



# THE SAGE HEN

## A Quarterly Publication of the AAUW Nevada State Council

### 2024 - 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter



Mission Statement: To advance gender equity for women and girls through research, education, and advocacy.

#### President's Message:

I am honored and humbled to follow Caroline Panches in the role of President of Nevada State AAUW. There is no doubt; she is a hard act to follow. Thank you, Caroline, for your dedication to AAUW and your enthusiastic approach to leadership. I look forward to your continued mentorship.

As I have thought about assuming the presidency of Nevada State AAUW, I have been reminded of the synergy of tradition and change. We are comforted by tradition. Every four years we thrill in international competition during the Olympics. The presidential election occurs every four years, bringing both anxiety as well as fierce competitiveness. Annually, late summer means the usual back-to-school anticipation and activities. Although a few months ago we looked forward to summer vacations, many of us are happy that the tourists will soon leave and we can have our beautiful communities back. The list goes on.

With the rhythm of the seasons comes the wonder of change. No two Olympics are the same; elections invariably introduce us to new leaders; the new school year brings new learning and wonderment; Fall allows us to change our behaviors.

My hope in assuming the presidency is that I can build on the great successes that Caroline has championed in a manner that provides an opportunity for the next generation of women to grab the baton in our quest for equity for women and girls. We have a great Council that represents our future. Now more than ever, we need to make our voices heard. Let's go!



Janet Usinger, President  
AAUW Nevada State

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Hello, Ladies of AAUW!

*As the new Nevada State Public Policy Chair, I know the important legacy I must uphold. Thank you to Debbie Nicholas for the wealth of policy knowledge you shared during your term! As we approach the forthcoming presidential election, it's clear that not only are women's rights on the line but our democracy itself. A few of AAUW's public policy positions are below and remind us of the work before us. (Go to [www.AAUW.org](http://www.AAUW.org) for more.)*

### **Where We Stand: Economic Security**

*AAUW advocates for all women to achieve economic self-sufficiency.*

**Equal Pay:** AAUW advocates pay equity and fairness in compensation and benefits to achieve economic security for all women.

<https://www.aauw.org/app/uploads/2022/08/Equal-Pay-Quick-Facts-Jan-2022.pdf>

- In Nevada, the Gender Pay Ratio is 87%, and we rank 5th in the National Rankings.

**Retirement Security:** AAUW advocates strengthening retirement benefits and programs, including pension improvements and protecting Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid from privatization.

<https://www.aauw.org/app/uploads/2022/08/Retirement-Security-Quick-Facts-Jan-2022.pdf>

### **Where We Stand: Education & Title IX**

*AAUW supports a strong public education system that promotes gender fairness, equity, and diversity, including vigorously enforcing Title IX.*

**Student Debt:** AAUW advocates increased support for and access to affordable higher education for women, including alleviating the debt burden that disproportionately impacts borrowers of color and exacerbates the racial wealth gap.

<https://www.aauw.org/app/uploads/2022/01/Student-Debt-Quick-Facts-Jan-2022.pdf>

**Sexual Harassment and Sexual Violence in School:** AAUW advocates equitable access to education and climates free of harassment, bullying, and sexual assault.

<https://www.aauw.org/app/uploads/2022/08/Sexual-Harassment-and-Violence-in-School-Quick-Facts-Jan-2022.pdf>

**Title IX:** AAUW supports the strengthening and vigorous enforcement of Title IX and all other civil rights laws on education. <https://www.aauw.org/app/uploads/2022/12/Title-IX-Quick-Facts-Nov-2022.pdf>

### **Where We Stand: Civil Rights**

*AAUW advocates for equality, individual rights, and social justice for a diverse society.*

**Voting Rights:** AAUW is committed to open and fair elections that are broadly accessible to all voters, nonpartisan voter education efforts to promote equitable political participation and representation in appointed and elected office, and expanding voting rights.

