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Items for May
Newsletter
DUE April 19, 2021

AAUW Austin April Branch Meeting

When: Saturday, April 10, 10:00 a.m.

Where: Zoom

Topic: *Our Fragile Early Childhood System: Lessons from COVID 19*

Speaker: Cathy McHorse, MA



Cathy McHorse is the Vice President, Success By 6 at the United Way for Greater Austin. Cathy is an experienced early childhood director and educator who oversees the United Way ATX portfolio of early childhood work and leads the Austin/Travis County Success By 6 Coalition. Cathy taught public school early childhood special education and pre-kindergarten in the Austin Independent School District, as well as serving as a teacher, director, and board member in child care centers in Austin.

Since joining the United Way ATX team, Cathy has focused her efforts on innovative, systems-level change. Under Cathy's Leadership, United Way ATX created an Innovation Management Organization (IMO) that serves as the administrative hub for Pre-K Partnerships, allowing AISD to partner with child care centers leveraging over \$1.84M of state funding into child care centers last year. Cathy manages Early Matters Greater Austin, an alliance of business leaders as advocates for early childhood education at the local and state level. She is the Chair of the City of Austin Early Childhood Council. Cathy was recently recognized as the Outstanding Child Advocate for Central Texas by Children At Risk.

Child care is a major issue for working women who have disproportionately been impacted by COVID. This current crisis has brought the challenges within the early childhood system to the forefront. Learn what our community is doing to ensure that all young children get a great start.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Though I had not expected to return to the topic of the 100th anniversary of the ratification of the 19th Amendment, there is more to share. This note in the "Today in History" column of the Austin American-Statesman caught my eye:

"February 27, 1922, The Supreme Court in *Leser v. Garnett*, unanimously upheld the 19th Amendment to the Constitution, which guaranteed the right of women to vote."

Given the talents of our members, I bet that some of the group knew about *Leser v. Garnett*, but I didn't. This freely available Time.com page explains the case in lay terms:

<https://time.com/3716603/leser-v-garnett/>

As explained by Time.com and other sources, a Maryland judge sued to prevent women in the state from registering to vote. A central claim was that since Maryland had not ratified the amendment, the state was exempt from its provisions. Also, the Maryland state constitution stated that voters were male. By denying the challenge, the Supreme Court confirmed that the U.S. Constitution could be amended in the process used to ratify the 19th Amendment and that state constitutions did not overrule the U.S. Constitution. The 19th Amendment would stand.

If you receive State and National AAUW e-mails, you won't need this reminder; but just in case: "Starting April 7, AAUW members will be asked to vote to elect members to the national board of directors and on amendments to our Public Policy Priorities and bylaws, including a proposal to eliminate AAUW's longstanding membership degree requirement." There is a [National Election](#) page at the AAUW National website. Online voting ends at 4:00 p.m. CT on May 17 (Monday). Please see more details about this issue on page 10.

Even more on voting: Our annual Branch elections will be held at the Branch meeting on April 10. As I write, the slate is not complete. If you can, please say "Yes" to fill one of the vacant positions. Likewise, if you recognize another member as being an excellent fit for a vacancy, please speak with that person.

Please be sure to recommend to any college women you know the AAUW's [National Conference for College Women Student Leaders](#) (NCCWSL) scheduled for May 25-26. It's online this year. Of course that means missing the in-person experience but makes possible most of the benefit with less expense. Thanks to State AAUW and to Austin member, **Roberta Coffin**, our branch was able to offer scholarships. If you see this before the application deadline of March 31 and are thinking that someone might squeeze in an application, there is more information on the [Branch homepage](#). Registration is \$125.00.

Finally: Everyone, thank you for supporting AAUW and, volunteers, thank you for your many contributions!

Larayne J. Dallas,
Co-President, Austin Branch AAUW
ldallas@austin.utexas.edu



March Meeting Recap

Edmund T. Gordon, Ph.D., Vice-President for Diversity at the University of Texas at Austin, joined us to speak on “Racial Geography at the University of Texas at Austin.” Dr. Gordon is an anthropologist whose research focuses on power and social transformation in the Black Diaspora. He regularly presents on the topic of “racial geography” and, in non-virus times, leads tours at the University of Texas, allowing participants to see how racial history and politics are built into the campus landscape and architecture. An online version of the tour is available (<http://racialgeographytour.org/>).

