



ROCKLAND COUNTY (NY) BRANCH

# FACETS

*Advancing equity for women and girls through advocacy,  
education, and research*

APRIL 2021



Suzanne Young-Mercer,  
President

[smymaauw@gmail.com](mailto:smymaauw@gmail.com)

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Elda Graff,  
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Sandra Blasy,  
Treasurer

April Biggs,  
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Anita Nessin,  
Corresponding Secretary

Sylvia Miller,  
Communications

## *President's Message*

Happy Spring. Hopefully most of us have been vaccinated, so that we can all return to our real lives again.

This month the AAUW National election cycle begins. Members are being asked to elect board members and to vote on a bylaw and some important policy changes. I would like to give you my opinion about the bylaw that is generating the most chatter -the removal of the degree requirement for AAUW membership.

National has tried to amend the degree requirement twice since I have been a member of the Rockland Branch. Being the child of immigrant parents, I am very proud of the accomplishments I've made in getting my bachelors and my master's degrees. I am the oldest daughter of six children and although I was the first person in my family to do this, I am proud to say that I am no longer the *only* one in my family with a degree. That being said, I have known many people throughout my life who do *not* have degrees but are talented and smart, and who make a difference every day. I am certain that we all know people like this. As AAUW members, who believe in equity for all, I do not see how we can discriminate against individuals who may believe in our mission but can't join because they don't have a degree. I get it, I really do. I understand that our mission involves ensuring that education is a priority but if we are fighting for *equity* as an organization, then we must protect the right for people to choose their own priorities.

Simply put, I believe that membership should be extended to anyone who wishes to fight for the AAUW mission and the equity we want to achieve for all. The decision is yours. The 2021 election period has begun, and will end on May 17<sup>th</sup>. Whatever your position is... please VOTE because every vote counts.

Best regards,

*Suzanne Young-Mercer*



**Would you like to join AAUW Rockland?**

**Check out our [website](#) or**

**Contact Elda Graff at**

**[eldagraff@gmail.com](mailto:eldagraff@gmail.com)**

**Tuesday, April 13**

**April Branch Meeting**

*Business/ Budget/ Elections*

**Tuesday, April 20**

**Board Meeting – 7:00 PM**

**Tuesday, May 25**

**Board Meeting – 7:00 PM**

**June 15, 2021**

**June Branch Meeting – 7:00 PM**

**June 22, 2021**

**Board Meeting – 7:00 PM**

*\*All members are welcome to attend board meetings. Call (845) 598-8520 for join information.*



**NOTIFICATION OF *Branch Membership Dues Increase* to offset the three- year dues increase from National.**

- **2021/22 \$88 - \$3.00 increase in National dues**
- **2022/23 \$90 - \$6.00 waiver applied to offset \$5.00 increase in National dues and \$3.00 increase in Branch dues.**
- **2023/24 \$94 - \$7.00 waiver applied to offset \$5.00 increase in National dues**

**If you do not approve of the dues plan or have questions, you can let the Board know your objection via email at [aauwrockland62@gmail.com](mailto:aauwrockland62@gmail.com) by April 13, 2021 our branch business meeting.**

The AAUW – Rockland Book Club  
will meet at the home of Fran  
Carlson (outdoors) on the  
3<sup>rd</sup> Monday of each month as long  
as weather permits from

\*April 12, 2021 “Olive Again” by,  
Elizabeth Straut

\*May 10, 2021 “ The Sun Does  
Shine” by, A.R. Hinton

\*Contact Fran Carlson for more  
information (845) 634-9648



**Please plan to attend our annual  
Branch Business Meeting virtually  
on  
TUESDAY, APRIL 13, 2021  
at 7:00 PM**

**Click [HERE](#) to Join the Zoom**

Meeting ID: 811 7309 2738

Passcode: 218216

OR DIAL -In 646. 876. 9923



*To AAUW Rockland member,  
Maureen Brown on the passing of  
her mother, Margaret C. Brown  
on March 17, 2021. Mrs. Brown  
was 91 years old and was a  
resident of Nanuet.*



**AAUW Branch Elections  
EARLY VOTING!!!**

**[Click Here](#)**

# WHAT'S HAPPENING.

**FROM CORRESPONDING SECRETARY, ANITA NESSIN:** Please forward any information regarding special events, such as weddings, illnesses, graduations, surgeries etc. She will be happy to send a greeting card. Please forward your birthday month and date (year is NOT necessary) so that your name can be placed on her special birthday roster.

