issue Forums this year as you can. All sessions will start at 6:00 PM and last for an hour. The series is open to AAUW members and guests.

| TITLE   | DATE           | SPEAKERS  | RSVP  |
|---|----------------|---|---|
| <b>Gender Studies and DEI Initiatives at Colleges</b> | Nov. 2 2023    | Dr. Elizabeth Brown, Past President of the United Faculty of Florida, University of North Florida   | <a href="#">Click here to register for this session</a> |
| <b>Florida 2024 Legislative Preview</b>               | Nov.16, 2023   | Dr. Pat DeWitt, AAUW Co-Public Policy Director and Public Policy Committee Members  | <a href="#">Click here to register for this session</a> |
| <b>Public Education and Book Bans</b>                 | Jan. 11, 2024  | Dr. Marvin Dunn, Professor Emeritus at Florida International University and Miami Center for Racial Justice                                   | <a href="#">Click here to register for this session</a> |
| <b>Gender Pay Gap and Economic Security</b>           | March 7, 2024  | Dr. Mary Gatta, AAUW FL Co- Public Policy Director and Director of Research and Public Policy, National Association of Colleges and Employers | <a href="#">Click here to register for this session</a> |
| <b>Voting Rights</b>                                  | April 18, 2024 | Debbie Chandler, Co-President, League of Women's Voters. Florida  | <a href="#">Click here to register for this session</a> |

You will need to RSVP for each session individually. Once you RSVP you will receive a Zoom link for the session. If you have any questions, contact Mary Gatta, Co-Public Policy Director, AAUW Florida at [gatta.mary@gmail.com](mailto:gatta.mary@gmail.com).

*Submitted by Diana Sells, Director for Public Policy*



Our Tech Trek Coordinator, Leiland Theriot, will be "retiring" her role at the end of this school year. We are looking for someone to replace her. Most of the work is via email. Here are the activities:

Sept-December 15: Send out Principal and Teacher letters to all available middle school principals. Leiland usually starts sending the first invite in late September and continues to update the principals about every other week or so, letting everyone know how many nominations have been received from each school (info she gets from Sue Slone, FL AAUW coordinator). Leiland has a distribution list of the principals' email addresses.

Dec-January 31: Nominated students go online to complete their applications. Leiland usually follows up with Sue Slone to be sure that all nominated students get their applications done.

February: Applicants will interview with our AAUW Branch volunteers, two AAUW members for each interview. In the past we have scheduled this to happen in person at the Gulf Gate Library study rooms or via Zoom. Leiland can show you how to set this up. Leiland then ranks the results from the nomination, application, and interviews and forwards that to Sue Slone.

We usually find out who made it in March.

If you are interested in shadowing Leiland this year and taking over next year, please telephone her at 941-266-7316 or email at [leiland.theriot@gmail.com](mailto:leiland.theriot@gmail.com)



## 2023 AAUW Scholarship Award Recipients from the AAUW Sarasota Branch Scholarship Fund

### Elizabeth Parker Scholarship Fund

Jamiya C. Barnes

Scholarship Awarded: 2023

High School: Suncoast Polytechnical High

College: Galen College of Nursing – Anticipated Graduation: August 2024

Major: Nursing (RN)

Please explain why you are pursuing the course of study that you have chosen. In your response, consider how your chosen course of study reflects your life’s journey thus far and your personal and professional aspirations for your future.