Noting the history of our group, Dr. Gordon had prepared a special talk (with many photographs and images) on “UT’s gendered campus.” His remarks began with a general reminder of how symbols convey messages. The University of Texas has removed controversial statues of Confederate figures (and of others linked to the “Lost Cause”) but has not removed the statue bases. The recently released report on the history of the UT school song, *The Eyes of Texas*, has answered questions but not necessarily changed emotions associated with the song.

On the topic of a “gendered campus,” Dr. Gordon described an institution founded with a traditional male focus. The Forty Acres set aside for the university are on a hill overlooking the seat of state political power. The administration building, the Main Building, is on top of the hill and is topped by what is often considered a phallic symbol.

Women were admitted to UT from its start and state legislators soon provided for housing, although separate housing. Much later, when Black students were admitted to the university, their racially segregated housing was also separated by gender. Beginning around 1930 as part of the campus master plan prepared by Paul Cret (the designer of the UT Main Building and Tower), UT provided for a full “Women’s Campus.” Gearing Hall, built to be the Home Economics building, is one of these. Gearing was the gateway to the Women’s Campus and is one of the few buildings named for a woman. Likewise, Barbara Jordan, remembered with a statue near the Texas Union, is one of the few women honored with a monument.

In summary, Dr. Gordon described what many of us may have seen and experienced at UT-Austin and on other campuses, but asked us to look again with a more critical eye. He provided historical background and context so that we might have a deeper understanding of how gender is built into a university environment.

Dr. Rashaanne N. Lewis, Austin-based author, businessperson and educator, spoke following Dr. Gordon’s talk. Dr. Lewis provided an “Introduction to the National Council of Negro Women (NCNW), the Greater Austin Section” where she serves as President. Dr. Lewis, also a member of the Austin Branch of AAUW, noted shared interests and bonds between the two groups.

The NCNW as a national organization (<https://ncnw.org/>) was founded in 1935, with Mary McLeod Bethune serving as the first president. Other strong leaders have followed Mary McLeod Bethune; Johnnetta Betsch Cole, Ph.D. serves as current NCNW national chair. The NCNW, Greater Austin Section (<https://www.ncnwaustin.org/>) was founded in 1946.

For those who would like to know more about becoming a member of the NCNW, Dr. Lewis directed us to make that connection at the local level. Contact Dr. Lewis for details: Dr. Rashaanne Lewis (Ladypapillon200@outlook.com).

April Interest Groups

Bridge Groups, Out to Lunch, Wine Tasters

No April Meeting

Art Tours

When: Wednesday April 28, 10:00 a.m.
Where: Art on 12 Wimberley, 13811 Ranch Road 12
What: Next Guest Show and visits to other Wimberley galleries
Lunch: TBD
Planner: Ginny Tannebring
To RSVP: Marsha Endahl Kramer, MEKspirit66@gmail.com or text (512) 906-6566

Contemporary Literature

When: Monday April 5, 7:00 p.m.
Where: Zoom
Book: *The Yellow House*
Author: Sara M. Broom
Leader: Louise Jordan
To RSVP: Mary Ellen Scribner, maryescribner@gmail.com



Central Book Club

When: Monday April 12, 10:30 a.m.
Where: Zoom
Book: *A Woman is No Man*
Author: Etan Rum
Facilitator: Mary Lou Bell
To RSVP: Mary Lou Bell, maryloubell@gmail.com

Creative Stitchery

When: Wednesday April 21, 10:00 a.m.
Where: Home of Elaine Penn, 912 Dartmoor, Drive
Project: Tunisian Crocheting with Elaine
Hosts: Elaine Penn and Jackie Hardee
To RSVP: Beverly Locklin, bklocklin@outlook.com



Culture and Cuisine

When: Thursday April 15, 6:30 p.m.
Where: Zoom
Theme: Yogurt: learn to make your own yogurt and appreciate the benefits of yogurt "culture".
Hosts: Lynn Cooksey, Brenda Scholin and Anne Wheat
To RSVP: Shirlene Justice, shirlenejustice@gmail.com



