

SPRING ISSUE - APRIL 2021

# BAYSTATER

AAUW MASSACHUSETTS QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

## President's Note:

My term as President of AAUW-MA ends on April 17, 2021. At the Annual Meeting I strongly encourage votes for Cris Ajemian and Katherine Honey for co-presidents for the next two years. You will read some background about each of them in this newsletter. What stands out for me is their strong connections to diversity, equity, and inclusion; in communities, and specific to the area of STEM as well. They both have a focus that intersects so well with the AAUW of now and the future. Both have leadership histories with AAUW.

Thank you to my fellow Executive Officers, the Board of Directors, members, and the AAUW national staff. You have assisted and guided me during my term.

Please join our Annual Meeting on April 17, 2021, 3:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. A Zoom link will be sent to your email address the week prior to the meeting.

Stacy Fatale  
President  
AAUW-MA





**MARCH 8TH 2021**

## *International Women's Day*

### **PUBLIC POLICY HIGHLIGHTS**

There are four bills of particular importance to us currently. The Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) has just passed the US House of Representatives and has been sent to the Senate. AAUW will continue to pressure Congress to pass this so we can finally progress the amendment.

There are three bills in the Massachusetts legislature that we are watching:

- An Act providing affordable and accessible high quality early education and care to promote child development and well-being and support the economy in the Commonwealth
- An Act to end child marriage in Massachusetts
- An Act to guarantee debt-free public higher education

They are also outlined on the next page.



## Continued...

### **An Act providing affordable and accessible high quality early education and care to promote child development and well-being and support the economy in the Commonwealth**

This bill (sponsored by Representative Ken Gordon of Bedford, Representative Adrian Madaro of Boston, Senator Jason Lewis of Winchester, and Senator Susan Moran of Plymouth) will provide universal, affordable early education. It will also provide funding for after-school programs for children until age 12, and there will be grants to train early educators.

### **An Act to end child marriage in Massachusetts**

*An Act to end child marriage in Massachusetts* (House Docket 718 and Senate Docket 292, sponsored by Representative Kay Khan and Senator Harriette Chandler) would keep the marriage age at 18 and eliminate the dangerous loophole allowing marriage before 18 with parental “consent” and judicial approval.

### **An Act to guarantee debt-free public higher education**

*An Act to guarantee debt-free public higher education* has been sponsored by Senator James Eldridge and Rep. Natalie Higgins.

# BRANCH HIGHLIGHTS



## Taunton Area Branch

Taunton Area Branch held their annual Knit In for Scholarships in March 2021 virtually!



## North Shore Area Branch

January 19 - Wine and Remembrance. Branch members were encouraged to share their experiences regarding life changing situations, and what they meant to them.

February 22 - Members had the honor of hearing Safiya St. Clair speak, as an AAUW International Fellow.

March 16 - MA Senator Joan Lovely, a branch member, updated us on current legislative actions.

NSAB also made donations to various food pantries on the North Shore and sent a donation to AAUW Funds in memory of our member, Doris Wilson, who passed away in November 2020, just shy of her 100th birthday.

One of our NCCWSL scholarship recipients will attend the virtual conference. We hope to have her speak to us about her experience at a future meeting.

## South Shore Area Branch

### *Branch Program*

### **Let's Tour the North and South Rivers**

**April 13, 2021**

**7:00 p.m. on Zoom**

**Presented by The North and South Rivers Watershed Association**



Join us for a virtual tour of the North and South Rivers. We will share the natural beauty of these rivers, which are recognized as Natural National Landmarks. The North River is the only Scenic Protected River in Massachusetts. The estuaries of these tidal rivers with their salt marshes serve as nurseries of life for our oceans, provide flood storage, and are home to many species. The North and South Watershed Association will share highlights of their work in education, engagement, advocacy, and river restoration to advance our mission to protect local waters.

# AAUW MA Annual State Meeting

Join us virtually on Saturday, April 17th from 3PM to 5PM!

The link will be emailed to you prior to the meeting.

We hope to see you there!





## Election of AAUW- MA President April 17, 2021

When Cris Ajemian was asked to consider the position of President, she reached out to Katherine Honey. Together they agreed to serve as AAUW-MA Co-Presidents if elected at the AAUW-Massachusetts Annual Meeting on April 17, 2021.

Cris has been a member of the Taunton Area Branch since 1972 and has held several offices both in her branch and at the state level over the years. Currently, she is the branch president. Cris retired from Massasoit Community College where she taught Spanish, Portuguese and English as a Second Language. She is active in her community and is a member of BCCR (Bridgewater Communities for Civil Rights).

BCCR was formed in 2015 in response to verbal attacks on people in Bridgewater based on their appearance and has worked recently to increase diversity, equity and inclusion in Bridgewater's schools and town agencies. Along with Cris, other AAUW members involved include Beryl Domingo, past AAUW-MA President, Evelyn DeLutis, Gloria Moran, Karen Reed Messing, and Barbara Balboni, all members of the Taunton branch. Cris and her husband Ray have two children and two grandchildren.

Katherine has been an AAUW member since 1996 and has held several offices including President of the Attleboro Branch. She has collaborated with many AAUW members to organize and present at events to promote equity and education for girls and women including the Envision the Future Program for Girls at Bridgewater State University, AAUW-MA Conference at Bristol Community College and the AAUW National Conference in Rhode Island. Presently, as the SE MA STEM Network Coordinator, in response to issues relative to DEI (diversity, equity, inclusion) and the need to increase participation in STEM education and STEM careers, she is working with several AAUW members including Cris Ajemian to develop a virtual program comprised of three sessions that will provide resources to support STEM education and DEI initiatives. Katherine looks forward to working with all AAUW members who would like to share their STEM and/or DEI efforts at the virtual sessions as panelists or discussion facilitators or include their efforts on the STEM/DEI resource list that will be available to program attendees.