<https://www.aauw.org/app/uploads/2022/01/Voting-Rights-Jan-2022-update.pdf>

**Equal Rights Amendment:** To guarantee equality, individual rights, and social justice for a diverse and inclusive society, AAUW advocates the passage and ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment.

<https://www.aauw.org/app/uploads/2022/01/Equal-Rights-Amendment-Quick-Facts-Jan-2022.pdf>



Public Policy  
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**Reproductive Rights:** AAUW supports choice in determining one’s reproductive life and increased access to health care and family planning services.

<https://www.aauw.org/app/uploads/2022/08/Repro-Rights-Quick-Facts-Aug-2022.pdf>

**LGBTQ+ Rights:** AAUW advocates freedom in the definition of self and family, including protection from discrimination and a guarantee of civil rights for all family structures, and vigorous enforcement of and full access to civil and constitutional rights.

<https://www.aauw.org/app/uploads/2022/09/LGBTQ-Rights-Quick-Facts-Jan-2022.pdf>

*I look forward to being of service and will update you on Nevada’s position and relevant bills for the upcoming legislative session in the forthcoming months. Feel free to send your questions and feedback to me:*

**Dr. Evelyn Thompson-Hilbert, DDP** | Email: [evelyn.AAUW@gmail.com](mailto:evelyn.AAUW@gmail.com)

**PLEASE NOTE THE FOLLOWING FOR ANY AAUW POSTS:**

**AAUW Membership Advocacy**

DO	DON'T
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Remain non-partisan</li><li>• Work on issues guided by our values and mission</li><li>• Engage with candidates and elected officials from all major parties equally</li><li>• Encourage voter registration for everyone, regardless of their political persuasion</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Expressly advocate for or endorse any one candidate</li><li>• Encourage voter registration for any one particular party</li><li>• Share AAUW member lists with campaigns or political parties</li><li>• Raise funds for candidates or coordinate any election activity with a campaign or political party</li><li>• Support anything in conflict with AAUW Public Policy Priorities</li></ul>

AAUW



**AAUW of NEVADA**  
**2024-2026 State Leadership Council Members**

OFFICE	NAME	EMAIL	HOME PHONE	CELL PHONE	AAUW BRANCH
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Finance	Debbie Nicholas	nicholas89451@gmail.com	(775) 843-0775		Tahoe Nevada
Secretary	Terry Owens	terry49408@gmail.com	(269) 355-2670		Reno
Public policy	Evelyn Thompson-Hilbert	evelyn.AAUW@gmail.com			Las Vegas
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Advisor/Past President	Caroline Punches	cpunches206@charter.net	(775) 246-1850	(775) 443-8318	Capital (Carson City)





# Meet Your New Council Members

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## Janet Usinger, President

Although I have only been a member of AAUW for about 8 years, she has felt part of AAUW since my mother joined AAUW Tahoe Nevada shortly after the Branch started in the early 1970s. Recently completing her second term as President of the Tahoe Nevada Branch, she continues to serve as the Chair of the Fundraising Committee. Janet's favorite AAUW activity is Great Decisions as it provides the opportunity to explore public policy issues with a group of thoughtful women.



## Marian Stanton, Program

Born in California on December 29, 1939, Marian Stanton moved to Las Vegas in 2002 and promptly joined AAUW Las Vegas Branch from the Diamond Bar Branch in California. She immediately got involved in fundraising, supporting scholarships. She attended junior college and eventually earned her BA degree from Cal State Fullerton, a teaching credential from the University of Colorado, Ft. Collins, and an MS in Vocational Education. Her background in Sales and Marketing helped prepared her for this subject and gave her the ability to write a proposal for a drop-out program which was utilized by the Boulder, Colorado High School. In 1987, and for more than 20 years, Marian was a loan officer. In addition, she was a caregiver and trustee for her uncle, who passed in 2005 and until her aunt's death in 2013. She has held several positions with AAUW including president in 2019-2022.



