



AAUW PUBLIC POLICY PRIORITY ISSUES

Strong system of Public Education
Equality, Individual Rights and Social Justice for a Diverse Society.
Economic Self-sufficiency for Women

MISSION

Advancing Gender Equity Through Research, Education and Advocacy

VISION

Equity for all.

VALUES

Nonpartisan. Fact-based. Inclusion and Intersectionality.

AAUW FUNDS

The Educational Foundation is one of the largest sources of funding for graduate women in the world awarding millions each year in scholarships.

LEGAL ADVOCACY FUND (LAF)

(LAF) works to combat sex discrimination in higher education and the workplace.

Highline AAUW theme is “Participation & Engagement”

Highline Branch – October 2025 Newsletter

Serving Highline & South King County Area of Washington State



Our Theme for October “Participation & Engagement”

Participation is important because it strengthens community bonds, fosters shared responsibility, and ensures that diverse voices are heard in shaping local decisions, programs, and policies. When people engage, they help build a more equitable, resilient, and vibrant community where everyone's needs and talents are recognized.

Why Participation Matters:

- Empowerment** – Individuals gain a sense of agency and influence over decisions that affect their lives.
- Representation** – Broader participation ensures that marginalized or underrepresented groups have a voice.
- Better Solutions** – Diverse perspectives lead to more creative and practical problem-solving.
- Social Connection** – Participation builds relationships, trust, and mutual support among neighbors.
- Civic Health** – Engaged communities are more informed, active, and resilient in times of change or crisis.

Ways Community Members Can Get Started or Reengage:

- Start Small** – Attend a local town hall, school board meeting, AAUW meeting or neighborhood association gathering.
- Volunteer** – Offer your time or skills to a local nonprofit, mutual aid group, school, or community center.
- Join or Support Local Initiatives** – Look for clean-up days, cultural events, advocacy efforts, or food drives.
- Speak Up** – Share your thoughts through public comment periods, social media, or by writing to elected officials.
- Connect with Others** – Partner with friends, family, or neighbors to attend or host community events together.
- Educate Yourself** – Stay informed about local issues, leadership, and opportunities through newsletters or community bulletin boards.
- Join a Board or Committee** – Many cities, schools, or nonprofits seek volunteers for advisory groups and leadership roles.

Participation isn't about being an expert—it's about showing up, listening, learning, and contributing in any way you can. Even small steps can make a big impact. (For the complete article see: [file:///Users/annelieseellerton/Desktop/Participation is important because it strengthens community bonds.html](file:///Users/annelieseellerton/Desktop/Participation%20is%20important%20because%20it%20strengthens%20community%20bonds.html).)

Submitted By Emily Hitchens, AAUW-WA President and Highline Board member



September Event



AAUW Highline and LWV - Seattle sponsored a meeting to discuss the upcoming candidate forums for Burien and Des Moines at Des Moines Library Meeting Room on September 20, 2025



AAUW Highline members, Emily Hitchens, Karen Keiser, Eva Parks, Kerry Lohr, Mary Kay Ault, Anneliese Ellerton, Sharon Feucht, Linda Hagen and Jean Munro attended, as well as Diane Hoyer, president of AAUW Federal Way and a neighboring guest. Vicci Rudin and Meg Van Wyk, representing LWV-Seattle, also attended the meeting.

Emily Hitchens welcomed branch members and introduced the visitors. She gave an interesting overview of the history of women's movements and societies, such as Women's Suffrage, League of Women Voters and AAUW over the last 150 years.

Guest speaker Vicci Rudin from LWV, Seattle, talked about the founding of LWV in 1920, and reviewed their current mission. She handed out LWV Voter Directories of elected officials in WA State and suggested how members of our communities could participate with the upcoming candidate forums. (see box below).



PARTICIPATION OPPORTUNITY

Dear Highline Members: If you would like to volunteer, there are still some opportunities to help at the forums in Burien and Des Moines. Please contact Vicci Rudin at rudin@olypen.com if you are interested in signing up.

