



Equity Now

JANUARY
2023

Program Note: Members will be sent a Zoom invitation through emails. Non-members who wish to join Zoom meetings should contact Mel Worbis at worbismm@gmail.com for the link.

Equity for Children with Disabilities

NEW DATE!

Monday, Jan. 16 at 7 pm

At our January meeting we will be hearing from Tracy Gilchrist on how to advocate and push for education and the best opportunities for children with disabilities. Tracy has worked with non-profit organizations for many years and continues to work with groups that help refugees and asylum seekers.



Tracy Gilchrist

Tracy has another important job: being mom and advocate for her daughters, Morgan and Katie. Morgan was born with Cornelia de Lange syndrome (CdLS), and Katie was born three months prematurely. Both girls are thriving in their environments because of how Tracy advocates for their education and care. With her years of experience as a parent and social advocate, Tracy uses her knowledge to help others find resources and to advise how they can advocate and push for changes to help children with disabilities.

☀ *According to the Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia, Cornelia de Lange syndrome (CdLS) is a genetic condition present at birth that is characterized by numerous physical, intellectual and behavioral differences. Children with CdLS usually have low birth weight, are smaller in size and height, and have a smaller head circumference. Most also experience developmental delays that range from mild learning disabilities to profound intellectual disabilities. The syndrome takes its name from the Dutch pediatrician who in 1933 was one of the first to formally describe it. It occurs in an estimated 1 in 10,000 live births.*

Calendar of Events

Monday, Jan. 16 at 7 pm
“Equity for Children with Disabilities”

Parents of kids with disabilities often face challenges getting resources for their children. This meeting will discuss challenges and solutions for parents and caregivers.

▶ ZOOM ONLY*

Monday, Feb.13 at 7 pm
“Creative Problem Solving: How to Make Your Own Equity”

Dayton-based internist Dr. Carol Levine will share how creative problem solving changed her life and can help our lives. She will tell us how art got her into medical school and how she thrived with challenges that would have stopped others.

▶ ZOOM ONLY*

Monday, March 13 at 7 pm
“Preparing Future Generations of Women Leaders”

Dana Bisignani, Director of University of Cincinnati’s Women’s Center, will discuss how they use programs created by AAUW to help guide women with pay equity and negotiations.

▶ Kettering Health Center Community Room, Middletown and Zoom

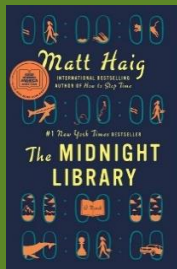
**Zoom links will be provided monthly in reminder emails.*

Joy Luck Book Club

Thursday, Jan. 19, 2023 at 7 pm
(Zoom Only)

***The Measure* – Nikki Erlick OR
The Midnight Library – Matt Haig**

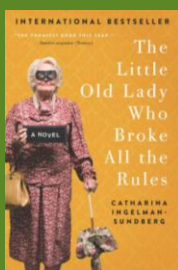
It's reader choice month! Get ready to set your future path in 2023 by reading one of two these books that pose the question, "What if our lives had been different?" Nikki Erlick's debut novel explores humanity's obsession with both the quality and quantity (longevity) of life. Matt Haig's novel has a similar "what if" bent and been called a "feel-good book guaranteed to lift your spirits."



Thursday, Feb. 16, 2023 at 7 pm
(Zoom Only)

***The Little Old Lady Who Broke All the Rules* – Catherine Ingelman-Sundberg**

February's pick is a quirky, funny story from a Swedish author who had a notable career as a marine archeologist, journalist and writer of historical novels about Vikings before she became an international bestseller with her series about the League of Pensioners. This is the first of three tales in which the residents of an assisted living facility plan robberies to improve life for others. Think *Ocean's 11* for the elderly!



Holiday Bazaar Hits Historical Highs

Once again our branch's Holiday Bazaar was a great success, generating \$6,137.50 after expenses. There were so many items to sell that we filled our present sale location. Every year the community and our members have been generous in donating items to sell and eager to buy that something special to take home.

Sale co-chair Chris Buchert reminds us that the sale began in 2011 as the brainchild of member Rose Grau, who suggested a holiday-time bazaar to generate dollars for scholarships. The sale was first held in 2011 in the cozy basement of Rose's home, where she had previously operated a children's daycare. That sale grossed \$1,186, not bad for a first effort.



Over the years Rose has kept records of the money generated. With this year's total, she estimates that AAUW Middletown has grossed about \$35,000 for scholarships over the past 11 years. Nice work, ladies!

Our members are committed to earning money for scholarships and building up our scholarship fund. The branch provides significant funding for Middletown high school graduates pursuing college degrees (renewable scholarship), as well as non-traditional college students who have barriers to staying in school. We also sponsor local 7th and 8th grade girls attending Ohio AAUW STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) camps.

This educational funding is provided by proceeds from the spring garage sale, fall book sale, and holiday bazaar sale. The branch is also working to build up our scholarship fund at the Middletown Community Foundation so that high school scholarships can continue on their own into the future.

