



COVID-19 Guidelines: AAUW's recommendation is to adhere to the state guidelines as determined by its governor. Link to <https://govstatus.egov.com/OR-OHA-COVID-19>

# OREGON NEWS

*Fall Edition, September 2021*

**Founded in 1881, AAUW celebrates its 140<sup>th</sup> Birthday on November 28<sup>th</sup>.**



**In this Edition: District & Branch News, Presidents' Message, Summer Skills Camp Review, Meet our Oregon AAUW Fellows**

## **AAUW of Oregon Breaking Barriers Achievement Award 2022**

Do you know AAUW of Oregon is moving into its eighth year of this award?!! The Breaking Barriers Achievement Award recognizes and celebrates a woman in Oregon who is not an AAUW member, but who exemplifies our AAUW mission. The award also recognizes and celebrates an organization that demonstrates an impact on women and girls in our state. So, now is your opportunity to nominate a person or organization! Get started now! Applications, due January 10, 2022, are on the website at <https://aauw-or.aauw.net/aauw-of-oregon-breaking-barriers-award/>



### ***Five-Star Program Update***

AAUW National is excited to announce that the Five Star Recognition program has restarted in FY22, providing another opportunity for your branch to be recognized for furthering AAUW's mission. To learn about the updates to the program and how your AAUW affiliate can be recognized for its work, go to the National website.

# State Presidents' Message

Pat Lehman & Sue Klumph, Co-presidents



We feel fortunate and take pride in having an outstanding state leadership team. For example, when our state webmaster had to step down, Communications VP Ilga Ross quickly learned new skills and has made our state website current, relevant and attractive. Of course, we NEED a state webmaster and hope that one of you will step up soon to take on this position. When our hard-working Events Coordinator Nancy Brown had personal responsibilities during Summer Skills Camp 2.1, Immediate Past President and awesome Technology Chair Georgia Applegate filled in to make the sessions run smoothly. When Finance VP Monica Weyhe couldn't host the counterpart session for branch Finance VPs, Membership VP Gini Dideum successfully folded our Finance members into her Membership session. And Sharron Noone is ready to fill in when a representative is needed to speak for a president of one of her three branches, or for Public Policy when Chair Trish Garner cannot. Our board and committee members do what needs to be done to keep AAUW of Oregon running seamlessly and efficiently. We are so grateful for the dedication and expertise that support us.

Our president-elect Linda Lybecker is already engaged in all our meetings, and we will call on her considerable expertise as we re-vision our state strategic plan to be better aligned with National's, more attractive, more appropriately focused, and more user-friendly. Linda has strong leadership skills, and we already know she will be an excellent president.

As co-presidents, we will continue to pursue our goal of increased communication with branches and district directors and our efforts to offer information and support wherever we can. In addition, this year we are committed to developing a succession plan for our state. Finding, preparing, and supporting leadership is an ongoing issue at all levels of AAUW, and we urge all of you to send us your ideas for creating a workable plan that could also serve as a model for branches.

Meanwhile, we appreciate the work of our state board, and we ask you to consider joining us in the roles of Webmaster, Central District Director, and College/University Relations Chair. This year, these are one-year appointed positions. Why not expand your skills to be part of our terrific team?

## AAUW of Oregon Elected Officers

Co-Presidents  
Sue Klumph & Pat Lehman

President-Elect  
Linda Lybecker

Communications VP  
Ilga Ross

Finance VP  
Monica Weyhe

Membership VP  
Gini (Virginia) Dideum

Program VP  
Pat Squire

Secretary  
Marie Mueller

Northeast District Director  
Karen A. King

Northwest District Director  
Susan Wahlke

North-Central District Director  
Mary Pat Silveira

Central District Director  
*vacant*

South District Director  
Pam Shay



## Summer Skills Camp 2.1 Full of Useful Information

*Pat Squire, Program VP &  
Nancy Brown, Events Coordinator*

A big thanks to everyone who participated in Summer Skills Camp 2.1. From presenters to campers, everyone seemed to enjoy learning new things for advancing AAUW and enhancing their own skills.

The kick-off session by the West Linn High School Robotics team was truly inspirational. These girls don't JUST learn STEM, they learn how to do presentations, marketing, managing and community engagement. For more information, go to their website at <http://wlhsfrc.com/home>

Our California partner, Dawn Johnson, did an excellent job of giving us tips about how to encourage and manage our volunteers. I saw many people taking notes. Don't forget these sessions will be on YouTube soon. We especially appreciated Dawn taking time out from her vacation (here in Oregon to escape California heat and smoke!) to do her program.

