



Breaking through Barriers for Women and Girls

<http://richmond-va.aauw.net>

February/March 2024

President's Letter

Happy New Year Greetings to all GRAAUW branch members !! It's really hard to believe that it's 2024 and we're already through the month of January 🤔 sure hope you are all doing well in this highly unusual weather weather pattern of 30° days and 78° days!!

Our Virginia General Assembly is in session with nearly 2300 bills filed this year plus resolutions and there has been rapid movement on many of those that AAUW follows/supports. I encourage all of you to keep track of what is happening and respond quickly to any calls for legislator contacts with emails to your representatives in a timely fashion!! This session will be over in just a few short weeks on March 10 so time is of the essence!

We have some exciting programs and activities lined up for spring and look forward to seeing you soon.

Information from our program VPs, Lisa and Ramona, about our **February 10th** meeting is in the newsletter. Hope you can help at the STEM event on **March 23rd**.

Also hoping that many of you will be able to attend the **state conference in Lynchburg on April 12th and 13th** - details in the state newsletter coming out in February. As always, if you have questions or concerns, please contact any of your branch board members.

Laura (804)387-5315 or (804)496-6124 or lwimmeraaauw@aol.com

Current and Future State of Women in STEM Professions

February 10th 12:00 - 1:30 pm St. Mathias Episcopal Church 11300 W Huguenot Rd, Midlothian VA. **Also join us via Zoom**, contact Lisa Scott at lisa.scott9944@gmail.com to receive the link.

Please join us for a discussion on the current and future state of women in STEM professions. We are thrilled to have two young women involved in the groundbreaking, Computer and Human Interaction Program, at Carnegie Mellon University who will share their personal experiences, as well as their current work to increase interest and enthusiasm among girls and young women considering careers in STEM.

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GRAAUW in the Community!

Jan. 14 & 15th - Sylvia's Sisters

Kathy Kelley and others met at Bon Air Presbyterian Church on Sunday Jan. 14th and Dulce Lawrence and Carol Stephens met at a church in Mechanicsville on Jan. 15th to help pack feminine hygiene products for the middle and high school girls in Richmond public schools. There was a good turnout of helpers and we were treated to pizza. Over 3,000 packets of products were packed for area schools and cards with sexual abuse hotline info were tucked inside.

STEM PROJECT at VCU with Girls For A Change and Girl Scouts March 22 & 23 !!

On March 22nd 7:00 - 8:00 pm we will meet the girls attending the conference along with their parents via zoom to prepare them for the conference and to inspire them to think big!

A contact through Lisa Scott, JaeMarie Solyst, who is a researcher and doctoral candidate at Carnegie Mellon, will speak about Artificial Intelligence and Human Interaction and demonstrate an "experiment" for the girls.

On Saturday March 23rd we will meet on the VCU campus at 9:00 am to set up and prepare registration table. **We need volunteers** for set up, registration table, guides in building between sessions to help girls find their way, help setting up lunch and monitoring lunch from 11:30 - 1:00 as well as clean up 3:30 - 4:00 pm. Please contact Carol Stephens if you are able to help. We will also have a sign up sheet at the Feb. 10th meeting.

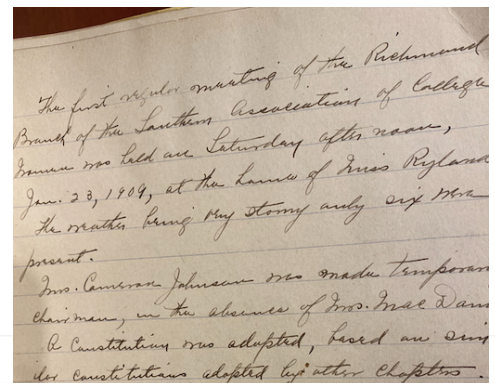
Programs

February 10, 12:00-1:30 St. Mathias Episcopal Church - Women in STEM Professions (see front page of newsletter and flyer at end of newsletter)

March 23rd - help with STEM conference at VCU - see article

Virginia Museum of History and Culture visit on January 13th

If you missed our program, you missed a wonderful experience! We were treated to 2 hours of information and exploration of the library in the VMHC. What a beautiful facility and what an amazing and wide ranging collection of documents and artifacts from the beginning of Virginia to present day. We were able to view an original letter from an escaped slave who settled in Canada and paintings from civil war artists as well as a painting of Sacajawea and documents from Thomas Jefferson. Our presenters were kind enough to pull the minutes from the first meeting of our precursor to the Richmond branch in 1909.



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Nominating Committee Report

The Nominating Committee, Laura W, Isata Turay, and Carol S, are happy to report that all positions up for election for 2024-2025 positions are filled. Of course we will take nominations from the floor at our **Annual Business Meeting which will be held this year on April 20, 10:00 - 11:30 at St. Mathias Episcopal Church.**

Secretary - We are very grateful for Kathy Kelly's commitment to taking our minutes for the past 2 years. She has served on the board of GRAAUW in some capacity for more years than many of us have been members! She decided she needed a complete break! We are delighted that **DeAnn Lineberry** has agreed to serve for the next two years!

