



Middletown  
Newsletter

February 2021

## FEBRUARY PROGRAM: Systemic Inequality in Our American Education System



On Monday, February 8, at 7:00 p.m., we will enjoy a Zoom presentation by Butler Tech Superintendent Jon Graft who will speak to us about the challenge of education revolution and the continuing mission of Butler Tech to be “transforming lives by making our students career-ready and college-prepared.”

The week following our February 8th meeting, Butler Tech is releasing a new documentary and our branch members are encouraged to view the trailer before our February program. Supt. Graft will likely reference the new documentary during his presentation.

[Click here](#) to see the **The Education Revolution: Documentary Trailer**

Or in Google search, type The Education Revolution: Documentary Trailer. It brings it up on YouTube.

A short synopsis of the documentary:

The Education Revolution follows four high school students as they make the difficult decision to step-away from the traditional school system to attend one of the largest career technical education districts in Ohio. Over the course of the 2019-2020 school year, amid the COVID-19 pandemic, this documentary tells the story of how an education steeped in personalized learning, unique initiatives and innovative opportunities, can transform lives and become a replicable model across nation, ending outdated, one-size fits all education.

## COMMUNITY BUILDING INSTITUTE OF MIDDLETOWN

### MARCH PROGRAM: Community Leadership Roundtable

On Monday, March 8, at 7:00 p.m., we will enjoy a Zoom presentation by Karin Maney who will lead a roundtable discussion of how AAUW can help coordinate and maximize the impact of other nonprofit organization's community efforts. Ms. Maney is the Executive Director of the Community Building Institute of Middletown, which follows the mission: It takes teamwork to help transform

[stay connected](#)

[aauw.org](http://aauw.org)

[aauwoh.org](http://aauwoh.org)

[middletown-oh.aauw.net](http://middletown-oh.aauw.net)

## Calendar of Events

**Monday, February 8, 7:00pm**

Zoom Branch Meeting

Topic: The continuing mission of Butler Tech to “transform lives by making our students career-ready and college-prepared” Speaker: Jon Graft, Superintendent, Butler Tech

**Every Thursday 1pm PENS  
group via Zoom meeting**

**Saturdays, February 6 and 13,  
11:00 – 2:00**

Drop off items for human trafficking survivors at Rose Grau's home

**Thursday, February 18, 7:00pm**

Zoom Joy Luck Book Club

*The Address* by Fiona Davis

**Monday, February 22, 7:30**

Zoom Board Meeting

**Monday, March 8, 7:00pm**

Zoom Branch Meeting  
Community Leadership  
Roundtable

**Thursday, March 18, 7:00 pm**

Zoom Joy Luck Book Club

**Important Dates to add to your  
calendars:**

Garage Sale: June 11 and 12,  
plus 18 and 19

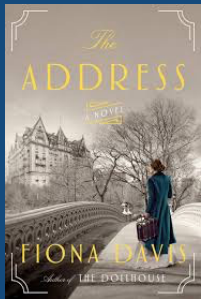
Used Book Sale: September 9  
– 12 and 19

Holiday Sale: October 22 and  
23 plus 29 and 30



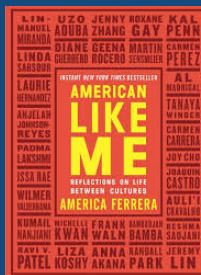
## Joy Luck Book Club

Thursday, February 18 at 7:00 pm  
**The Address – Fiona Davis**



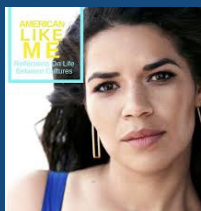
This national bestseller explores the secrets hidden behind the walls of The Dakota—New York City’s most famous residence – in a story that spans a century. The author is known for taking iconic New York City landmarks and weaving compelling tales around their history, architecture, and inhabitants. In *The Address*, we meet an immigrant servant who becomes manager of the hotel in 1884 and a former interior designer who, 100 years later, is now homeless and connected to the Dakota’s original architect.

Thursday, March 18 at 7:00 pm  
**American Like Me: Reflections On Life Between Cultures – America Ferrera, editor**



Award-winning actress and political activist America Ferrera invited 31 of her friends, peers and heroes to provide first-person accounts about their experience of growing up between cultures. There are heartwarming, funny and poignant stories from actors,

comedians, athletes, politicians, artists, and writers who are also immigrants, children or grandchildren of immigrants, indigenous people, or people who otherwise grew up with deep and personal connections to more than one culture. They read their own stories in the audio book version, which is an added delight.



## Chris Buchert, Middletown Branch President

Our program year is over half over and we have listened to so many interesting programs. Now is the time to start thinking about continuing our competent board into the next program year. Our board has worked on having a succession plan to continue strong leadership into the future. Having a president elect has been so helpful. Mel Worbis and I have worked together as we talked over ideas. She also has started taking over some of the president’s responsibilities. Sharing has been great. The plan is to have a member be president elect for one year and then president the next year. This plan gives the president elect time to become more familiar with the job and gives the president time to share her experiences.