*Nursing has always been my passion, my dream. I’ve always been a person who enjoyed problem solving. Nursing gives me the opportunity to become a solution to a person’s health problems, as well as make a difference in their life. I can’t count how many times I’ve been complimented at work for always coming in with a positive attitude, a smile, and exciting energy, even when the workload is heavy, and we’re being slammed at work, I still keep my head up and keep a smile on my face. It gives me great pleasure that those attributes about myself don’t go unnoticed. I’m currently an LPN, and I chose to continue my education to become an RN because I know the satisfaction and enjoyment I feel will only be amplified, especially working in a hospital setting. One of my biggest challenges for myself would be not becoming a statistic of my environment. I come from a family of seven, being raised by our grandmother due to our parents battling drug and alcohol addiction. I’ve worked hard to work my way out of a poverty-stricken environment. I’m hardworking, dedicated, and have a true passion for being a nurse. I remember having a patient on hospice; she was one of the sweetest women I had yet to meet at my current facility. She was declining rapidly, and her body was destroying itself from the inside out. No matter what, this woman was funny, sweet, and would always tell jokes. One day her sickness started to really take over, and she started plummeting. I immediately got EMS to the facility so they could transfer her to the hospital. This patient was on her deathbed and still to this day I remember vividly how this woman called out my name in a room full of medical professionals, begging me to help her. That day, and patients like her confirmed I’m in the correct field and I need to keep going with my career. Please share with the donors and committee members how receiving this scholarship will impact your educational goals. I’d first like to extend my sincerest thank you to all the donors and committee members involved with selecting me to be awarded with this scholarship. This scholarship will help with books, uniforms, clinical, and/or towards tuition. With this scholarship I have security that I don’t have to choose between school or my transportation, or between school or being homeless. With this Scholarship I’m able to study without distractions, and I’m able to cut back on my work hours to focus on my course work. I’m very grateful to be a recipient of this award because having my finances secured for school put me in a better position to receive a proper education without the stressors of life weighing me down.*

∞ ∞ ∞ ∞ ∞

### **Maria I. Martinez Chavez**

Scholarship Awarded: 2023

High School: Sarasota High School

College: State College of Florida – Anticipated Graduation: August 2024

Major: Nursing (BSN) – GPA: 3.38

Please explain why you are pursuing the course of study that you have chosen. In your response, consider how your chosen course of study reflects your life’s journey thus far and your personal and professional aspirations for your future.

*When I was 16 years old, I did not know what I wanted to do with my life, like most teenagers that age. In my experience, I did not make the best decisions and ended up in a situation where I was vulnerable, scared, and helpless. I felt like my life was over, and I felt that I was not worthy of having*

*the good fortunes others did. In the midst of this happening, there was someone there that helped me regardless of why I was brought to the hospital nor who I was, and that was my nurse. I admired the compassion she showed to a total stranger, and the comfort that her presence brought me in my time of need. When I asked her if she thought I would be able to become a nurse, she told me that I could achieve this if I set my mind to it, and that I could be a great nurse if I wanted to pursue it. After this scare in my life, I dedicated myself to studying and doing my best in school, and with the guidance and help of my school principal and a dear teacher and friend now, I won the award of Most Improved Student of our class, was able to graduate on time, and enroll into our community college, SCF, while also receiving my certificate as a nursing assistant and working full time hours as a Certified Nursing Assistant in Sarasota Memorial Hospital. My love for Nursing grew with being a CAN; even the smallest gestures can mean the world to someone. Anyone that has gone through nursing school knows the struggles we endure as students, the amount of work, dedication, focus, and love you need to have for your profession to succeed and pass. Knowing in my heart that this is my purpose in life and what I want to do is how I passed school and passed the NCLEX to become a RN. Even once that part was over, transitioning to this role was another mountain to climb, and as a 1-year-old nurse, I look back at my journey and I'm grateful for every experience I've had. It's made me be the person I am today. One of the biggest things I have learned is empathy towards humanity. With empathy, I give the best I can to every person I come across, because if it were me one day, I would hope for that. In the process, I was also able to complete a dream for my parents, who left their home in Mexico to give me a better future, and I feel that I am there. My aspirations for the future include furthering my education to continue to give the best I can to our community and keep up to date with our ever-changing world. I know that there is always more for me to learn and give to humanity, in the hope that whatever I do, big or small, makes a good impact in their life, and that is the reason I am here in the world.*

*“Hope is the thing with feathers,  
That perches in the soul,  
And sings the tune without the words,  
And never stops at all.”*

*- Emily Dickinson*

Please share with the donors and committee members how receiving this scholarship will impact your educational goals.

