



# THE SAGE HEN

## A Quarterly Publication of the AAUW Nevada State Council

2025 - 1st Quarter



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

### A *Message* FROM THE PRESIDENT

Welcome to 2025! If you thought 2024 was a rollercoaster ride, my prediction is that 2025 will be just as wild a ride, if not more so. Buckle up and stay engaged. I know that each Branch will be thoroughly engaged in critical issues affecting their local communities. The Nevada State Legislature is in session this Spring; Evelyn Thompson-Hilbert, our State AAUW Public Policy Chair, as well as your local Public Policy Chairs will keep you apprised of pending legislation that affect women and families. AAUW National will keep us informed of course, but it is up to all of us to stay informed through reliable news sources. In this day of misinformation, social media influencers, and artificial intelligence (AI), it is imperative that each of us thoroughly vet our new sources.

Put **Saturday, April 26** on your calendar for our annual AAUW State Conference. The theme will be Life Transitions: Finding and Imparting Joy at Each Stage of Life. Our keynote speaker will be **Mary Brabant**, Director of Disability and Volunteer Programming, at Goodwill Southern Nevada. She will share the history and work of Goodwill to assist people effectively manage all stages of life. Next, **Shirley Bolden** will take us through her retirement “journey” after retiring from the financial industry. Finding herself at a loss in retirement, she has taken to Pilates in major way. Her story will inspire all of us. Look for details of the conference closer to the date.



Janet Usinger, President  
AAUW Nevada State

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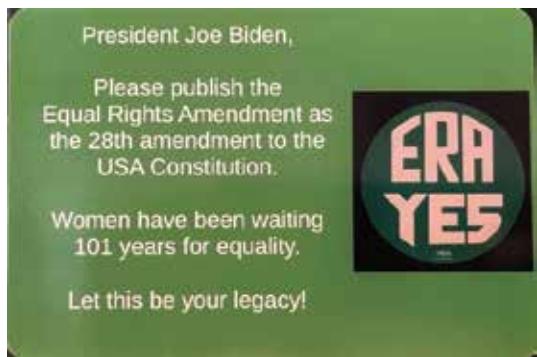
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Happy First Quarter of 2025 Ladies!

## **NATIONAL**

At the end of his term, President Biden declared the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) is the "law of the land" but the fight may not be over yet. **The ERA is officially the 28th Amendment!**



Before the 2024 presidential election, many of us brainstormed ways to convince President Biden to sign an executive order supporting the ERA. As time went on, however, the possibility of the ERA becoming law seemed bleak. During the last AAUW-National public policy meeting, there was a sense of resignation—we believed there was little we could do before 2028, and our focus shifted to priorities like Title IX.

But the women of AAUW refused to give up. North Carolina Public Policy Chair Carol Tempel created and distributed postcards nationwide, urging branches to take

action. (I had planned to send them to Nevada branches, but between the holidays and illness, a few of us from the Las Vegas Branch signed and sent our allotment instead.)

Even with Biden's declaration, the archivist's intentions remain unclear. Before this, the archivist refused to publish the ERA. According to NPR, it may still face challenges in the Supreme Court. (You can read more about this here: <https://www.npr.org/2025/01/17/nx-s1-5264378/biden-era-national-archivist-constitution>.) However, Harvard Law Professor Laurence Tribe asserts that publication by the archivist is not necessary for the ERA to be valid under the Constitution. His analysis offers critical insight:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1EzaWP2M2VtID09Pm22gppoAvryj1Wc39/edit?usp=sharing&ouid=108373233764216242636&rtpof=true&sd=true>. We'll be watching this closely.

The ERA's journey from 1972 to 2024 has been long and fraught with uncertainty. It's a powerful reminder of how hard-fought progress often is. The Voting Rights Act finds itself in a similar state of limbo. The Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Voting Rights Act of 1965, and the Fair Housing Act of 1968 laid the groundwork for greater equality. They paved the way for laws like Title IX (protecting gender rights) and LGBTQ+ rights—both of which are currently under attack.

While the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment gave women the right to vote in 1920, by the early 1970s, women still needed their husband's permission to open a bank account or get a credit card. These examples show just how far we've come—and how much more there is to do to fulfill AAUW's mission of pay equity, gender equality, and justice for all.

As we celebrate this milestone, we must also question: what will happen to women's rights if voting rights remain unratified and are not codified into law?