Our branch also has two members for many of the elected executive board positions. The work is spread out as it is shared with several office holders. Ideas flow, and it keeps our branch vibrant to have more members giving opinions at board meetings. The members of the board are respectful and listen to each other’s opinions as to what will be good for continuing the mission of our branch.

The board also discussed book sales, garage sales and holiday sales as these are our major fundraisers for earning money for our scholarships. The main scholarships are renewable scholarships for high school seniors, scholarships for non-traditional students and scholarships for Be Wise Camp for middle school girls. We also work at building up our reserves in the Middletown Community Foundation so AAUW scholarships will continue long into the future.

As you are curled up at home this winter, take time to look at our Middletown website and face book page. Also check out the National website once in a while and read about the impact AAUW is making around our nation.

## Middletown AAUW Announces Named Gift Recipient

Congratulations to Karen Jones, the recipient of this year’s Middletown Branch Named Gift Award. Jones exemplifies the work ethic of our branch. She is an active member of our branch who works diligently each year, organizing and pricing books for the book sale and items for the garage sale and holiday bazaar. She is a founding member of the PENS Writing Group. She has served as Branch Financial Officer and on nominating committees.

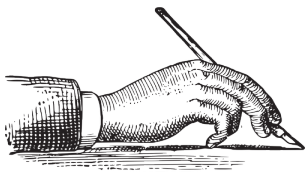
Karen Jones received her award in typical COVID19 style in a drive-by and congratulations from several members of the Middletown board, all outside and wearing masks.

This year’s named gift of \$1000 went to the AAUW Greatest Needs Fund, which, according to AAUW.org, “allows AAUW the flexibility to respond rapidly to new and emerging challenges facing women and girls.” It assures “strength, relevance, and viability of AAUW into the future.”

## Proposed AAUW National Bylaws Amendment

This spring AAUW members will vote on a long-standing membership requirement, which creates a barrier to women who do not hold a college degree. Proposed changes to the bylaws being recommended by the AAUW Board of Directors and AAUW Governance Committee would eliminate the degree requirement for membership. Now through February 5th, you can participate in the ongoing national discussion by submitting your comments about the proposed changes at <https://www.aauw.org/resources/member/governance-tools/national-election/2021-comment-bylaws/>

All voting will take place online in April and May 2021 unless a member sends a specific request to AAUW for a paper ballot. All members without an email address on file with AAUW national will receive notification of the vote by mail. Branches can organize a voting day, which can easily be done via Zoom, and everyone can vote online together. The AAUW bylaws require that the affirmative (yes) vote of two-thirds of the votes cast are required to amend the bylaws. The AAUW Board of Directors and Governance Committee's rationale for the bylaws change states that AAUW's mission is to advance gender equity, yet the requirement for membership explicitly denies access to membership to those without college degrees. They believe that the organization cannot promote equity for all women if it maintains exclusionary membership requirements. This issue has previously been voted on with the result of no change to the degree membership requirement. You are encouraged to consider your thoughts on this issue and be willing to share them at the next branch meeting.



### PENS

We all have a story to tell, and our PENS group is a safe place to share our stories. Recently our writing topics have included family memories, political commentary, poetry, journal entries, humorous anecdotes, reflection on the time we're living in, and resolutions for the New Year. We meet Thursday afternoons on Zoom. Each of us chooses a topic about which we want to write. We encourage each other, give constructive feedback, and share laughter and lively discussions. To join our group, contact: Becky Ward; beckward@gmail.com; 513/424-8409.

## Announcing AAUW Sale Dates for 2021

Several decisions were made at our January Board meeting that may affect your activity schedules/calendars this year. We have agreed to have 3 sales – a Garage Sale, a Used Book Sale and a Holiday Sale. You might remember that in 2020 we combined the Garage and Holiday Sales. Here are dates that you may want to place on your 2021 calendar:

**Garage Sale: June 11 and 12, plus 18 and 19**

**Used Book Sale: September 9 – 12 and 19**

**Holiday Sale: October 22 and 23 plus 29 and 30**

Of course, there will be much activity and preparation before, during and after those times. But most of all, at this time, we are thankful for Steve O'Neil and his willingness to work with us and allow us to use the space we have been utilizing the past two years. If you happen to see him, give him some credit!

Also, since we did not rent additional storage space this year after the book sale, please let Tina (424-1120) or Libby (424-7551), your Book Sale Chairpersons, know if you would be able to store any boxes prior to July 1 when we will begin collecting at the site.

## AAUW Diversity

Perhaps you have seen the picture of the three kids trying to see over the fence. They are different heights so the shorter ones cannot see over. If you distributed three equal boxes giving each one, one kid still cannot see over the fence but if the tallest kid who already could see over the fence gave their box to the shortest, all three could see. Google three boxes looking over a fence. (I hesitated copying one because of copyright.) The first picture shows how things are divided up. The second where each one gets a box is equality. Fair, yes, because each kid received the same thing but one kid (or group) is still left unable to see. The third picture where the one who already could see shares their box with the one who cannot is an illustration of equity because now all three can see.