*My gratitude for your kindness and generosity is unmeasurable. Thank you for your commitment to your community's future. With your contribution I promise to better the lives of others by healing, educating, giving compassion and understanding in times of need. Receiving this award will allow me to finish my Bachelors of Science in Nursing, and I will be able to provide the best care to the people of Sarasota at our local hospital. It will also give me peace of mind to focus on studying*

*instead of working extra hours to pay for schooling, as I am already a full-time worker and full-time student, and struggle to make ends meet in today's costs of living. Again, I am so touched that there are people like you in this world, who are willing to help someone like me, out of the kindness of your heart. God bless you.*

*Submitted by Virginia Waring*

## Education Committee

The Education Committee has five areas we work with: **NCCWSL** (National Conference for College Women Student Leaders)--an annual conference for college women; **Tech Trek--** a STEM summer camp experience for rising 8<sup>th</sup> grade girls; **Academic Olympics** – a competition for local area high school students; **Write-Read-Write** – our reading program for a local third grade classroom; **Scholarships** – branch monies helping women complete college or a non-traditional career path.

**We have openings on these committees: Tech Trek and Write Read Write!** If you have questions regarding any of these areas or if you would like to join us, please contact Lois Wilkins at [cellololoma2@gmail.com](mailto:cellololoma2@gmail.com) or 989-430-0478.

*Submitted by Lois Wilkins, Director of Education Programs*



## Benderson Babes

Every Wednesday at 11:30 am - the absolute best remedy for the mid-week blahs. It's getting a vitamin shot from like-minded women – just what the doctor ordered.

We bring our folding chairs and meet under the shade of the trees at Benderson Park, enjoying gentle breezes. We spend about an hour sharing everything from current topics to “problem solving” (amazing what a group of females can do together). The conversation is as varied as the ladies who join us. After we've chatted, we head off for lunch– where we go for lunch varies each week and is decided by majority vote. Come join us and give us your opinion of where we should dine. For details on where we meet, send an email to [aauwflcasey@gmail.com](mailto:aauwflcasey@gmail.com) or call (941)735-8324. Hope to see you next Wednesday.

## ***Meet and Eat Sundays***

*For further information contact Sue Casey at [aauwflcasey@gmail.com](mailto:aauwflcasey@gmail.com).*

### **Sunday, October 22 – 5:00**

Boca – Sarasota

19 South Lemon

941-256-3565

Click on the link for the menu - <https://bocakbm.com/sarasota-menus/>

### **Sunday, October 29 – 5:00**

Caragiulos Italian American Restaurant

Repeat request

69 S Palm Ave

941-951-0866

Click on the link for the menu - <https://order.toasttab.com/online/caragiulos-italian>

### **Sunday, November 5 – 5:00**

Fleming’s Prime Steakhouse

Request to try a different steakhouse

2001 Siesta Drive (valet parking available) – Do NOT park in post office; you’ll be Towed.)

941-358-9463

Click on the link for the menu -<https://www.flemingssteakhouse.com/menus/dinner>

### **Sunday, November 12 – 5:00**

Classico Italian Chophouse

This one was recommended.

1341 Main St

941-203-5115

Click on the link for the menu <https://www.clasicosrq.com/>

## **KEEP YOUR CALENDARS OUT AND SAVE THESE DATES!**



**OUR ANNUAL HOLIDAY LUNCHEON, SATURDAY, DECEMBER 2, AT STONYBROOK COUNTRY CLUB. THERE’LL BE ORIGINAL AND TRADITIONAL HOLIDAY MUSIC.**



**OUR ANNUAL FUNDRAISER, JANUARY 16, 2024, AT THE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH IN SARASOTA. A ONE-WOMAN SHOW BY SHERYL FAYE AS RUTH BADER GINSBERG. CALLING ALL VOLUNTEERS!!!**



## NOVEMBER 2023

To place items in the Calendar, contact Sue McGowan by November 10 for the December 2023 Newsletter at [suemcg4802@gmail.com](mailto:suemcg4802@gmail.com). Please send them in Word format. I cannot edit a PDF file. You can reach me at 781-264-2450. Thank you.