Looking ahead, AAUW-National will be sharing its new priorities for 2025 and beyond as we prepare for the next presidential administration. Advocacy for Title IX, higher education, and our broader mission will remain at the forefront.

Together, let's keep pushing forward!

(Continued on Page 3)



## Public Policy - continued from Page 2

### **STATE**

The 83rd (2025) Session of the Nevada Legislature will begin on February 6, 2025. For those interested in tracking bills, the Nevada Electronic Legislative Information System (NELIS) is available at <https://www.leg.state.nv.us/App/NELIS/REL/83rd2025>.

At this time, we are not actively tracking a specific bill, but we'll keep you updated via email if any significant legislation related to our advocacy arises. Joanne Walen of the AAUW Reno Branch is already working on potential legislation to require background checks for legislators—a crucial initiative worth following.

Our partner, the Nevada Women's Lobby, is planning Grassroots Lobby Days for April 6 - 7. Finalized details will be shared via email as soon as they're available. In the meantime, be aware that organizations like the Nevada Women's Lobby (<https://nevadawomenslobby.org/>), the Nevada League of Women Voters (<https://www.lwv.org/local-leagues/lwv-nevada>), and the Progressive Leadership Alliance of Nevada (PLAN) at <https://planevada.org/> offer valuable legislative resources if you're ready to take action. Please note that this is not an exhaustive list.

Stay engaged, stay informed, and let's make a difference together!



### **ARCHIVING RECORDS**

By Holly Gallup, Archivist

Need help deciding what AAUW branch or state documents to save or to pass along, or when or how or where or why to permanently archive them? On Saturday, March 22<sup>nd</sup>, from 10 a.m. to noon, Holly Gallup, AAUW Nevada Archivist, will present a how-to session by Zoom. All members are welcome. We'll send out an archive guidelines document and the Zoom sign-up link to branch presidents and state council members ahead of the workshop, so you'll have time to collect your questions. If you'd like to be added to those mailings, send your name and email address to Holly Gallup ([galluph@gmail.com](mailto:galluph@gmail.com)) with "Archive Zoom" in the subject line.



**AAUW of NEVADA**  
**2024-2026 State Leadership Council Members and Branch Presidents**

**AAUW Nevada State Council Roster**

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Barb	Ortiz	Tahoe NV Co-Pres	president@tahoenvaauw.org
Peggy	Poindexter	Tahoe NV Co-Pres	president@tahoenvaauw.org



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

Last get together of our members in 2024 to celebrate our 5 Star Program. Our Branch attained the Advancement, Communications, External Relations, Programming, Public Policy & Advocacy Stars.

This recognition by AAUW National is a testament to the dedication, hard work, and commitment of our Branch members to advancing AAUW's mission of gender equity for women and girls.



Participants: Valerie, Pat, Angel Janelle, Pam, Sharon (at table)



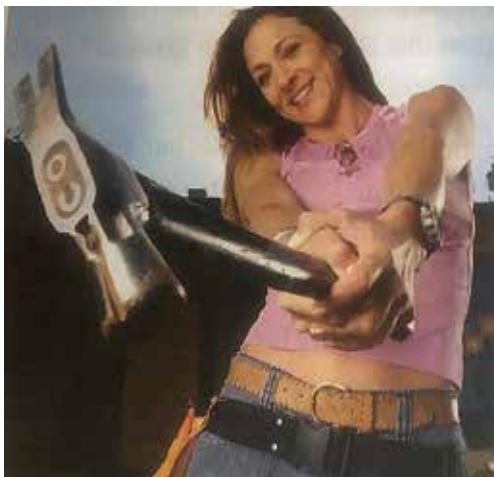
Linda, Val, Judy, Pat, LuAnn, Cindi, Kathi, Angel, Diane, Anne, Janelle, Sharon, Pam



***From the Boulder City Branch (continued):***

AAUW Branch Meeting 1/8/25: Speaker: Norma Valley, Toolbelt Diva

Norma filled the Conference Room in the Historic Boulder Dam Hotel-Museum. Everyone in attendance raved about her great speaking skills on the topics of Home Improvement, Food & Wine Rep, Author of 3 books, Columnist, Model and much more! Norma's Top-10 List of DIY DO'S and DON'T'S, for which she provided a copy for everyone, then explained and provided examples of all was super popular for audience! Thanks Norma, for providing everyone with your business cards and inviting us to contact you with questions about all your areas of expertise!



