



Synthesis

AAUW Sarasota Branch

March 2024

AAUW Branch General Meeting

Location: WOMEN'S RESOURCE CENTER

340 S. TUTTLE AVE., SARASOTA, FL 34237

Our special guest speaker this month -- Jane Gill Watt

IMPACT 100 SRQ

March 20, 2024



March is Women's History Month in which we celebrate the achievements of amazing women throughout history. It seems fitting that the speaker for our March 20 branch meeting is a local trailblazing woman, Jane Gill Watt.

Jane is the founding member and past president of Impact100 SRQ, a 501 (c)(3) nonprofit that has awarded \$2.4 million dollars to 22 local nonprofit organizations since its inception in 2018. With over 700 members and counting, **Impact100 SRQ** is the fastest growing Impact100 chapter and joins more than 70 chapters worldwide who have embraced the power of collective giving.

Jane was raised in a small town in upstate New York before attending Radford University in Southern Virginia. Her career and family led her to Indiana, where she worked in the pharmaceutical industry, focusing on the oncology sector, before relocating to sunny Sarasota. After learning about the Impact100 model from her mom and sister, Jane took a sabbatical from her career, serving as founder of Impact100 SRQ, which ignited Jane's passion for making a positive change in our community.

You won't want to miss hearing more about Jane and Impact100 SRQ, which has harnessed the power of women to solve problems and affect meaningful and sustainable change by awarding game-changing grants within Sarasota and Manatee counties.

President's Message

March 2024



Dear Members--

*January certainly started out on a high note! With the help of many people, especially Martha Lindberg and Judy Beilman anchoring the team, we raised an amazing **\$4,860.50**. This represents the work of so many--inviting neighbors, friends, and any others of like mind who would be interested in knowing more about RBG. The program was exceptional. Sheryl Faye's representation of the arc of Supreme Court Justice Ginsberg's life showed not only her fierce intelligence and determination in the face of discrimination but also her humanness and sense of purpose.*

That sense of purpose is something each of us has demonstrated on so many occasions here at our Sarasota AAUW Branch. May we always remember that purpose and continue to work together. And may our newest six members, women who joined after seeing the performance, feel that same purpose to continue doing the work of improving the lives of girls and women through our scholarships and grants and through participating in the life of our Branch.

Sue Casey, President



Welcome to our newest members: Terrie-Anne Bajorek, Lana Bruce, Julie Moser, Carolyn Primus, Melissa Rockman, Patricia Oxley Young. We are so glad you joined us!

Melissa Rockman

Melissa was born in the Bronx and raised on Long Island. As an undergraduate she majored in Chemistry at Barnard College and received two master’s degrees, one in Chemistry at Columbia and a second in Medicinal Chemistry at St. John’s University. She worked in the pharmaceutical industry her entire career, mostly in Quality Assurance. Melissa met her husband in a sleep-away camp at the age of 14. They have two daughters who live in Massachusetts and North Carolina and three grandchildren. She is an active golfer and enjoys bicycling, swimming, hiking, reading, and traveling.

Carolyn Primus

Carolyn has lived in Illinois, California, Massachusetts, Washington, DC, New Jersey, and Florida. She attended the University of Illinois and University of California where she majored in Engineering. Her work was in Research and Development.

We heartily welcome both Melissa and Carolyn. We look forward to opportunities to get to know them.

➤ *Submitted by Nancy Brennan, Membership*



OFFICERS NEEDED:

Please nominate yourself or a friend for one of the following positions on our Board. It’s a wonderful way to be in community with your AAUW Sarasota friends.

President

Vice-President

Membership

Nominations

Public Policy



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
Gender Pay Gap and Economic Security	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	Click here to register for this session
Voting Rights	April 18, 2024	Debbie Chandler, Co-President, League of Women’s Voters. Florida	Click here to register for this session

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.



The AAUW Florida Public Policy Committee has selected six bills to support and one to oppose for the current legislative session that began January 9. You may not read about these bills in the news, but they have been crafted to make the lives of women easier in Florida. Please contact your state legislators to give your opinion—position papers are available on the AAUW Florida website: <https://aauwadvocacyflorida.blog/2024/01/10/florida-2024-legislative-session/> After stating that you are a constituent, you may use the AAUW Florida name (I stand with AAUW Florida on this bill.) or just write a short note in support/opposition with your name.

ERA Bills: SCR142/H647: The 14th Amendment to the US Constitution does not prohibit discrimination on the basis of sex in the same way it does for race or national origin. We need this protection now.