| Date   | Time          | Event   | Location / Contact  | Notes   |
|--|---------------|---|---|---|
| Tuesday,<br>November 7   | 10:30<br>a.m. | <b>AAUW Sarasota<br/>BOARD MEETING</b><br> | Meet at Women's Resource Center. An invitation will be sent a day or two before the meeting.<br><br><b>Contact:</b> Sue Casey at <a href="mailto:aaufcasey@gmail.com">aaufcasey@gmail.com</a> | All members welcome.  |
| Friday,<br>November 10   |               | <b>DEADLINE for<br/>submission of articles<br/>for the November<br/>Synthesis.</b>  | Susan McGowan<br><a href="mailto:Suemcg4802@gmail.com">Suemcg4802@gmail.com</a>   | Early submissions are appreciated.  |
| Tuesday,<br>November 14<br> | 11:00<br>a.m  | <b>Gulf Gate Book<br/>Group</b><br><br><i>The Queen of Dirt<br/>Island by Donal Ryan</i>                                    | Gulf Gate Library<br>7112 Curtiss Ave,<br>Sarasota, FL 34231  | Discussion Leader:<br>Sylvia Rosenfeld<br>All members welcome.<br><br>For more information<br>contact Sylvia Rosenfeld<br>at <a href="mailto:Sylros10@yahoo.com">Sylros10@yahoo.com</a><br>Jocelyn Baskey<br><a href="mailto:@yahoo.co.uk">@yahoo.co.uk</a> |
| Wednesday,<br>November 15  | 2:00<br>p.m.  | <b>AAUW September<br/>BUSINESS MEETING</b>  | Women's Resource<br>Center<br>340 S Tuttle Ave.<br>Sarasota, FL 34237   | All members and guests<br>are welcome.  |
| Friday,<br>November 17   | 1:30<br>p.m.  | <b>Third Friday bridge</b>  | 1500 Glen Oaks Drive E.   | Contact Maureen First at<br><a href="mailto:firthernt@yahoo.com">firthernt@yahoo.com</a> for<br>details.  |
| Tuesday,<br>November 21  | 11:00<br>a.m. | <b>North County Book<br/>Group</b><br><br><i>The Personal Librarian</i><br>Marie Benedict and<br>Christopher Murray         | Betty J. Johnson North<br>Sarasota Library<br>Dr. Edward James II<br>Meeting Room<br>2801 Newtown Blvd,<br>Sarasota   | Discussion Leader:<br><i>Sue McGowan</i><br><br>All members welcome.<br><br>For more information<br>contact Lois Fisch at<br><a href="mailto:lfisch@utica.edu">lfisch@utica.edu</a>   |

**AAUW Sarasota Branch  
Elected Officers and Directors 2022-2024**

**OFFICERS**

|                               |                    |
|-------------------------------|--------------------|
| President<br>(2022-2024)      | Susan Casey        |
| Vice President<br>(2022-2024) | Vacant             |
| Secretary<br>(2021-2023)      | Estephanie Herrera |
| Treasurer<br>(2021-2023)      | Ellen Roche        |

**DIRECTORS**

|  |                 |
|--|-----------------|
| Program<br>(2023-2025)                   | Martha Lindberg |
| Membership<br>(2022-2024)                | Nancy Brennan   |
| Public Policy<br>(2022-2024)             | Diana Sells     |
| Communications<br>(2022-2024)            | Dawn Graber     |
| Education Programs<br>(2023-2025)        | Lois Wilkins    |
| Nominations<br>(2023-2025)               | Lois Fisch      |
| Past President, (ex-officio, non-voting) | Lois Fisch      |
| <b>Synthesis</b> Editor                  | Sue McGowan     |



Visit us on Facebook at  
[www.facebook.com/AAUWSarasota](http://www.facebook.com/AAUWSarasota)

Or on the web at:

<https://sarasota-fl.aauw.net/>

<https://www.aauw.org/>

(National organization)

<https://aauw-fl.aauw.net/>

(Florida branch)

or

email us at: [Sarasota.AAUW@gmail.com](mailto:Sarasota.AAUW@gmail.com)



**Synthesis** is published monthly September through May by the American Association of University Women  
Sarasota Branch  
P.O. Box 3554, Sarasota, FL 34230