***From the Capital Branch:***

AAUW Capital Branch has been busy selling our signature pecans, learning about the Northern Nevada International Center from Executive Director Dr. Carina Black, and celebrating the winter holidays with a joyful party and festive walk through the spectacular lights in downtown Carson City. With the legislature convening this year, we're gearing up to learn about and advocate for AAUW-related bills. Although we had a banner scholarship fundraiser with our Pecans, due to their late arrival and our optimistic ordering, we still have many bags left to sell -- at a reduced price! (See flyer)



From Left:

Andrea Minor, Anita Habberfield, Jennifer Verive,  
Stephanie Facchini, Barbara Kuehner



### **From the Fallon Branch:**

Our AAUW Fallon Branch had our New Year's luncheon on January 11<sup>th</sup> at Maine Street Cafe in Fallon. Seems food is always good when we don't have to do it ourselves. We had a traditional White Elephant Sale after lunch. Every year the sale seems to get bigger and always has some beautiful items. We had two guests who indicated they were interested in AAUW.

Our February meeting will be a tour of the Oat's Park Art Center. It was the old school and has been wonderfully restored. Our guest speaker will be Kelli Kelly. She has just taken a new job working with the state having to do with produce and food in rural areas. She is also a marvelous cook and has a weekly column in the Fallon Post. She is a wealth of information and we are all looking forward to hearing her.

March will be our yearly Film Festival fundraiser. So far, we have not yet chosen a film. This is always a big project as it is the main fundraiser for the year. The local restaurants provide snacks and we still have Irish Coffee available. We started it with *Darby O'Gill and the Little People* and it is still a very popular fundraiser.



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

AAUW Las Vegas' November meeting was our annual fund-raising event to generate funds for our scholarships. The event included a silent auction as well as requests for cash donations. Nate Tannenbaum, Meteorologist at KLAS 7 News Now, a local news broadcaster, was our speaker and is always entertaining.

The silent auction generated \$2,281 for scholarships, with an additional \$465 in contributions to the Branch. We are now processing our scholarships with the Public Education Foundation. They received \$850 in additional contributions designated for our scholarships. To date, a total of \$3,596 has been raised to support scholarships for the 2025-2026 academic year. We will be awarding four \$1,000 scholarships this year.



Above: Helene Winkler,  
Evelyn Thompson-Hilbert, Anne Green

We held our annual holiday gathering in December at the home of Shirley Hills. This is always a great opportunity to socialize with members, enjoy a lunch provided by the Branch, and admire Shirley's wonderful holiday decorations. Members also brought coats to support the Girl Scouts of Southern Nevada's Coat Drive and medical supplies to help Janai McFarland, one of our scholarship recipients as she travels on a medical trip to Mexico.

Left: Janis Schoen, Lisa Hahn,  
Judy Ingham, Marilyn Zimmerman  
Dr. Afi Bruce





**From the Las Vegas Branch (continued):**

The Las Vegas Branch's monthly luncheon on Saturday, January 18th, was a memorable event, highlighted by an inspiring presentation from Dr. Margoth Tello. Dr. Tello, a distinguished public administrator, holds a Doctorate in Public Policy from UNLV and a Master's in Public Administration from the University of Utah. She currently serves as the Community Land Trust Manager for Clark County's affordable homeownership program and is an Executive Board Member and Policy Specialist with Return Strong, a prison advocacy organization.



state

Her presentation could not have been timelier, as it coincided with the Trump administration's announcement of mass deportations and related executive orders set for Tuesday, January 21<sup>st</sup>. Dr. Tello provided critical insights into the challenges faced by Dreamers and Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) recipients.

She shared that 97% of DACA recipients graduate from high school, hold jobs, and contribute significantly to the economy. Yet, they are denied access to intuition, lack a pathway to citizenship, and receive no benefits from the taxes they pay. Her personal story as a DACA recipient underscored the immense barriers millions of women and girls face. Dr. Tello is a passionate advocate on this important issue and is available to speak further about its far-reaching implications.

In February, our Out to Lunch group will be joining the Boulder City Branch for lunch and a tour of Junior Achievement of Southern Nevada's newly opened facility.





## From the Reno Branch:

Happy New Year to one and all! However, I sometimes feel like Lucy in this cartoon:



promising women who need support to pursue their educational dreams, was highlighted by a visit from one of AAUW Reno's scholarship recipients, Amanda Fischer. Her touching story made real the impact of the NWF scholarship program. Since her award, Amanda completed her studies at TMCC, went on to graduate UNR, and is currently contemplating a return to UNR to complete coursework to become a teacher in rural Nevada.