First Friday Book Club

When: Friday April 2, 10:00 a.m.
Where: Hyde Park Church of Christ, 43rd and Avenue B.
Book: *The Doctors Blackwell*
Author: Janice P. Nimura
Reviewer: Elizabeth Newell
Host: Judy Reinhart
To RSVP: Judy Reinhart, jareinhart@att.net, 512-345-5936

Hiking Group

Hike 1
When: Tuesday April 6, 10:00 a.m.
Where: Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center
4801 La Crosse Ave.
<https://www.wildflower.org/visit/trails>
Fees: Members free, Adults - \$12; Seniors - \$10
Leader: Debbie Starr
To RSVP: Linda Welsh, lawelsh@gmail.com

Hike 2
Thursday April 15, 10:00 a.m.
Belterra Monarch Trail, Dripping
Springs [Trail Information](#)

Ginny Tannebring and Brenda Hahne
Linda Welsh, lawelsh@gmail.com.

Mystery Book Club

When: Tuesday April 27, 11:00 a.m.
Where: Zoom
Topic: Somewhere in the world mysteries (country, place
within a country).
To RSVP: Pam Wolfe, piwolfe@yahoo.com



Pears

When: Saturday April 24, 5:30 p.m.
Where: County Line on the Hill, 6500 Bee Cave Rd.
To RSVP: Milli Stecker, milli1251@gmail.com
RSVP before Thursday April 22



Southwest Book Club

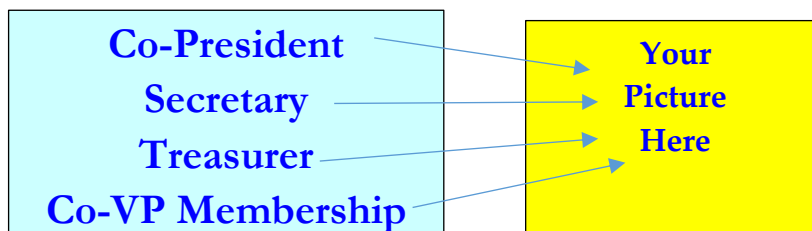
When: Monday April 12, 10:30 a.m. - noon
Where: Zoom
Book: *Olive Again*
Author: Elizabeth Stout
Facilitator: Mary Braunagel-Brown
Host: Debbie Starr
To RSVP: Please RSVP to the emailed calendar invitation and save details to your calendar.

Be the Change – We Need Leaders Volunteers Rule!



The Branch Nominating Committee Needs YOU!

We have been meeting, talking and asking members to consider joining our board, but several positions remain open for the coming 2021-2022 year.



Larayne Dallas (current co-president), **Marian Wernicke** (secretary), **Roberta Coffin** (Co-VP membership) and **Jackie Hardee** (treasurer) have been fantastic board members and advocates for the mission of AAUW. But nothing is forever, and it's time to give them a much-needed break and bring in fresh replacements. Fortunately, the nominating committee is putting forth **Ruth Subramanian** for Co-VP of Membership.

We all love our interest groups and stimulating branch program meetings, but none of these are possible without a strong leadership team. We must all do our part to grow and sustain our many branch activities that keep us engaged. Did we mention how supportive and helpful our continuing board members are? Please think about your skills and what might interest you, and volunteer to fill one of these positions.

Contact committee chair, **Elaine Penn**, at epenn9915@gmail.com, to learn more and volunteer!

College/University Partner Liaison Needed:

In addition to Austin Community College, the University of Texas at Austin and St. Edward's University are also College/University Partner participants, each with one or more on-campus representatives. There are several exciting ways that AAUW Austin can work with these representatives but we need a **liaison** to spearhead the effort as well as help spread the word to Huston Tillotson University and other schools. The commitment is that of only a few hours a month. Please contact **Larayne Dallas** (ldallas@austin.utexas.edu) if you are interested in serving as the College/University Partner Liaison.



Be the Change Continued.....