Forum	Date	Time	Location
Highline School Board	Tuesday, September 30, 2025	6:00pm-7:30pm	Burien Library, 2nd Floor
Burien City Council	Tuesday, October 7, 2025	6:00pm-7:30pm	Burien Library, 2nd Floor
Des Moines City Council	Tuesday, October 14, 2025	7:00pm-8:00pm	Wesley Des Moines
33rd Legislative District Rep #1	Tuesday, October 14, 2025	8:00pm-9:00pm	Wesley Des Moines

Our branch is one of the sponsors of four candidate forums planned for this fall prior to the elections. The lead sponsor is the League of Women Voters of Seattle-King County. The others are the King County Library System and the Special Needs PTA. The four evening meetings are intended to showcase candidates for the Highline School Board, the Burien City Council, the Des Moines City Council, and the 33rd Legislative District.

Highline School Board is the first forum, on September 30, 6:00-7:30pm at Burien Library, 2nd floor. Burien City Council is next, on October 7, 6:00-7:30 pm, also at Burien Library, 2nd floor.

Des Moines City Council is on October 14, 7:00-8:00 pm at Wesley in Des Moines.

33rd Legislative District is also on October 14, 8:00-9:00 pm at Wesley in Des Moines.

The format will give each of the candidates for contested positions an opportunity to speak and to answer questions. The public will have the chance to ask questions of the candidates, with members of the League and perhaps AAUW monitoring microphone use. Candidates for uncontested positions will be invited but because of time constraints will not have speaking opportunities.

Branch News & Events



WA Family Engagement training

Classes start October 4, 2025

Opportunity coming up - advocacy / leadership training

Do you know a parent or teacher who wants to step up their advocacy for education?

[Parent Leadership - Washington Family Engagement](#)

This is a free 10-week, 18 session training. The course offers 10 clock-hours for certified teachers. It is also for parents who wish to improve their advocacy for education.

Please contact Kerry Lohr at kerrylohr@yahoo.com if you are interested in the program.

AAUW Florida Public Policy Report by Lynn Zachow - September 9, 2025

The Florida Book Banning forum was recorded and the Vimeo link is below.

Even though the speakers, Nancy Tray and Anne Tressler, were addressing a particular county in Florida, a lot of what they talked about is important everywhere in the US. Obviously, here in WA we don't have the laws that have been enacted in Florida regarding "Don't Say Gay" or the extreme book banning which have passed at the state level. The two speakers were very attuned to what is going on in the public schools where their children attend and are very concerned that the state has allowed so much of public school monies go for private school vouchers. Nancy really emphasized the need for people to volunteer in their schools and to be a part of groups that are responsible for determining whether a book should be banned or not.

What they also talked about was "soft" censorship because the state laws are so vague the teachers and librarians are censoring some books themselves because they don't know if they will be in trouble if they don't.

The first 2025-2026 Issue Forum on Book Bans in Public Schools is now up on Vimeo! If you weren't able to attend live, here's the recording:

<https://vimeo.com/1117615550>

I assure you it was hard-hitting and to the point. Interesting discussion too.



"That Librarian: The Fight Against Book Banning in America" by [Amanda Jones](#)

"Amanda Jones started getting death threats, all for standing up for our right to read . . . but she's not stopped fighting against book bans, or stopped advocating for access to diverse stories." -Oprah Winfrey, in a speech at the 2023 National Book Awards.

Part memoir, part manifesto, the inspiring story of a Louisiana librarian advocating for inclusivity on the front lines of our vicious culture wars.

One of the things small town librarian Amanda Jones values most about books is how they can affirm a young person's sense of self. So, in 2022, when she caught wind of a local public hearing that would discuss "book content," she knew what was at stake. Schools and libraries nationwide have been bombarded by demands for books with LGBTQ+ references, discussions of racism, and more to be purged from the shelves. Amanda would be damned if her community were to ban stories representing minority groups. She spoke out that night at the meeting. Days later, she woke up to a nightmare that is still ongoing.

Amanda Jones has been called a groomer, a pedo, and a porn-pusher; she has faced death threats and attacks from strangers and friends alike. Her decision to support a collection of books with diverse perspectives made her a target for extremists using book banning campaigns funded by dark money organizations and advanced by hard right politicians in a crusade to make America more white, straight, and "Christian." But Amanda Jones wouldn't give up without a fight: she sued her harassers for defamation and urged others to join her in the resistance.