VP's of Program - It is going to be a hard act to follow after Lisa Scott and Ramona Jones-Lemon terrific programs these past two years, but **Musua Wakabonga and Dulce Lawrence** have agreed to head up our programs for 2024-2026!

Co-Presidents - Words cannot express how grateful we are to Laura Wimmer for her willingness to continue for an extra term as President even while she served on the state board as District Rep! **Lisa Scott has agreed to serve as Co - President with Carol Stephens** for 2024-2026. With Lisa working full time and having to work various shifts, Carol agreed to share the responsibility with Lisa.

Co VP of Membership - Erica Brown-Meredith is serving her last year of VP of Membership in 2024-2025 as well as serving on the State Board. We were hoping to find someone to work with her

During 2024-2025 to then be willing to run for election for 2025 - 2027. We have not been successful in that endeavor. If anyone is willing to work with Erica this year, please let the nominating committee know.

AAUW VA STATE CONFERENCE - APRIL 12 - 13th in Lynchburg

Please be sure to check the February Newsletter from AAUW VA for details and registration information. A flyer for it is at the end of this newsletter and here is a link for the [conference brochure](#). There are several afternoon activities at 2:00 pm on Friday April 12th. We will be arranging carpools, so be sure to let us know if you are willing to drive or need a ride.

Public Education Matters

Feb. 6th 6:30 -7:30 pm via zoom

The LWV -RMA is inviting us to join them for an update on education bills at the General Assembly. Matthew Stanley, Richmond Public School Director of Advocacy and Outreach, will speak on last-minute ways our members and community partners can continue to support public education.

Zoom Link: <https://bit.ly/3O7MOYR>

Meeting ID: 836 9334 0184

Passcode: 599888

Public Policy Updates

See page 5

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Book Group

Continuing a 50-year tradition, our Book Group meets at **2 p.m.** on the third Thursday of each month. **All GRAAUW members and their guests are welcome.** Join us any time our book interests you OR come every month. If you wish to attend, please contact DeAnn Lineberry: deann.lineberry@yahoo.com or call 804-233-5352 to find out location.

Thursday, Feb.15

BOOK: Truevine: Two Brothers, a Kidnapping, and a Mother's Quest – a True Story of the Jim Crow South, by Roanoke-based journalist Beth Macy. We will meet via Zoom.

Thursday, March 21

BOOK: *Books about the Triangle Shirtwaist Fire*, members will select their own books about this landmark event that led to many changes in factory work-life. We will meet via Zoom.

February Birthdays:

Feb. 09 - Marian Seigla
Feb. 23 - Carol Stephens

March Birthdays:

Mar. 19 - Elizabeth Smith

Lunch Bunch

GRAAUW's Lunch Bunch normally gathers on the second Thursday each month at 1:30 p.m. in restaurants around RVA. **Lunch Bunch** began a few years ago as a way for members to meet for informal socializing. Currently, we're doing an International Tour with our Lunch Bunch dates, trying a wide variety of international cuisines available around RVA. For information about the group, contact DeAnn Lineberry 804-233-5352 deann.lineberry@yahoo.com

February 8, 1:30 pm, Mama Cucina in the Shoppes at Innsbrook off Broad St. for authentic Italian food. Contact DeAnn if you wish to attend.

March 14 1:30 pm O Tooles Irish Pub on 4800 Forest Hill Ave. (just east of Westover Hills Blvd). Contact DeAnn Lineberry if you plan to attend.

Birthday Corner

We would like to recognize the folks who will be celebrating their birthdays in **Feb. and March**. Please let them know you are thinking of them on their special day!



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Public Policy News Article February- March 2024

I want to thank everyone who supported the AAUW-VA Legislative Reception that was held on January 30th at St. Paul's Episcopal Church. A Big Thank you goes to **Carol Stephens, Lisa Scott, Connie Sorrell, Kathy Kelley, Dulce Lawrence, Laura Wimmer, Jane Newell, and Nora Norum** for supplying wonderful appetizers for the event! The Buffet was very well received by all who attended the event. A special thanks goes to **Connie Sorrell** for the beautiful Floral centerpiece! We had over 30 AAUW VA members, attend from around the state including our **State AAUW-VA President** and our **2 AAUW-VA Public Policy Co-Chairs**. Also in attendance were 2 representatives from the Virginia Interfaith for Public Policy that we coalition with on several bills and Lisa Sales from NOW. We had one Legislator, **Delegate Debra Gardner** representing portions of Chesterfield County, attend the event. Also from our branch in attendance were **Isata Turay** and **Natima Jones**.