AAUW Reno has increased its annual scholarship from \$2000 to \$2500. Our holiday program underscored the impact of our scholarships and was success both as a social event and as a fundraiser to support these awards.

**Big News from AAUW:** "AAUW Reno (NV) Branch has achieved two stars in AAUW's FY24 Five Star Program! Your Branch attained the Communications & External Relations and Programming stars. This recognition is a testament to the dedication, hard work, and commitment of your Branch members to advancing AAUW's mission of gender equity for women and girls." This is due to the dedicated work of the DEI & Program Committee (led by Sara Velez) and the STEAM & Program Committee (led by Robbyn Tolles).

Be that as it may, we in Reno are moving ahead with several plans for the Spring. Our February 8, 2025 meeting will be held at Famous Dave's BBQ where we will welcome Sue Davis of the Nevada Women's History Project to share their plans for National Women's History month in March.

On Saturday, March 8, 2025, Nevada Women's Fund is sponsoring the first local celebration of International Women's Day. It will take place at various locations throughout Reno-Sparks, and we are urging our members to participate.

Our holiday celebration was held at the Nevada Women's Fund (NWF) office, with an inspiring presentation by the CEO of the NWF, Ila Atchabowski,. The work of the NWF, providing scholarships for



**From the Reno Branch:** (continued from page 9)

**Book Club surprise:** At the December meeting, Annie Lobert, the author of the December book choice, *Fallen: Out of the Sex Industry and into the Arms of the Savior*, visited for 2 hours, answering questions and telling us more anecdotes of her life. We have Anne Stilwill to thank for pursuing this connection. Ms. Lobert was also a featured speaker at the AAUW NEVADA Convention in April 2024.

**Nevada Women's Fund Scholarships:** Since 2019, the Reno Branch has been raising money for scholarships that are awarded by the Nevada Women's Fund based on our established criteria. Since 1983 NWF has awarded a total of \$4.9 million in scholarships funded by corporations and organizations like ours. To see interesting statistics on all NWF scholarship recipients, visit <https://reno-nv.aauw.net/files/2024/12/NWF-SCHOLARSHIP-RECIPIENT-DATA.pdf>



**From the Tahoe-Nevada Branch:**

**Career Technical Education (CTE) Event**

We had a great showing at our inaugural CTE event at Incline High School on November 7<sup>th</sup> with 22 students in attendance to hear about careers in the medical field. Ellen Bjorkman, Director of Operations at Incline Community Hospital, a registered nurse, who has a BS in nursing from UNR, spoke about her career. She introduced one of her employees who is from Kings Beach and began her career in the medical field without benefit of a 4-year degree. She talked about the training she had received while working with Tahoe Forest Health System and shared information about the many opportunities for on-the-job training and employer-paid certificate programs available once inside the health care system. She also emphasized the need for bi-lingual employees.



**Holiday Party**

About 35 women attended our Holiday Party at Glasses Wine Bar on December 11<sup>th</sup>. It was a fun event celebrating the season, catching up with friends and meeting new members.

**Candy Cane Lane Participation**

As part of the Incline Village/Crystal Bay Community and Business Association's Northern Lights Festival, AAUW Tahoe NV participated in Candy Cane Lane on December 7<sup>th</sup>. There were special holiday activities where children were on hand for the arrival of Santa and Mrs. Lollie Claus to Incline Village. This has become a fun and festive annual event and we were delighted to take part.



presents a  
Summer fundraiser

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For more information:

Millie Szerman

775-833-3311 or

MillieSz746@gmail.com



BEFORE PETER PAN THERE WAS  
**PETER AND THE  
STARCATCHER**

Tickets: \$ 95.00

includes: Appetizers, Desserts,  
Wine/Beer, Non-Alcoholic Beverages

FRIDAY, AUGUST 15<sup>th</sup>, 2025  
5:30 p.m.



Sand Harbor  
Lake Tahoe, Nevada State Park

AAUW Tahoe Nevada  
P.O. Box 5465  
Incline Village, NV 89450

American Association of University Women Tahoe Nevada is a non-profit 501(c)(3) corporation formed in Nevada and registered with the Nevada Secretary of State (Federal Tax I.D. #943055754). Our purpose is the advancement of equity for women and girls through advocacy, education, and research.