I find myself as the privileged kid seeing over the fence. How can I share what I have? Can we strive for equity? I think education can be one box to help others see. Who needs a box? I watched at our January 11th meeting. Our guests spoke of young women who need a BOX. I was impressed by the question asked by several people, "How can we help?" They said it could be as simple as a bag of hygiene items and snacks or as committed as becoming a Safe House. I appreciate how our AAUW is making me aware.

(Illustration from *Is your Perspective Inclusive?* With Dr. Lissette Garcia and Pamela Fuller 9/9/2020 on AAUW website.) – Marti Kreps, Diversity Chair

## AAUW Five Star National Recognition Program

Some of our newer members do not know much about the National Five Star Recognition Program. Other members might like a refresher on what we accomplished last year in regards to the Five Star Program. You may look up the Five Star Program information with this link to the AAUW website. <https://www.aauw.org/resources/member/initiatives/5-star-program/>. There are a limited number of AAUW branches throughout the United States that have reached this five star status.

At the 2019 Fall State leadership meeting, the Five Star program was explained. AAUW's Five-Star National Recognition Program would reward affiliates (states, branches and other organizations) for aligning their work with the AAUW strategic plan and other initiatives that foster the organization's mission of advancing gender equity for women and girls. The program was to run from July 2019 through June 2021 (although at the beginning the program was supposed to end in June 2020). Our Middletown Board and Branch decided to see how many stars our branch could earn. At that time we did not envision earning all five stars. Throughout the year the board and branch brainstormed various ideas for the five focus areas. Different members worked on completing focus areas. The president updated the information on the national website.

### Program Focus –

Goal 1 – Host 3-5 strategic plan programs and activities that spread the vision of AAUW. This focus was difficult as our branch had to think about how we actually accomplish these outward facing meetings and events.

These events were accepted by National.

1. Our Joy Luck Book Club reading a book from the National list on women's equity, *Because of Sex: One Law, Ten Cases and Fifty Years that Changed American Women's Lives at Work*, and then hosting an Action network sign up at the Friends and Family Fundraiser Dinner.
2. The Friends and Family Fundraiser Dinner that had cards around the tables telling about AAUW and including the Action network sign up.
3. Hosting an online Work Smart Training Day where participants completed the online training ahead of time and then met as a group on zoom to discuss the training.
4. Holding a branch meeting in September about Miami's strategic plan for regional campuses, and then changing the way our branch donates money for non-traditional adult scholarships.

Goal 2 – Representatives from our branch completed the community resource mapping exercise which meant we filled out forms on the National Website citing community institutions that might be interested in learning more about AAUW. Members contributed a few entries and this goal was accepted.

### Advancement Focus –

Goal 1 – Our branch completed this goal by raising our annual per capita member giving to an average of \$30 per member. This goal evolved from our branch giving and individual membership gifts.

Goal 2 – Our branch completed this goal by retaining 90% or more of our members and submitting annual dues by September 30.

### Communications and External Relations Focus –

This goal was accomplished by showing that our existing websites and social media include an Economic Security focus and Work Smart Online focus. Monthly posts were included about Work Smart Online.

### Public Policy and Research Focus

Goal 1 – Conduct an annual meeting with a US or state legislator. This was hard because of the corona virus. Several members attended an online meeting with Warren Davidson.

Goal 2 – Appoint a public policy chair. Our branch has a public policy chair as a member of the board.

Goal 3 – Host at least one public event where Action network sign-ups are collected. This event was the Feast with Family and Friends fundraiser.

### Governance and Sustainability Focus

Goal 1 – Our branch successfully showed on our website how our branch programs, fundraisers and activities align with AAUW national's strategic plan. This goal was difficult as we had to design the best way to show the alignment on our website.

Goal 2 – Our branch successfully showed that we have instituted a succession plan to ensure new ideas by adding a president elect and by having two members for many of the executive officer roles.



## Donations for Human Trafficking Survivors

In addition to the notes that Becky will be sending to describe the upcoming programs, this information is to follow through on our January program. "After hearing about the work of Jeri Lewis and Beth Bullock at our January meeting on human trafficking, many members expressed an interest in donating items to help them with their work. The following is a list of items that they can use:

Drawstring book bag to put everything in

Socks

Deodorant

Toothpaste

Toothbrush

Chapstick

Hair brush

Travel cup with lid

Feminine pad / tampon

Sunscreen

Water

Vitamin C Packs to put in water

Calling Card

Dry Shampoo

Poncho for rain

Peanut butter or cheese crackers

Individual bags of trail mix

Winter: Gloves, Hats, Scarfs, Hand Warmer packs (Amazon), Blanket

Rose Grau has graciously offered to receive the donations, so items may be dropped off at her home on the first two Saturdays of February, 2/6/21 and 2/13/21, between the hours of 11:00 AM and 2:00 PM. If you cannot make it during those hours, you can also contact Rose at [edrosegrau@cinci.rr.com](mailto:edrosegrau@cinci.rr.com) to set up a convenient time. For anyone interested in looking into the idea of providing safe haven for women escaping from human trafficking, you can email Jeri Lewis for more information about the necessary training at [jlewis@kingswell.us](mailto:jlewis@kingswell.us)

"Thanks! Let me know if you have any questions. Debbie

## AAUW Middletown Branch Officers

### Branch President

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