Our own tech advisors from the Technology Committee, Ilga Ross, Kelli Matthews, Suzanne Wicklin and Randa Blanding, helped simplify website maintenance and explained how to use MailChimp in a way that made me want to try both! Trish Garner gave a serious and forthright discussion of Critical Race Theory, something that is impacting our communities right now. Three representatives from branches around the state talked about outstanding projects they delivered, and helpful counterpart sessions were conducted for branch officers. Linda Liebenstein presented a very useful program on something we've all either encountered, or are contemplating: Downsizing!

Some of you may have noticed that we drew several speakers from one branch: Tigard Area. Well, they have the expertise, and it's a nice way to showcase a branch that struggled a few years ago. Well done ladies!!!!

When you get a chance, please reach out to our fabulous presenters and thank them for their time, expertise and energy in doing these programs. And thanks to all of you for attending!

As of this writing, any plans for district in-person meetings this Fall seem to be either on hold, or will be scheduled on Zoom, because of the rampant Delta Variant of the virus.

Next up, convention! April 7-9, 2022, in Ashland!



## National AAUW News

Recently AAUW Board Chair Julia Brown shared the news that CEO Kim Churches will soon become president of The Washington Center. At her departure, Kim writes in part, "The future is bright. AAUW is emerging from the pandemic with a stronger financial balance sheet, more transparent governance, highly skilled and dedicated staff, and clear strategic priorities."

## **AAUW of Oregon Board Meeting, August 1st, Action Summary**

*Marie Mueller, State Secretary*

- Recognizing that a full complement of officers helps accomplish state goals and spreads the work, the board suggested that branches recommend individuals to fill open positions.
- Do you like planning? AAUW of Oregon will begin work on a new state Strategic Plan in 2021-23. Volunteer for the committee or send ideas to the co-presidents.
- Summer Skills Camp 2.1 begins August 16. Sign up for mental stimulation, meeting friends, learning, and fun.
- The board approved two letters composed by Pat Squire. They will be sent to (1) former CEO Kim Churches, thanking her for contributions to AAUW and wishing her well in her position at the Washington Center and (2) to Julia Brown, on the search committee for a new CEO. Ms. Brown was asked to ensure that the new CEO establish a clear focus on MEMBERS, something missing for several years, and to add improved IT (information technology) support that would also help members.

## **Membership Goal for Five-Star Recognition**

*Gini Dideum, Membership Vice President*

To retain at least 90% of branch membership statewide is the only membership goal in the Five-Star National Recognition Program. The program rewards affiliates (states and branches) for aligning their work with the AAUW strategic plan and other initiatives that foster the AAUW's mission of advancing gender equity for women and girls. The program will run from July 2021 through June 2022. Is this a worthy and attainable goal? I think so. But it is going to take some work. As of August 1st, Oregon's retention rate was 71.1%.

## **AAUW of Oregon Public Policy Report, September 2021**

*Trish Garner, State Public Policy Chair*

Well, we can't win them all and that's especially true in the legislative arena. One win was legislation that required civics to be taught in schools. The corporate board diversity and age discrimination task force bills did not advance. The latter was not for lack of trying and we are proud to report that over 30 AAUW of Oregon members sent testimony via emails of support. We are still being noticed! Over the summer Trish is continuing to speak with various legislators and advocacy groups about strategies to get our legislative priorities passed.



The State Public Policy Committee is also working on how we might foster AAUW of Oregon public policy goals by encouraging greater state and branch collaboration. In May 2021, our branch public policy chairs, presidents, district directors and state public policy committee members met for a "brainstorming session" to discuss what this might look like.

We have yet to adopt an official plan, but at this time we anticipate that at least one component of the plan is to have members of the State Public Policy Committee contact each branch public policy chair or president about what branch public policy projects have been successful, which were not, and what a state-branch collaboration might look like.



## Special Projects Fund Website

*Penney Hoodenpyle, Chair, & Susan Gilstrap, Finance Officer*



The AAUW of Oregon Special Projects Fund has a new website! The website will facilitate branches with projects to receive donations in a variety of ways. And the donation process will be much easier for the donors. Thank you to everyone who continues to support our branch projects and the Special Projects Fund!