Pregnant Women in Custody: SB 100/HB 237: After a pregnancy test on their request, every arrested female would be allowed to petition for a postponement, but not a reprieve, of incarceration. Jail is no place for healthy pregnancy and delivery.

Paid Parental Leave for State Career Service Employees: SB 127/HB 128: This bill changes unpaid to paid leave for the over 80,000 employees of the State of Florida, who are paid an average of \$56,500 per year.

Pregnancy Support and Wellness Services: SB 256/HB 343: This bill would improve the integrity of the state-supported childbirth-only Pregnancy Support Centers by requiring that information presented be medically correct and requiring Department of Health inspections and annual audit reports.

Employment and Curfew of Minors HB49 The AAUW Florida opposes bills aiming to enable employers to hire 16-year-olds without time or job restrictions (HB49/SB1596), because of the supreme importance of a good education in lifting people out of poverty.

The Freedom to Learn Act S1414/HB1355 The Freedom to Learn Act would repeal or amend many of the provisions of previously passed legislation prohibiting educational materials related to system racism and “identity politics”.

S1442/H1609 Pregnancy Support Services

Would establish the Florida State Maternity Housing Program within the Department of Health, for resident women and families during the prenatal period if they don’t have the resources for housing, i. e. experiencing homelessness. Limit is 8 months including a maximum of 6 weeks postpartum care. Services would also be provided to “encourage economic independence and positive health outcomes.”

Staff analyses in the House and Senate reference the affordable housing crisis in Florida and the negative impacts of homelessness on pregnant women and their infants.

If these bills become law, it will still be up to the Department of Health to establish rules regarding client eligibility, adequacy of housing arrangements, and methods for payment or reimbursement for housing.

These bills are moving with bipartisan support, so ask your legislators to vote for them when they reach the floor of the House or Senate.

H687/S1160 Use of Campaign Funds for Childcare Expenses

These identical bills are very simple: candidates would be able to use campaign funds for childcare expenses that would not have been incurred but for the campaign. The state restricts use of campaign funds for household expenses, so this would constitute an exception.

We heard from a representative of the national organization VoteMama (<https://www.votemamafoundation.org>) which seeks to make it easier for moms to run for office. They petitioned the Federal Election Commission, which approved the use of campaign funds for childcare, but this only applies to federal elections. They have to go state by state to get approval for the use of campaign funds in state and local campaigns.

Submitted by Diana Sells, Director for Public Policy

UNIDOSNOW: This year we were able to grant \$3,000 to UNIDOS NOW helping them to support their mission of improving the quality of life of our growing Hispanic/Latino population through education, engagement, and civic integration.

The following is the text of a thank you letter AAUW Sarasota received from

UNIDOS NOW

November 29, 2023

Dear Ms. Roche,

On behalf of the UnidosNow team, I would like to express my sincere gratitude for the generous grant from AAUW Sarasota of \$3,000 to support students pursuing their post-secondary education. These funds will help students like Helen. As a first-generation student, when Helen first thought about applying to college, she was unsure of where to start and if she'd get the help she needed. However, Helen saw how big she could dream when she became a Future Leaders Academy scholar. As she says,"

When I joined UnidosNow, they made it their mission to teach us everything we needed to know and match us up with other students who could give us insight based on their experience. I had all the tools I needed and now get to attend Duke University on a full ride as a Questbridge scholar and study biology to one day become a doctor. Thank you, UnidosNow!"

Your support enables us to continue providing these life-changing opportunities to our students, and we are grateful for the generosity of AAUW Sarasota.

Alexandra DeMartino Operations
Coordinator alex@unidosnow.org

¡Mil gracias, AAUW!

EDUCATION INITIATIVES

LOIS WILKINS

WRITE READ WRITE

Alta Vista Elementary School

Mrs. Jackson's class

Mrs. Bowlin's class

Everyone who participated has received their student's letter. Your book--in a gift bag, along with a personal message—is due no later than February 21, our next meeting. Please be sure to also indicate which team member sent you the letter so we can get the books to the right classes! Thank you goes to Kathy Oarr, Carol Bernasconi, Bev Prechtel, and Anne Salamone for their participation as team leaders.

*Submitted by Sue McGowan
Write Read Write Coordinator*

NCCWSL:

We are in contact with the women heading the searches at USFSM and New College and hope to have candidates by early March.

Submitted by June Benowitz & Joan Nasser

SCHOLARSHIPS

I have been in touch with Melissa Wareham, Student Services at Suncoast Polytechnical College. She has put the word out, so I hope to have responses in the next few weeks.