Mapping the book banning crisis occurring all across the nation, *That Librarian* draws the battle lines in the war against equity and inclusion, calling book lovers everywhere to rise in defense of our readers. ([Amazon](#))

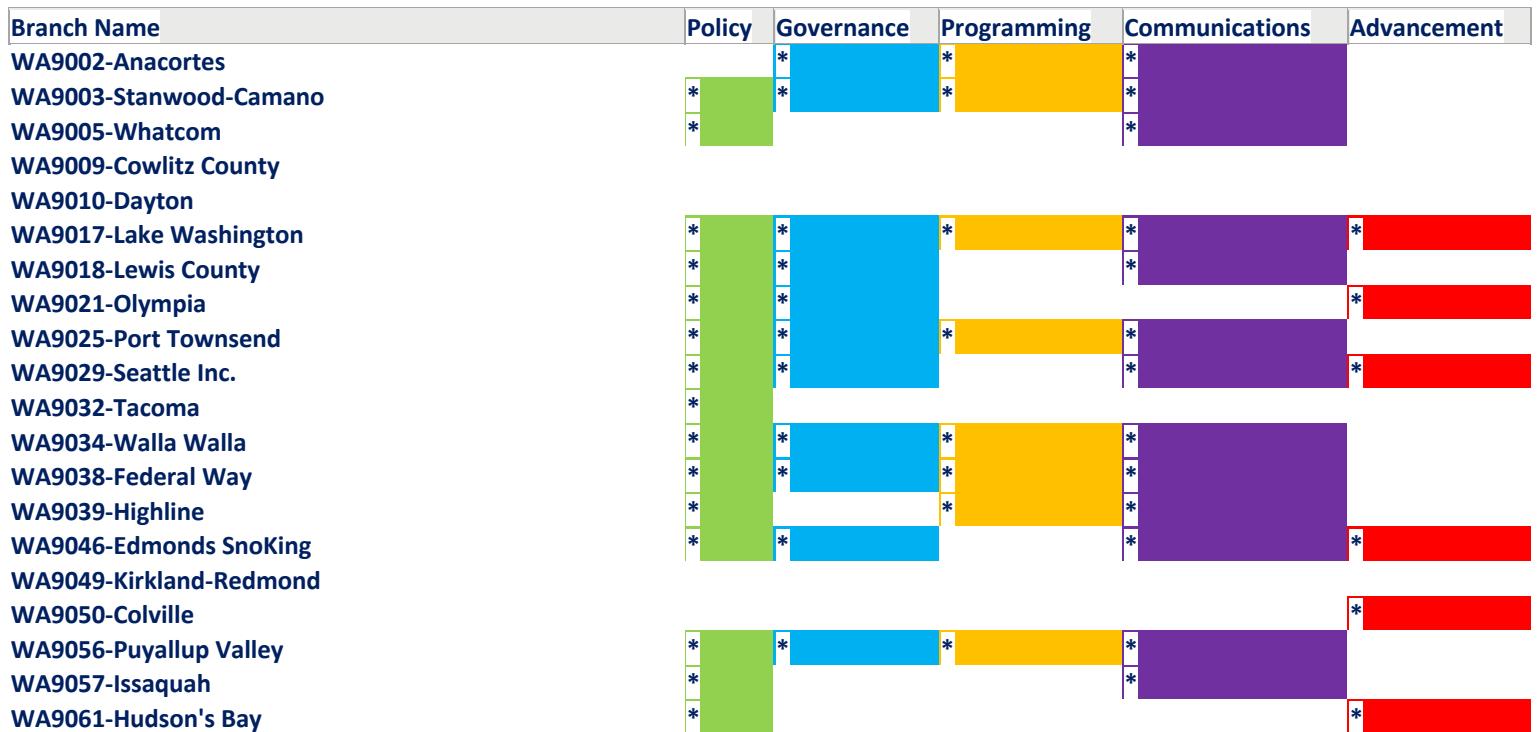


AAUW FY25 Annual Branch Survey Participation & Five Star Awards for Your State
 Summary provided by Emily Hitchens, AAUW-WA President

Dear State Presidents,

Thank you for your leadership in encouraging branch participation in AAUW's FY25 Annual Branch Survey and Five Star Program. Your outreach made a real difference: this year we saw record participation from 453 branches that completed the survey, a 42% increase over last year. That growth reflects the strong partnership between state leaders and branches in advancing AAUW's mission.