## Debbie Nicholas, Finance (Treasurer)

Debbie Nicholas has been privileged to be a member of AAUW for 17 years. She is a member of the Tahoe Nevada Branch in Incline Village, and has served as Branch newsletter, treasurer, fundraising chair, president-elect, and president over the years. She continues to serve on the fundraising committee, and interest groups including the Travel Tips, and Outdoor Enthusiasts. Debbie has served on the Nevada State Council for several years, most recently as Public Policy chair. She looks forward to being more active (and traveling more), once she retires from her current part-time position with Sierra Community House, a local nonprofit.



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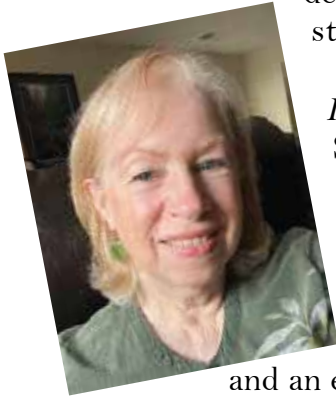
# Meet Your New Council Members

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## Dr. Terry Owens, Secretary

Dr. Terry Owens retired in 2018 from the Educational Testing Service (ETS). Primary duties included dissemination of company information, conducting workshops on Praxis testing, and detailed analysis of test score data for presentation to higher education deans, state school boards, and licensing personnel.



She led Hafen Elementary School in Pahrump, NV, from *Needing Improvement* to *High Achievement* within three years of being hired as principal. She was elected president of the Nye County Principals' Association and was appointed by Nevada Governor Gibbons to the Commission on Professional Standards in Education, where she served as the Commission president for two years.

She implemented and managed the Nevada Education Reform Act (NERA) for six years with a starting budget of \$3 million and 26 schools, and an ending budget in final two years of \$5.75 million, and 80 schools; was appointed to a four-state consortium on school improvement hosted by WestEd in San Francisco, and as representative for the southern region school districts in the state's Professional Development Programs.

Dr. Owens was awarded *Nevada Administrator of the Year*, 2009, by the Nevada Association of School Boards and received a *Distinguished Teacher Award* from the Washoe County Teachers Association.

She was elected as State Vice President for Delta Kappa Gamma, selected as State Research Chair, and was appointed the Nevada representative to the National Legislative Forum in Washington, DC. Dr. Owens' educational background includes a Ph.D. in 2000 from the University of Nevada, Reno, in Educational Administration, an M.Ed., and a B.A. from Western State College of Colorado.

Dr. Owens is single/divorced with two sons – one living in Washington State and the other in Reno, Nevada. Current associations and activities are AAUW (Reno Branch and State Council); Reno Toastmasters, Sierra Nevada Mini Cooper Club, Northern Nevada Mensa, season ticket holder for the Reno Philharmonic, and editing novels for a local Emmy award winning journalist.

## Dr. Evelyn Thompson-Hilbert, Public Policy

Dr. Evelyn Thompson-Hilbert, DPP (she, her, hers) has been a dedicated member of the Las Vegas AAUW for three years. She is originally from Massachusetts, and holds a BS in Public Administration and Development from the University of Southern California, an MA in Urban Leadership from UNLV, and a Doctorate in Public Policy from UNLV. Evelyn serves as the Public Policy Chair and Program VP for the AAUW in Las Vegas and also holds the position of Nevada State Public Policy Chair. She can be reached at [evelyn.aauw@gmail.com](mailto:evelyn.aauw@gmail.com) or 415.377.0470.





# Meet Your New Council Members

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## Holly Gallup, Archivist (Historian)



Holly Gallup has been a second-generation member of AAUW since 1971 when her mother gave her a membership (in Boulder City) as a graduation gift. She has held positions at both Branch and state levels in both California and Nevada and is currently the AAUW Reno Treasurer. She also leads a small group working to catalog the AAUW Nevada archives (representing AAUW Nevada and all Nevada Branches) held at the Nevada Historical Society. Nevada's history is an amazing story of women in Nevada over the last 100+ years, and their goal is making it more widely accessible to researchers.