Submitted by Louise Oleyourryk

ACADEMIC OLYMPICS

The Finals were held on Tuesday, February 20, at Suncoast Polytechnical High School at 3 p.m.

Submitted by Kathy Schersten



Twenty-one students were nominated in Sarasota County. However, that is not broken down by branch (We share those students with the Venice branch.). These students are currently submitting their applications after having been nominated by their teachers. Currently I have received five applications.

*Submitted by Leiland Theriot
AAUW Tech Trek Coordinator
Sarasota Branch*



NEW FINANCE COMMITTEE NEEDED

As our year rolls around, we are already preparing for another year of learning and giving. We are forming a Finance Committee to prepare the Budget and the Philanthropy Plan for 2024-2025 and would like to have any interested members join us. We will begin with Zoom calls and perhaps meet in person. The Board will review the documents on March 5th, and they will be submitted to the Synthesis by March 10. The final vote will be at the Annual General Meeting/Branch Meeting on April 17th. Please join us to learn about how we get money and how we give money. Contact Ellen Roche: ellen.roche.AAUW@gmail.com.

SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS



Play Reading Group

The play reading group meets occasionally on the second Wednesday of the month for cold readings of plays and warm conversations with fellow AAUW members. Next month, the group will be meeting on March 13 at 1:30 pm. For further information on the details of the March get-together, please contact Nancy Brennan at nbrennan617@gmail.com.



Benderson Babes

Weather permitting, every Wednesday at 11:30 we 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.” The conversation is as varied as the ladies who join us. After that, we head off

for lunch— where we go for lunch varies each week and is decided by majority vote. For details on where we meet or are having lunch if the weather is inclement, send an email to aauwflcasey@gmail.com or call (941)735-8324. Hope to see you next Wednesday.



Meet and Eat Sundays

Sunday dinner with your AAUW friends—good times with great people. All are welcome to join us, share dinner, and spend time with your AAUW family. All reservations are for 5 p.m. If you want to join us, **please reply to this email** (aauwflcasey@gmail.com) to let me know. If your plans change, or you forgot to RSVP and you decide you'd like to come, just call (941-735-8324) or email me so I can update the reservations.

The list of upcoming dinners will be available soon. Stay tuned.





Submitted by Sue Casey

Our AAUW members have had amazing careers and lives beyond that. I would love to profile you for a future issue. If you would be willing to share YOUR story, especially for our newer members who don't know our varied backgrounds, please let me know.

And for our new(er) members, we would especially like to profile you as well.

*Thank you,
Sue McGowan (suemcg4802@gmail.com) or 781-264-2450.*

To place items in the Calendar, contact Sue McGowan by February 10 for the March 2024 Newsletter at suemcg4802@gmail.com. Please send them in Word format. I cannot edit a PDF file. You can text or call me at 781-264-2450. Thank you.

Date	Time	Event	Location / Contact	Notes
Tuesday March 6	10:30 a.m.	AAUW Sarasota BOARD MEETING 	Women's Resource Center 340 S. Tuttle Ave. Sarasota, FL Contact: Sue Casey at aauwflcasey@gmail.com	All members are welcome.
Wednesday March 13	1:30	Play Reading Group	The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie is this month's play.	Contact Nancy Brennan at nbrennan617@gmail.com
Friday March 15	1:30 p.m.	 Third Friday Bridge	1500 1500 Glen Oaks Drive E	Contact Maureen Firth at firthent@yahoo.com for details.
Tuesday March 19 	11.a.m.	North County Book Club <i>We will be choosing books for the next season.</i>	North Sarasota Library Edward James II Meeting Room	All members welcome For more information contact Lois Fisch at lfisch@utica.edu .
Wednesday March 20	2 p.m.	Monthly meeting Guest speaker: Jane Gill Watt, founding member of Impact100 SRQ	Women's Resource Center 340 S. Tuttle Ave. Sarasota, FL Contact: Sue Casey at aauwflcasey@gmail.com	All members and friends invited.
Tuesday March 26 	11:30 a.m.	Gulf Gate Book Group <i>We will be choosing books for the next season.</i>	Gulf Gate Library 7112 Curtiss Ave, Sarasota, FL 34231 2 nd floor	For more information contact Jocelyn Baskey at baskey0@gmail.com or Sylvia Rosenfeld at sylros10@yahoo.com .

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

OFFICERS

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

DIRECTORS

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



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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



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