Below you'll find a table listing the branches in your state that submitted the FY25 survey and the stars they earned (or did not earn) in the Five Star Program. We invite you to recognize and celebrate these branches wherever appropriate, whether that is on your website or upcoming newsletters and meetings.



Next week we'll be following up with a separate note and materials about branches in your state that did not participate in the FY25 survey. Our goal is to reach out to these branches to identify barriers (e.g., timing, leadership transitions, technical access) and make it easier for every branch to engage in the next cycle. We're planning a two-quarter window for this state-level feedback effort so we can incorporate improvements ahead of the FY26 survey.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to reach out.

With appreciation,

Tremayne A. Parquet ([he/him/his](#))

AAUW, Deputy Director of Advancement

For more information from AAUW-WA, see the latest Evergreen Leader:

<https://mailchi.mp/aauw-wa.org/august-evergreen-leader-news-and-views-1929?e=63d91eb535>

"In Washington State, 21 of our 23 branches completed the Branch Survey for FY25 [ended 6/30/2025]. Congratulations to Lake Washington Branch for earning all Five Stars! Of the remaining 20 branches, 8 branches earned 4 stars, 4 branches earned 3 stars, 3 branches earned 2 stars, and 2 branches earned 1 star. Thank you to all branches who completed the survey! Survey responses allow National to be aware of what's happening around the country, and to share good ideas with others. National is aware that it is more challenging for smaller branches and branches in small communities to earn the stars, and they have been strongly encouraged to adjust the criteria accordingly. That has not happened for FY26, however. Maybe next year." *Excerpt from "The Evergreen Leader"*



Please mark your calendars!

Highline Branch Meeting - October 24 - Time 1:30 pm

Location: Normandy Park United Church of Christ

Theme: Participation and Engagement. Members will share their thoughts and ideas on participation and engagement.

Speaker: Emily Hitchens will give an overview of the 5 STAR Program for AAUW WA State. A video may also be shown about this program.

See below and give us your feedback for the meeting:

GOT ANY IDEAS?

What are your favorite AAUW activities or programs? _____

Any suggestions for future AAUW Highline programs or activities?

Would you be interested in any of the following: Art, film or music groups, visits to local museums, gardens, walking tours, special excursions?

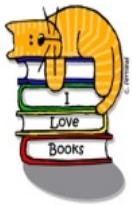
Are you interested in continuing our Cuisine/Culture group?

Please offer your ideas. We would love to get your feedback.

Please bring your ideas to the meeting. We will provide the forms.



Interest Groups



Morning and Afternoon Book Group Discussion Meetings

2nd Friday - Mornings at 9:30 am unless otherwise specified *

October 10 - *Unfinished Love Story* by Doris Kearns Goodwin, Discussion: Pat Hedges, Host: TBD

November 14, *The Grey Wolf* by Louise Penny, Discussion: Eva Parks, Host: Joanna Brunso

December 12, *The Woman in the Room: A Memoir* by Jane Hastings, Discussion: Vicki Moore, Host: Christmas Party for all

1st Monday - Afternoons at 2:30 pm unless otherwise specified *

October 6 - *That Librarian: The Fight Against Book Banning in America* by Amanda Jones, Host: Lynn Zachow
(Refer to Page 3 for AAUW Florida Public Policy Report by Lynn Zachow)

November 3 - *Breath: The New Science of a Lost Art* by James Nestor, Host: Kay Crane

December 1 - *The Women* by Kristin Hannah, Host: Barbara Sando



New Cuisine Club

October 18 or 21 - Date TBD

Dinner Theme: Native American

To be hosted by Mary Kay and Jon Ault

Mary Kay Ault will keep you posted on future meetings.



New Discussion Group

Back in September, Mary Kay sent an email suggesting a possible book/movie discussion group.

Feedback from some of our members who have shown interest in participating in this group and have offered the following ideas.

Carol Mohler suggested "*1984*" by George Orwell as a good first selection.