The Sparkle in our Crown – the Program Committee

One of the many benefits of AAUW Austin membership is the opportunity to learn and share information about issues that are important to us. Through our monthly meetings, we enjoy hearing from informed and interesting guest speakers who address a variety of topics. We have the dedicated volunteers on the Program Committee to thank for this privilege. The Program Committee needs your help. Phyllis Folarin and her team are seeking volunteers to serve on the committee. There are three ways to become involved:

- Suggest speaker and topic ideas to the committee.
- Join the committee. Generally, each member of the committee is responsible for seeking, recruiting and promoting a speaker for at least one monthly meeting during the year.
- Serve as Co-Chair. Committee work is always more fun, efficient and rewarding when on a team. For this reason, we are also seeking a co-chair to work closely with Phyllis to coordinate committee activities.

Please contact **Phyllis Folarin** (p.folarin@att.net) if you are interested in serving in any of these capacities. We are a relevant and robust organization in large part due to the work of this committee. Please consider how you can play a role in ensuring the vibrancy of AAUW Austin.

Renewal Time: Simple – Easy - All Online

On Tuesday, April 6, you will be receiving your membership renewal notification from memberinfo@AAUW.org. By simply clicking on the personalized link included in this email, you can directly access your own account and make your payment online.

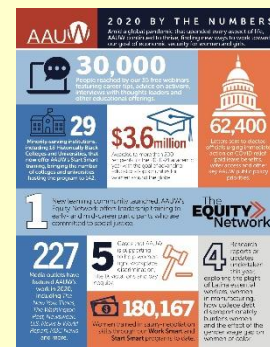
No checks to write, stamps to find or need for that trip to the post office.

For those who prefer to write a check, mailing information will be included at the bottom of the renewal notification email. Renewal forms also will be available online at <https://austin-tx.aauw.net/join/>.

National dues are increasing by \$3.00 this year. This is the first of three incremental increases planned over the next three years. Ever increasing expenses, combined with a greater-than-ever need to pro-actively support our membership and our mission necessitated this decision. Check out the [AAUW 2020 By the Numbers](#) page to see how much – just last year – AAUW accomplished. It is impressive!

For those who are interested, AAUW does offer a Paid Life Membership. Basically, this option equates to the prepayment of 20 years of National dues at the current rate. Life Members are still required to pay State and Branch dues on an annual basis. For further information, contact **Roberta Coffin**, Membership Co-VP, at (714) 679-8697.

To review 2020 National AAUW accomplishments, click on the above graphic.



Member Spotlight – Mercy Sosanya

Imagine you are a teenage mother in Nigeria living in poverty and have no resources to help you with breastfeeding your newborn or knowing what makes a nutritious meal to feed your toddler. AAUW International Fellowship recipient and Austin Branch member, Mercy Sosanya's goal is to change that scenario.



Mercy was born in Bacita, Kwara State, Nigeria but grew up in Ughelli, Delta State. She attended secondary school in Benin City, Edo State and earned a Bachelor and Master of Science - Human Nutrition at Ibadan University, Ibadan, Oyo State.

After earning her Master's degree, she taught secondary school for 3 ½ years and then taught at the college level for 13 years at Federal Polytechnic in Bauchi. She is a co-author of numerous articles on nutrition, and among many of her speaking engagements, was a presenter at the 2020 Virtual Nutrition Conference.

When Mercy came to the United States in 2018 to begin her Ph.D. studies in Nutritional Sciences at UT Austin, she brought her family with her. They include husband, Adewole, and three daughters, Ore, 18, is an electrical engineering student at ACC; Toba, 13, is in the eighth grade, and Olufe, 9, is in 4th grade.

Her Ph.D. research includes developing a mobile app, initially in Nigeria, that new moms can use to find information about topics such as breastfeeding, complementary foods and food quantities for young children, etc. Once the app has been developed and dispersed, her team will follow the teen moms to see how well the app has improved the nutritional outcomes of the children. Mercy will spend the summer of 2022 in Nigeria on this project.

Mercy's goal after earning her Ph.D. is to improve the nutritional well-being of mothers, children and malnourished people in Nigeria and ultimately in all of Africa. To see this through, Mercy knows she will need to be able to influence policy by becoming involved globally with policymakers and international partners to bring innovative change. Both governmental and non-governmental research is needed in many areas such as working to eliminate food waste and developing more efficient forms of solar refrigeration so that mothers can make yogurt that can be used for their families and also sold for profit.