Interested in supporting this worthy cause? You may donate scholarship funds with a check made out to "Middletown AAUW Scholarship Fund." Send it to the Middletown Community Foundation directly or to Middletown AAUW, Box 118, Middletown, OH 45042. Our treasurer will send the money on to the foundation.

Did You Know...?

Since 1888, AAUW has provided over \$100 million in supporting scholarships and fellowships for more than 12,000 women from 130 countries and in every field of study. This proud record began with a fellowship of \$350 for Ida Street in 1888. AAUW's action was designed to provide financial support for women pursuing advanced degrees in order that recipients could obtain leadership positions in academia.

It is only through the generosity of members and local chapters that this support has been and will continue to be provided. For more information about the history of AAUW you may want to visit the website for an in depth summary. (Search the for "Funding Women's History" page on aauw.org.)



Ida Street



Letter from Our Leader

Branch President Eleanor Stewart
(eleanorygilmore@gmail.com)

As we headed into the brisk cold of December and a busy holiday season, members gathered at Central Connections in Middletown on Dec. 12 to hear executive director Diane Rodgers (below right) speak about the professional journey that led her to Middletown as she discussed “Working Women: Victories and Challenges.”

Considering the fickleness of Miami Valley weather, we have scheduled our meetings for January and February as Zoom-only. Both meetings focus on this year’s theme of “Equity Now.” In January we will learn about “Equity for Children with Disabilities,” and in February we will investigate “Creative Problem Solving: How to Make Your Own Equity.” We hope you will join us online those days. (Please note that the January 16th meeting is a week later than stated in our program book.)



We are very enthusiastic about the membership growth of our chapter and hope to welcome even more new members. I am often surprised that many women have never heard of our organization and are eager to know our mission. Please consider inviting a friend or colleague to attend one of our meetings to see what AAUW offers.

The new year is now upon us. May you enter 2023 surrounded by the love of family and friends, looking forward to a year of peace and good will.



AAUW’s PENS Writing Group

As we welcome a new year, PENS chair Becky Ward takes a look at a PENS article from the past on why we write:

“Recently in our writers’ group we all took a moment to reflect on **“Why I Write.”** Some of the responses follow: I write to journal; I write for publication; writing is my creative outlet; there are stories in my head that must be written; when I was a very young girl, I would watch TV shows and change the ending in my mind because I thought my ending was better; writing is part of who I am; I write to understand my past; I write to find out what happens to the characters I create; I write because I am a dreamer who lives in my head; I write to be a witness to my life; if you want anyone to want to read it, you need to write in a compelling way, and the challenge is to learn how to do that; I write because I love words and phrases; I write to explore feelings and find answers to questions in my life; I write to remind myself of all that I am grateful for and to remember all the blessings in my life.

Members Enjoy Central Connections Treats at December Meeting



Resolved: To Write Each Day!

We all have a story to tell . . . and our PENS group is a safe place to share your story.

Anyone who has a passion to write is welcome to join the PENS writers’ group. 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.

We meet the first and third Thursday of each month from 1:00-2:30 pm in conference room 123 at Gardner Harvey Library* on the Middletown Campus of Miami University. Meeting dates are Jan. 5 and 19 and Feb. 2 and 16.

Call or email Becky Ward if you have any questions: beckward@gmail.com or 513/424-8409. *Masks are recommended but not required. It’s okay to bring a refreshment such as coffee or tea.

About the Pregnancy Workers Fairness Act

By Robin Becker, Public Policy Chair

Seventy-five percent of pregnant women and new mothers are in the workplace and need access to job protections. For the past 10 years, advocates have tried to pass legislation to provide reasonable accommodations for pregnant and postpartum workers. Finally, on December 22, 2022, with a vote of 73 to 24, the Senate passed the Pregnant Workers Fairness Act, a bipartisan law to ensure that pregnant women are treated fairly on the job.

This law will close loopholes in the 1978 Pregnancy Discrimination Act by requiring employers to make temporary, common-sense protections for pregnant workers like extra bathroom breaks or a stool to sit on. The act is closely modeled after the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and requires that employers with 15 or more employees provide reasonable accommodations that are often low-cost or no cost, unless doing so would pose an undue hardship to the employer.

The bill was first introduced to Congress in 2012 and twice passed the House with overwhelming margins. The law also prohibits employers from denying employment opportunities to women based on their need for reasonable accommodations due to childbirth or related medical conditions. AAUW states that outreach and education is now needed to make sure that pregnant and postpartum workers understand their rights and feel like they can take advantage of them



(Source: ABetterBalance.org)

AAUW Middletown Branch Officers

This list is provided to help members reach out to the correct person in case of questions, such as how to help someone join AAUW.

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Public Policy:

Robin Becker

Scholarships:

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Garage Sale & Holiday

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Carole Schul

Book Sale:

Libby Abele
Sharon Dowden
Tina Newlin

**Newsletter Editor/
Joy Luck Book Group:**

Sharon Williamson