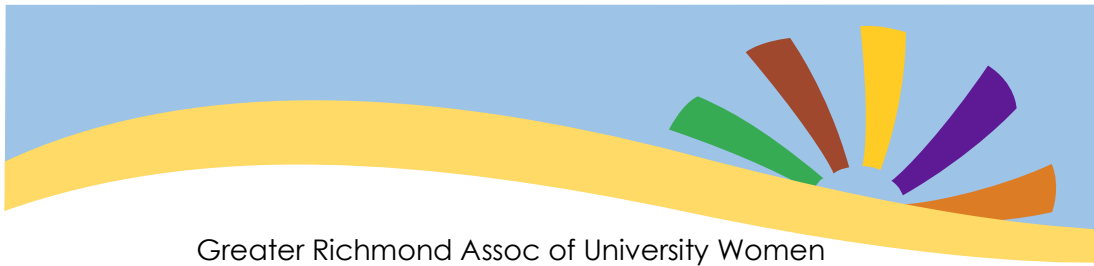
AAUW-VA Lobby Day was held the next day, January 31st. **Carol Stephens, Jane Newell, Barbara Strohm, and I** were able to lobby our delegates and senators on 3 bills of importance. One of those bills was the **Contraceptive Equity Act** which addresses cost barriers to contraceptive access and equity by eliminating burdensome co -pays. The Second Bill was concerning the **Paid Family & Medical Leave, PFML**, program which would establish a statewide, self-funding paid family and medical insurance program that would help eliminate fears of losing their jobs or risking their economic security. The 3rd bill was in **Support of Paid Sick Days** for all workers which would require all employers to provide 5 paid sick days each year for full time workers that can be used for themselves or to care for sick children. Part time employees could also participate in the program with fewer paid sick hours.

Thank you again for everyone's hard work and participation in hosting the AAUW-VA Legislative Reception and attending the annual in person AAUW-VA Lobby Day. A Virtual Lobby Day will be held later this month in February. Stay tuned for more information on that virtual event!

Laurie Coulter



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Greater Richmond Assoc of University Women
(GRAAUW)

Update On Women In STEM

Speakers:

Elaine Fath, BS Informatics, MA Design
Lead Game Designer , Carnegie Mellon
University Center for Transformational Play

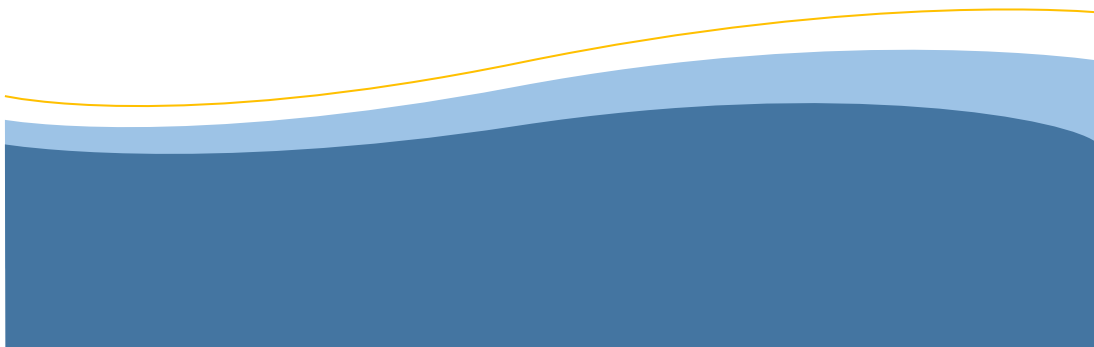


Jaemarie Solyst, BA Psychology & Computer
Science, Fulbright Scholar, PhD student
Computer and Human Interaction—Carnegie
Mellon University

February 10th, 2024, 12 to 1:30 p.m.

St. Matthias Episcopal Church
11300 W Huguenot Rd, Midlothian VA
Or join us via Zoom

RSVP to lisa.scott9944@gmail.com



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**The Southwest District Invites You to
Join Us in Lynchburg on
Friday, April 12 – Saturday, April 13
at the Hilton Garden Inn.**

The rate for rooms booked under the AAUW-VA block is \$139.00 per night, plus tax. The room rate includes breakfast. Room rates are subject to the following taxes: \$1.00 Occupancy Tax, 6.5% City Sales Tax, 5.3% State Sales Tax.

- Reservations can be made by calling the hotel directly at 434-239-3006 or by [Clicking Here](#)
- Please use the group code **AAW** to ensure you receive the block rate. When booking online, enter the code in the Group Code tab under Special Rate Codes.
- The cut-off date to book rooms at the discounted rate is 03/13/24.

**Our Keynote Speaker will be
Dr. Alison Morrison-Shetlar, the first woman president of
the University of Lynchburg.**

Plan to enjoy a little shopping because vendor tables will be available.

Friday afternoon sightseeing tours will be scheduled starting at 2:00 p.m. to give you a chance to enjoy Lynchburg.

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