[Amn46@hotmail.com](mailto:Amn46@hotmail.com)

**COMMUNICATIONS:** Did you notice anything missing from the latest **Rockland AAUW Directory**? We usually include a full page of information about our current political leaders, national, state and county. The Nov. 2020 elections provided many new names so we decided to wait until after the elections to include all the up- to -date information. This will be distributed shortly.

**TREASURER, SANDY BLASY:** If you would like to make a donation to National, individual donations can be made directly online <https://www.aauw.org/> or by sending your check directly marking your donation with their new fund name of 'Education and Training' fund. Mail to: AAUW Development, P.O. Box 98045 Washington, D.C. 20090-8045

**MIMI KORB SCHOLARSHIP:** Contributions to the Mimi Korb Scholarship (tax- deductible) can be made to honor any one, any occasion or to generously support this most worthwhile endeavor as you have in the past. Please make your tax-deductible check payable to AAUW Rockland County Branch and write **"Mimi Korb Scholarship"** on the detail line. Mail your check to: AAUW Rockland | P.O. Box 19 | West Nyack, NY 10994-0019

**LEGAL ADVOCACY FUND :** Check out the latest court cases that AAUW publicly and financially supports <https://www.aauw.org/resources/legal/laf/> or contact LAF Chair, Charlotte Sorger

**NOMINATING COMMITTEE:** Thanks to the hard work of the Nominating Committee: Anita Nessin, Sandra Masiello, Ellie Grossman, and Maureen Brown, the 2021-2023 Nominees are presented for two-year terms: **See Page 3 of the newsletter for early voting, or vote at the April 13<sup>th</sup> meeting with the link provided in the Chat. A quorum is needed to make the votes final – so please be sure to attend!!!!**

**President** – Still unfilled

**Vice President of Programming** – Doria Hillsman

**Corresponding Secretary** – Kimberly Weston

**Treasurer** – Sandra Blasy

Nominating Chairperson, Frances Riley Blauvelt

**PUBLIC POLICY:** If you are interested or curious about AAUW Public Policy issues, please drop me an email. You will be added to the AAUW Public Policy Mailing List and can expect to receive periodic messages on the latest legislation developments in Washington and in Albany. Please drop me an e-mail to get started today. [AMulligan125@gmail.com](mailto:AMulligan125@gmail.com)



*Many thanks to all members, prospective members and co-sponsors for attending our Women's History Month Celebration! It was informative and heart-warming. We are so glad you could join us!*





# AAUW ROCKLAND Annual Business Meeting Tuesday, April 13, 2021 at 7:00 PM

Meeting ID: 811 7309 2738

Passcode: 218216

OR DIAL-IN 646. 876. 9923

**Branch Elections**

**2021-22 Budget and Dues Information**

**Public Policy Presentation**

*\*Your attendance is desired as we will need a quorum for voting!!!*

## AAUW 2021 National Election

It's your AAUW, and your voice counts. It's time to elect new Board Members and to vote for proposals to changes in AAUW bylaws and Public Policy Priorities. **Check your April 7, 2021 email** for a message from National which should include your Member ID and PIN number. Click the link to the National web site provided and **VOTE! ... Do it**

**today....**



**51<sup>st</sup> ANNUAL Earth Day  
Wanna Celebrate? Visit**

**<https://www.earthday.org/earth-day-2021/>**

The information below was sent to our state representatives, Ken Zebrowski, Michael Lawler, James Skoufis and Elijah Riechlin-Melnick on March 29, 2021 in lieu of a visit to Albany to lobby for our concerns in advance of the budget hearings. Zebrowski and Melnick responded, thanking us for reaching out to them and assuring us that every one of the concerns listed here were important to them as well. We have yet to hear from Mr. Lawler and Mr. Skoufis... I suggest that if you have not already done so that you check out the Governor's Council's [agenda](#).  
~Doria E. Hillsman

The Governor's **Council on Women and Girls'** recent report entitled "*Making Progress Happen*" was an encouraging assessment of what New York State has done to identify and address concerns that affect women in New York– even the unanticipated concerns that arose as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Moving forward we urge you to consider to push for the following concerns...