## Millie Szerman, Newsletter (Sage Hen) Editor

Millie Szerman, past president (and newsletter editor) of AAUW Tahoe Nevada Branch, has served as AAUW Nevada's newsletter editor since 2021. A Public Relations and Marketing professional for nearly 30 years, Millie loves the English language and enjoys the creativity involved with newsletter design. Now retired from her own Public Relations business, Millie lives in Incline Village and travels extensively.



## Doris Dowden, Communications



Doris Dowden has been an honorary AAUW member and activist since the age of five when she was an able assistant to her mother, the President of AAUW Florida. She finally joined AAUW on her own in 1994 when a friend invited her to join the Antelope Valley Branch in Southern California. Before she retired and moved to Reno in 2003, she joined the Reno Branch where Janice Flanagan immediately persuaded her to consider serving on the Board. Since she's been a member, she's served as president, treasurer, communications officer in several Branches and AAUW Nevada state. As your current Communications officer, Doris composes and sends all member emails, hosts most Zoom meetings and manages the Zoom account. If you need an AAUW-related email blast sent to everyone, send her your draft and she'll get it done!

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## Meet Your New Council Members (Continued from Page 7)

### **Caroline PUNCHES, Advisor/Past President (ByLaws Chair)**

Caroline PUNCHES' AAUW path began as a young mother in the San Jose California AAUW Branch, which offered a Babysitting Coop! She served in several leadership positions before pursuing her career in nonprofit administration. Caroline allowed her AAUW membership lapse because she really missed the local aspect. SO, when she retired from the Northern Nevada Chapter American Red Cross in 2012, she joined the Capital (NV) Branch, where she continues to participate in book discussions, Great Decisions and Gourmet groups. Caroline also enjoyed serving as our AAUW Nevada President these last four years and looks forward to serving as Bylaws Chair this term.



### **Jennifer Verive, Member At Large**



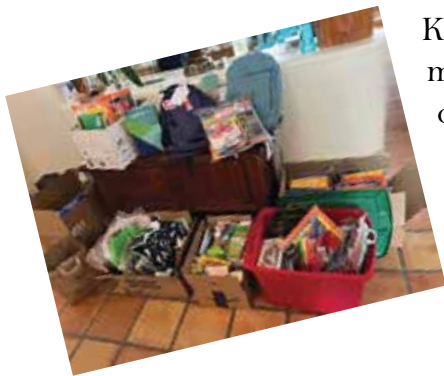
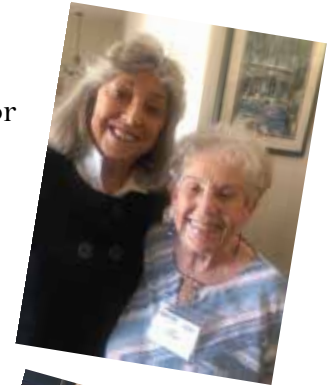




***From the Boulder City Branch:***

Our May meeting focused on scouting with members discussing their past experiences after our speaker was unable to attend.

This summer our Membership Chair, Linda Gardner, corresponded with the AAUW National Office seeking degree equivalency to AA or BA for one of our amazing *non-members*, Judy Hoskins. Judy was approved by Vice President of AAUW National due to her extensive experience and education. We welcomed Judy into full membership status and thanked Linda for this achievement and for increasing our membership to 24 + members. Photo of Judy with our congressional representative!



Kathi Dew, our scholarship chair, created a member directory for our Branch. In July, our members donated school supplies for local children which are being distributed by Boulder City Emergency Aid. We also gathered over the summer for our book group and out to lunch group.



In September, we will be celebrating our Branch's 85<sup>th</sup> anniversary, and we are planning for our 2024 Home Tour on November 2<sup>nd</sup>.