Mercy joined AAUW after receiving her Fellowship and becoming aware of the mission of the group. She wanted to understand AAUW better and learn from other professionals in the organization. She has become friends with Phyllis Folarin, an AAWW member.

Mercy is involved in STEM and has volunteered as a speaker for Latinitas. Mercy's hobbies include developing recipes,, playing badminton and table tennis, watching documentaries, telling stories and creative thinking and writing.

Mercy is involved in several professional organizations including: American Society for Nutrition, Nutrition Society of Nigeria, Organization for Women in Science for the Developing World, Nigerian Association of University Women and Graduate Women International.

Mercy would encourage young (and any age) women to join AAUW because it offers opportunities for philanthropy, promoting women's rights and improving the lives of all people. To learn more and appreciate Mercy Sosanya's Ph.D. work and future goals, see her [LinkedIn profile](#) and read "[Grateful for Professional Advancement 2020!](#)"

Upcoming Fun Fundraising Events and Opportunities

See's Candy Sale

See's yummy chocolate bars! Milk chocolate and dark chocolate! Order them for delivery in time for Easter or pick them up on **Saturday, April 17** from noon until 6 p.m. at 12 Fox Beer Company, located at 4700 W. Fitzhugh Road in Dripping Springs. The setting is beautiful, so please join us for candy and beer. Delicious dark chocolate and milk chocolate bars will be sold at **2 for \$5.00**.

Members who want to purchase candy bars in time for Easter for family or themselves can contact **Sharon Babot** at sharonbabot@gmail.com. Candy bars will be delivered to members who place a minimum order of \$10 (4 bars) by April 1 to be delivered on April 2.

We are half way to our goal of \$1,000 in candy sales that will net \$500 to support AAUW mission and goals. We still have a ways to go and NEED YOUR SUPPORT! It takes a village of AAUW members to raise the money to support women's equity issues and scholarships. We depend on each other, actively involved women who come together and help our causes and our organization.

Kendra Scott Jewelry

On April 19-20, just in time for Mother's Day, the Kendra Scott "Give Back" jewelry sale will take place. Buy online and use the code "GIVE BACK - 1775" and 20% of the purchase will go to AAUW. The 48 hours begins at 12:01 a.m. on the 19th.

There will also be a Zoom styling session to introduce new products and styles at 11 a.m. on April 19. An invitation will be coming to members via Evite. Please share this shopping opportunity with friends and family. And please think about buying all your spring and summer gifts for nieces, sisters, mom, and daughters.

The 20% of the price that Kendra gives back to us will help support all of the causes AAUW supports: education, leadership, employment equality and voting rights. To visit the Kendra Scott website, click on the graphic.



Virtual Cooking Class

June 13, 2021 from 4-5:30 p.m. Virtual cooking class with Chef Alex. Learn to make delicious appetizers and cocktails. More information will be included in future newsletters. To learn more about Chef Alex, click on the appetizer.



Amazon Smile

If you have not designated a charity to receive a percentage of your Amazon purchases, please consider naming AAUW as the recipient. To learn how to set up a charity, click on [Amazon Smile](#) to name AAUW. Everyday purchases at Amazon generated \$3,707 to AAUW last year.

Important National Bylaws Amendment Vote

April 7 - May 17 at 4:00 p.m.

Starting April 7, AAUW members will be asked to vote to elect members to the national board of directors and on amendments to our Public Policy Priorities and bylaws, including a proposal to eliminate AAUW's longstanding membership degree requirement. This bylaw change is recommended by the AAUW Board of Directors and AAUW Governance Committee, but it is not a new proposal, and it has been controversial in the past. The change would be:

An individual who supports the AAUW mission and pays annual AAUW dues shall be eligible to be an individual member with all rights and responsibilities of AAUW membership.

You need to consider if you agree with the current bylaw that to be a member of AAUW requires an individual to hold an associate's (or equivalent, e.g., RN), bachelor's, or higher degree from a higher education institution. Or do you agree that the long-standing membership requirement constitutes a "barrier" and by eliminating this requirement, AAUW can become a more diverse and inclusive organization?