- **Title IX Compliance in Rockland Secondary Schools** – This is a concern that we have expressed for a number of years. While Title IX is firmly secured in institutions of higher learning, it remains a concern for young women in high schools throughout the state.
- **Seeing Student Debt as a Women's Issue** and enacting legislation to lessen the financial burden of paying for education – a burden which disproportionately affects women.
- **Increasing the number of women in leadership** in ALL facets of society in the Rockland community, not just in finance and corporate boards, but in government, on the state and local levels as well.
- **Increased assistance to shelters** which deal with victims of domestic violence. The number of victims seeking shelter in Rockland County rose 70% in 2020.



- **Decrease the maternal mortality and morbidity** rates among women of color in New York. Serious and sustained effort is needed here as the problem remains an issue.
- **Support of local food pantries in Rockland County** as food insecurity has become a major issue for many of our families as many parents have lost or forfeited jobs to care for young children.
- **Safe and potable water in Rockland** was once taken for granted. We now know that we have a problem. Environmental justice is very much a part of family health and stability and we call on you to be vigilant in efforts to reduce PFA's PFOA's and other contaminants in our water.



- **Addressing the Gender Pay Gap** – the legislation is in place, but the problem persists. *Implementation of this legislation is essential to justice for women.* It will require funding and support.





JCC Rockland

## JCC Rockland's 18th Annual

### International Jewish Film Festival

Celebrating the rich history of Jewish culture through unique and diverse films from around the world.

## Rivertown Film Society

### THE WILD & SCENIC FILM FESTIVAL

Showing: Wednesday, April 21, at  
7:00 PM

Title: THE WILD & SCENIC FILM  
FESTIVAL

[Purchase Tickets Now](#)

**7TH ANNUAL FUNDRAISER**

Presented by:  
**TENDER STEPS OF NEW YORK, INC.**

Theme:  
**Making it Together**

**Saturday, April 17<sup>th</sup>, 2021**  
**7:00pm - 9:00pm**

Recognizing People of Purpose, Power and Passion  
Our 2021 Honorees:

**Micheal Miller** | **Victoria Shaw**  
Founder of C.U.P.O.N. | Wellcore, Inc.

**Vivian Street** | **Michael E. Smith**  
Community Leader & Activist | ERCSD Director of Fine & Performing Arts

Special Guests:

**Dr. Betty A. Rosa**  
Commissioner of Education  
and President of University  
of the State of New York

**Dr. Cindy Bautista-Thomas**  
Co-Founder Velocity Visions, Inc.

**Dr. Sandra Ortiz**  
Pediatrician

April 17 is the official TENDER STEPS OF NEW YORK DAY  
Declared April 17, 2016

Fee is \$25 with automatic raffles ticket with the entry ticket until April 15, 2021. Donations are  
used towards TSONY's mission to provide services to former and current shelter residents within the community.  
Entertainment: DJ Woods Instagram: [edj\\_woods](#)

For more detail & information: [www.tenderstepsofny.org](http://www.tenderstepsofny.org)

Evelyn Bautista-Miller, LMSW, SDA President of Tender Steps of New York, Inc.



***AAUW empowers all women and girls to reach their highest potential.***

***In principle and in practice, AAUW values and seeks a diverse membership. There shall be no barriers to full participation in the organization on the basis of gender, race, creed, sexual orientation, age, national origin, disability or class.***

***By joining AAUW, you belong to a community that breaks through economic barriers, so that all women and girls have a fair chance.***

AAUW Rockland County Branch  
PO Box 19 | West Nyack, NY 10994-0019  
[aauwrockland62@gmail.com](mailto:aauwrockland62@gmail.com)  
<http://rocklandcounty-ny.aauw.net>