***From the Capital Branch:***

AAUW Capital Branch is celebrating our 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year! We are fortunate to have an active membership working together to achieve four key goals: Education, Fellowship, Philanthropy, and Advocacy. This year, we'll focus our attention on our beloved Branch – on Renewing connections to each other and Refreshing our inspiration to advocate for gender equity. We'll also do a deep dive into Branch operations – Reflecting on how to simplify roles and tasks so that our Branch continues to thrive while we travel, spend time with family, recover from illness and injury, and enjoy our hobbies. It will be a year of self-care and celebration!



Branch News  
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***From the Fallon Branch:***

The Fallon Branch is dark from June to September but many of our members get together for lunch and traveling. We are planning for a Meet and Greet for our September Membership meeting. We will hold it in one of the newer shops in town. They have just opened an area with a Speakeasy theme. Sounds like a lot of fun.

In October we plan to visit our wonderful museum to find out about all the new programs and displays. We have been told we have the best small museum in the state.

November will be an update on our local Domestic Violence program and December brings us to our homemade candy sale fundraiser at one of the Christmas fairs here in Fallon. We have been selling homemade candy at Christmas for over 30 years and there are folks who look for us every year. We will be planning for the rest of the year sometime in October or November.



***From the Las Vegas Branch:***

In May, we heard from the Clark County Library District. While everyone in attendance uses the library, we all discovered something new about the library that we did not previously know. Our Out to Lunch group toured Project 150 which supports homeless teens in Clark County followed by lunch at Mezzo Bistro.

In June, we held our annual meeting and elected and installed new officers, Evelyn Thompson-Hilbert as Program Vice President, and Afi Bruce as Secretary. Also in June, our Board met to begin planning for the 2024-2025 year. We are excited about planning our candidate events for this Fall.

We are holding our annual ice cream social in August to bring our members together for a fun afternoon.

Our September meeting will include local candidates running for office. Then, in early October, we are planning a candidate forum with US congressional and senate candidates. Candidates will be asked questions related to AAUW priorities and work.

With our new partnership with the Public Education Foundation, we are completing the review and awarding six scholarships for women this year.







Branch News  
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***Las Vegas Branch (continued)***



***From the Reno Branch: (No article was submitted)***

***From the Tahoe-Nevada Branch:***

The end of summer brings a sigh of relief as the crowds start to die down here in Tahoe. It also brings a flurry of activity as we gear up for the Garden Party, our major fundraiser on September 15<sup>th</sup>. We will also hold a silent auction in conjunction with this event, check out all the awesome items our Branch has collected: <https://www.32auctions.com/aauwtahoenv2024>

The Garden Party will feature local artists with their work available for purchase, as well as a tasty selection of appetizers curated by our Branch's Cooking Club. You can click on the link on the flyer at the end of this newsletter to learn more.

Money raised will go towards scholarships and grants for young women from our local High School seeking post-secondary education; whether that be in a traditional University setting, a Community College program, Trade School or another type of training that leads to a career.

The money raised will also support our Community Grants that support schools, our library and other nonprofit groups in the Community, and help raise awareness of our mission in the Community.



The logo for AAU Tahoe (NV) Branch is located in the top left corner. It features the letters "AAU" in a large, bold, blue font, with a red stylized "M" or "W" shape to its right. Below "AAU" is the text "Tahoe (NV) Branch" in a smaller, black font. The logo is set against a white background and is tilted slightly to the right.

**AAU**  
Tahoe (NV) Branch

Fundraising for Scholarships  
and Community Education Grants

JOIN US FOR A  
**GARDEN**  
*party*

**When:** Sunday, September 15, 2024

**Time:** 3:00 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.

**Where:** Kern Schumacher Estate  
Lakefront Home

**Cost:** \$100 per person

**Includes:** Sophisticated Appetizers and  
Sommelier-selected Wines  
Music and Local Artists

Silent Auction from September 1<sup>st</sup> to September 18<sup>th</sup>!

For Tickets, visit  
<https://tahoe-nv.aauw.net/events>

For questions, please contact  
[Events@tahoenvaaauw.org](mailto:Events@tahoenvaaauw.org)