Regardless of your stance on this issue, we encourage you to vote beginning April 7 through May 17 at 4:00 p.m. CT. Members who cannot vote via email may request a mail-in ballot. For more information about the National AAUW election, click [National Election Bylaws Amendment](#).

Take Action Now – Stop Voter Suppression!

There are two bills currently being considered in the Texas Senate (SB-7) and House (HB-6) that make it more difficult for Texans to vote. As an organization that represents the voices of women, AAUW Texas is concerned that these two bills will disenfranchise voters and lead to the erosion of the state's democratic values. The 2020 elections demonstrated that Texans are dedicated voters. An unprecedented number of Texans exercised their right to vote, actively participating in our democracy. Unfortunately, many bills filed in the Texas Legislature this session will strike down the measures put in place to support voters during the pandemic. Instead, these bills call for barriers on when and how we can vote. SB-7 encompasses many of these barriers. HB-6 is a comprehensive election bill that complicates voting and adds criminal penalties which could threaten voters, those assisting voters and public officials.

The text of SB 7 is at <https://capitol.texas.gov/BillLookup/Text.aspx?LegSess=87R&Bill=SB7>

The text of HB-6 is at <https://capitol.texas.gov/BillLookup/Text.aspx?LegSess=87R&Bill=HB6>

It's hard to imagine how Texas could make it more difficult for voters to register, or cast a ballot, or assure that valid ballots are properly counted, but those are the goals of this legislation. For more information on the bills and their impact and how to voice your opinion, please go to the League of Women Voters of Texas website by clicking [RIGHT TO VOTE](#).

Policy Updates

What's Happening in the Texas Legislature?

Economic justice

SB 3 focuses on the state energy industry, requiring mandatory weatherization for power generators. It was approved by its Senate committee this week and is moving to the House!

Family leave

Family leave is an important issue for AAUW's mission that disproportionately affects women. HB 247 requires employers to offer employees 30 days of leave following a serious event, like birth of a child or caregiving for family members; HB 361 gives a franchise tax credit to smaller businesses (companies with fewer than 1,500 employees) that provide at least four weeks of paid leave following child birth, or two weeks following an adoption!

Racial Justice

The George Floyd Act (HB 88) is a sweeping police reform bill that bans chokeholds and requires officer intervention for excessive force. An innovative aspect of the bill is its potential to remove "qualified immunity," which makes it extremely difficult to convict police officers.

Childcare

Creating a task force in state government to study and make recommendations on childcare access and affordability in Texas (HB 1761); developing a statewide plan for childcare workers, including increased wages and workforce development (HB 619).

Your Vote Counts on Every Level - Saturday May 1 is Election Day

Numerous local entities in and around Austin are holding elections. The City of Austin has eight propositions on the ballot. Both Williamson County (Georgetown ISD) and Eanes ISD have school board elections. District 1 and District 5 City Council seats are up for vote in Georgetown. Multiple candidates are running for Mayor and the City Council in Lakeway. There are five propositions, along with candidates for Council Place 1, 3, and 5 to be determined in Cedar Park.

The above is simply an illustration of the depth and breadth of all to be considered. If you have not received information about a local election, check your city/county website. For example, you can find a listing of the eight propositions, several of which relate to council elections, oversight responsibilities and how the city government will be structured going forward, on the Austin ballot at [Austin Elections](#).

Just prior to the start of early voting, the League of Women Voters makes available non-partisan Voter Guides with statements provided from both sides of each issue. At [VOTE411.org](https://vote411.org) you can access this information as well as a personalized May 1 ballot based upon your address.

Important dates to remember:

- **April 20:** Mail-In Ballot requests must be received. You must submit a new request for a mail-in ballot each calendar year. To find out if you are qualified or to check on your Ballot By Mail (BBM) status for 2021 or to obtain a Ballot By Mail request form, go to <https://countyclerk.traviscountytexas.gov/elections/ballot-by-mail.html>.
- **April 19 - 27:** Early voting. Check with your city/county website for specific days, times and locations.
- **May 1:** Election Day. Check your city/county website for polling locations and times.