~ meet 4 times a year/once a quarter

~ read the book

~ get together to watch the movie - I have no problem with "long movies" i.e., 2-3 hours long, perhaps with an intermission?"

Lynn Zachow : "I think that meeting quarterly is a good idea.

If the idea is to read the book, watch the movie, and then have a discussion, I would like to read the book and watch the movie on my own and then meet for a discussion. If there are folks without the access to watch the movie, perhaps several folks can watch together.

I like the idea of taking on "*1984*" as our first read/movie. Also, "*The Thursday Murder Club*" just came out on Netflix."

Liz Zietz sent a list of books/movies that she recommends.

Stay tuned for more updates...



Would you like to contribute?

Our AAUW Highline branch members love to see the happy faces and success stories from girls that they have sponsored to attend the Tech Trek camp for many years.

However, to send a girl to camp costs about \$1000. Donations of any amount are greatly appreciated and are tax deductible. All campers are sponsored so that there are no financial barriers to attendance.



<https://techtrek-wa.aauw.net/donate/>

Or mail a check payable to AAUW-WA SPF to AAUW-WA SPF, P.O. Box 1665, Bellevue, WA 98009-1665.
Write "AAUW Highline" on the message line of your check.



July 2025 Camp at Pacific Lutheran University

Letters of Thanks from our Girls (Also shown in the September newsletter)

Dear Highline Branch, thank you for making it possible for me to attend Tech Trek. I really have been enjoying my experience at Tech Trek. I have dissected animals, learned about pollination, made Art, and formed new connections. Again, thank you for helping me attend Tech Trek. I have had a wonderful experience at this camp.

Sincerely, Amani Carter

Dear Highline AAUW Branch. Thank you for selecting me to Tech Trek. I really appreciate this wonderful opportunity to be able to come to camp this year.

Sincerely, Zoe Floresca



AAUW HIGHLINE BRANCH BOARD MEETING
September 11, 2025

The meeting was called to order at 1:05 p.m. by Co-President Kay Crane. Those present: Kay Crane, Emily Hitchens, Anneliese Ellerton, Teri Riordan, Mary Kay Ault and Jean Munro.

Newsletter and Website – Kay congratulated Anneliese for another fine newsletter! Anneliese reported that she is updating the Highline website support by Mary Ross and Cheryl at Site Resources.

Tech Trek – Can the remaining approximate balance of \$2,000 that was previously designated for the HS Scholars fund be transferred to Tech Trek? Ideas for fundraising were also discussed.

AAUW and LWV (League of Women Voters) meeting - Plans were confirmed for Saturday, September 20 at the Des Moines Public Library. Guest speaker will be LWV member Vicci Rudin. Flyers are ready for distribution. Plans for candidate forums to be held at end of September and during October will be discussed at the meeting. Vicci will bring sign-up sheets requesting volunteers to help at the forums.

October 24 meeting at Normandy Park UCC, 1:30 or 2 p.m. Subject – What do our members participate in? Plans for meeting to be formulated.

November Branch meeting - Tentative plans were discussed for a meeting on Friday, November 7, also at Normandy Park UCC church. Possible subjects – holiday theme? Fundraiser?

AAUW-WA State meeting - Emily gave a brief recap of the successful weekend meeting at Heritage College in Toppenish.

Cuisine Group – Successful dinner at Lynn Zachow's. Mary Kay will host a dinner with a Native American theme in October. Anneliese and Lynn Smith may jointly host a Greek dinner early in the new year.

Movie/book group – Good response to Mary Kay. Plans not yet firm. Carol Mohler suggested “1984” by George Orwell as a good first selection.

Other Interest Groups - Both morning and afternoon book groups seem to be doing well.

AAUW FY25 Annual Branch Five Survey - Branches have responded to a survey from National. Regarding participation and Five Star Awards. Kay will write up something for the newsletter.

Finance - Teri reports renewals are coming well. She will follow up on a few members who are in the grace period.

Other Business - Mathison Park trees are threatened by the Port of Seattle plans. Kay will forward the petition to oppose removal of those trees. [Note – Unfortunately we were too late to participate within the petition deadline. Several of us spoke up in other venues including Burien City Council.]