Named Gifts Submission Reminder

Now is the time of the year to nominate members for Named Gift awards. The number of awards is based on the amount of money branch members donated to the national organization in 2020. If you want to nominate someone to be recognized and honored, the form can be accessed on the branch [website](#) or by clicking [HERE](#). **The deadline for nominations has been extended to April 10, 2021.**

News from the College Front

NCCWSL Scholarships: AAUW Austin has four fully paid scholarships for this year's virtual National Conference for College Women Student Leaders, which will be held online from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. on May 25 and 26. The submission deadline is March 31. Further information and application forms may be obtained at <https://austin-tx.aauw.net/2021/02/23/nccwsl/>.

New C/U Representative for Austin Community College: **Talisia McHugh** is joining AAUW member **Charlene Buckley** in representing Austin Community College in AAUW's College/University Partnership program. Talisia serves as the Coordinator for High School Programs, Enrollment and Outreach and also has experience working with the Women's Leadership Organization at ACC.

Renewed C/U Partner Focus for AAUW Texas: **Karen Reichensperger**, the C/U Partner Liaison for AAUW Texas reported in the February issue of *University Women Texas* on the need to stress the benefits that this program offers both students and faculty among participating colleges and universities. She is now surveying the branches and providing information about such C/U Partner-related opportunities as Work Smart, Start Smart, NCCSWL, research publications, grants, networking and leadership growth.

Mainspring Schools



April is Planting Time at Mainspring Schools

The preschoolers at Mainspring are planting gardens and flowers around the school and in the classrooms. Everyone is thankful for better weather and the time spent enjoying the outdoors. Almost all of the staff are vaccinated, so that is a great step forward.

Amplify Austin was a big success for Mainspring Schools this year. Ninety-seven donors gave \$26,420, exceeding their \$20,000 goal.

The biggest upcoming news is that Mainsprings turns 80 in October. This year they are hosting a virtual fundraiser to celebrate their anniversary. Anyone can participate in Mainspring's [80 Celebrations for 80 Years](#). The AAUW Austin Mainspring Committee will be thinking of ways that AAUW can commemorate this anniversary and celebrate our role in establishing this important Austin institution!

Article submitted by **Linda Welsh**, AAUW Austin Mainspring Schools Advocacy Chair, lawelsh@gmail.com.



STEM news from your STEM liaison and committee: **Nancy Andren, Liaison; Roberta Coffin, Anita Knight, Elizabeth Newell, Rosemary Morrow, Jackie Hardee, Lilac Bauer and Ginny Tannebring.**

Latinitas

Latinitas is holding “**MEDIA CHICA: Workshops**”, a series of webinars led by innovative Latinas and Women of Color in the media field.

The first talk of the series, covering social media, will take place APRIL 10 from 10:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Senior Manager of Digital Content Strategy & Production of Austin FC **Silvia Higareda** is the keynote speaker.

This virtual event is open to all girls and non-binary high school and college students and requires access to a computer and the internet.

All questions and inquiries can be sent to elisa@latinitasonline.org.

Latinitas is also offering a new Code Chica class. They welcome all high school girl-identifying and trans/non-binary students between 8th and 12th grade for this free virtual nine-week event.

These online classes will take place from April 3 to May 29, every Saturday from 11 a.m.-2 p.m.

Students will work with instructors from the tech industry to learn the fundamentals of Javascript and website building. Upon completion of the program, students will receive a \$75 stipend and a certificate outlining their accomplishments.

If you are interested in ways to help as a Latinitas Volunteer, please reach out to Bailey@latinitasonline.org.

Girlstart

Girlstart continues to provide their Starry Nights program online on Thursday nights as well as their after school program at home virtual STEM program.

Summer camp dates and themes are available on their website: girlstart.org.

Other STEM Opportunities:

Stories of Women in STEM at the Smithsonian, the downloadable e-book for middle-school readers I mentioned at the general meeting is available at <https://ssec.si.edu/women-in-stem>. There are many activities for different age groups at the Smithsonian website, [Smithsonian Institute Learning Activities](https://www.si.edu/learning).