Next Board Meeting - Thursday, October 9 at 1 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Kay Crane

Highline Branch Leadership Team

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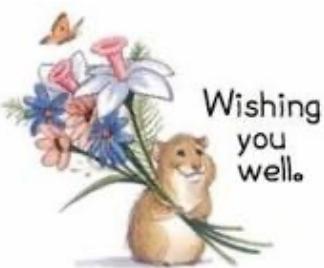
Mailer

Carol Erickson 206-246-5767
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Website & Facebook

Anneliese Ellerton,
Lynn Zachow, Jean Munro

Highline Branch Member News & Announcements



Penny Tetter is at Judson Park recovering from a fall, a month after her earlier stroke. She would appreciate well wishes and visits.

Eva Parks mentioned that she had a stroke back in August and is recovering well.

Kay Crane returned from a family cruise in September with a bout of Covid. She is resting and expects to fully recover to participate at upcoming meetings.

If you know of anyone who needs some well wishes or cheering up, please let us know so we can send a card.



Happy October Birthdays

Elsie Taniguchi 10/3 Lynn Zachow 10/7 Teri Riordan 10/31

If we have missed anyone's birthday, please email Anneliese at ellerton13@gmail.com

Still Open: Position for Board Secretary – We Need Your Help!

The Board is looking for a branch member who is willing to contribute just a few hours of her time a month.

Duties of the secretary are recording and keeping minutes of all board, membership, and special meetings.

The secretary shall also facilitate and promote the purpose and mission of AAUW.

Please contact Kay Crane at gandkcrane@msn.com or call her at 206-242-0605 if you would like to help.



Thursday, October 9 at 1:00 pm: Highline Board Zoom Meeting

Cuisine Club Dinner - October 18 or 21 (TBD) - Native American Theme, to be hosted by Mary Kay and Jon Ault.

Highline Branch Meeting - Friday, October 24 - Time 1:30 pm

Location: Normandy Park United Church of Christ

Theme: "Participation & Engagement" (See page 4 for details).

AAUW & LWV Forums: (see page 2 for details)

Highline School Board Tuesday, September 30, 6:00pm-7:30pm at Burien Library

Burien City Council Tuesday, October 7, 6:00pm-7:30pm at Burien Library

Des Moines City Council Tuesday, October 14, 7:00pm-8:00pm at Wesley Des Moines

33rd Legislative District Rep #1 Tuesday, October 14, 8:00pm-9:00pm at Wesley Des Moines

Federal Way Branch invites you: Saturday October 4, 10:30 am to a "Welcome Tea"

Location: Christ Lutheran Church: 2501 SW 320th, Federal Way

Guest Speaker: Megan Van Wyk, League of Women Voters, SW King County Unit.

Seattle Branch invites you: Saturday, October 18, 10:00 am

October 18, 10 am, on Zoom

"The Power of Women Saying YES" with Sharon Lacey, US Census Historian

Embrace growth by strategically accepting new challenges

Free program - Registration Required: RSVP@aauw-seattle.org

For more information on Seattle events, visit the website at www.aauw-seattle.org

West Seattle & Points South online interest group: Several of our Highline members have joined the above group, which meets on the second Tuesday of the month at 10 am. The current theme is "Writing triggers". Next meeting is on **Tuesday, October 14 at 10:00 am**. If you are interested in joining this virtual coffee club, email Barbara Sando at barbarasando@yahoo.com



AAUW of Washington: For all the latest information, read the Evergreen Leader:

<https://mailchi.mp/aauw-wa.org/august-evergreen-leader-news-and-views-1929?e=63d91eb535>



Check out our Highline Branch website. It's still in the process of updating, but we'd appreciate your input.

<https://highline-wa.aauw.net>

We are also on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/people/AAUW-WA-Highline-branch/100083148625851/?rdr>

AAUW Highline Branch Newsletter
2121 SW 152nd Street, #203
Burien, WA 98166



AAUW works to remove barriers and advance inclusive, affordable, and equitable education

“

Education is a powerful catalyst for opportunity – but persistent barriers continue to hold women and girls back. From civil rights rollbacks and rising tuition to disproportionate debt and campus discrimination, systemic obstacles threaten access and equity at every level.”