The new website is at [oregonspecialprojectsfund.org](http://oregonspecialprojectsfund.org).

Mission-based projects provided by AAUW of Oregon branches include, but are not limited to,

scholarships to college and university students, tuition and travel to AAUW's annual National Conference for College Women Student Leaders (NCCWSL), and Tech Trek camps for middle school girls.

## Technology for You!

*Georgia Applegate, Technology Committee Chair*

The AAUW of Oregon Technology Committee exists to serve branches and the Board of Directors with their technology needs and desires. The committee started in 2018 with two members and now is a standing committee of the Board of Directors with nine members. They are Kelli Mathews (Eugene/Lane), Randa Blanding (Tigard Area), Sharron Noone (Gresham), Nancy Brown (Online), Suzanne Wicklin (Grants Pass), Ilga Ross (Portland), Betty Diamond (Tillamook), Gail Engblom (Ashland), and Georgia Applegate (Grants Pass).

Check out our areas of concentration and how we can help YOU on our AAUW of Oregon website: <https://aauw-or.aauw.net/tech-help/>

Allen Hall Public Relations at the University of Oregon will once again be working with us on our three social media channels: Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/aauworegon>, LinkedIn, and Instagram [https://www.instagram.com/aauw\\_of\\_oregon/](https://www.instagram.com/aauw_of_oregon/). Watch for the project to start up again in early October.

Please contact Georgia Applegate, Chair of the Technology Committee, for any technology services of the committee members. ([gkapple@gmail.com](mailto:gkapple@gmail.com))

## AAUW LAF Supports Case Against Oregon State University

In 2018, Anne Devan-Song, a PhD candidate at Oregon State University (OSU), faced sexual and gender-based harassment at the hands of a fellow graduate student. OSU not only failed to address and resolve the complaints, but also discharged Devan-Song from her lab despite her excellent academic standing. Subsequently, she was suspended for speaking out about her experience.

With financial assistance from AAUW's Legal Advocacy Fund, Devan-Song brought legal action against the university. The case against OSU was settled recently. All disciplinary sanctions for Devan-Song's speech about her experiences were removed and she was reinstated as a PhD candidate in good standing. OSU also agreed to amend its Student Code of Conduct.

## Meet Our 2021-22 Fellowship Recipients



**Safia Farole**, American Fellowship  
**Portland State University**, Portland, Oregon

Discipline/Degree: Political science; Postdoctoral, Comparative politics, African politics  
Project: *Women's Candidacy in Local Government Elections in Sub-Saharan Africa*

In her research, Safia Farole focuses on local elections, party systems and political representation of women in Africa. Her recent research on how opposition political parties build support at the local level has been published in peer-reviewed political science journals. Her new work on women's representation in local elections in South Africa examines why female politicians are less likely to win seats in direct elections even in the context of gender quotas.



**Casey Thornton**, American Fellowship  
**Oregon Health & Science University**, Portland, Oregon

Discipline/Degree: Biology; Ph.D., Molecular and medical genetics  
Project: *Spatial Mapping of Single-Cell Epigenomic Signatures in the Mammalian Brain*

In her research, Casey Thornton develops methods for capturing genomic and epigenomic information from single cells in order to better understand the complexity of mammalian brains in healthy and diseased states. She hopes to apply her skill in computational genomics to advancing precision medicine, especially in rare disease cohorts. She is an advocate for graduate researcher unionization in order to make research careers accessible to chronically underrepresented groups in higher education.

**Technology Tip: Recordings of the State Zoom sessions are edited and posted on the AAUW of Oregon YouTube channel, and are available for viewing by all members.**

AAUW of Oregon website password to "Member Center" is *oregonaauw*

## District and Branch News

### Central District

**ALBANY BRANCH**, Virginia Staffelbach and Theresa Johnson, Co-presidents

Albany was hoping to start the Fall with in-person meetings and activities, but that does not appear to be the case. Albany is going to set up all in-person business meetings and programs with back-up Zoom meetings. Last year we had to reduce our number of programs and business meetings due to the COVID-19 pandemic. We did manage to have one in-person business meeting in June 2021; it was held outdoors.

Last year we lost our District Director. We are hoping another wonderful person will replace her. As we start the new year we continue to remain optimistic, but also realistic and committed to keeping our membership safe. The new year 2022 will be an election year for the branch. This will present challenges as we do not have all of

our officer positions filled currently, and most of our members seem busy and not interested in taking over these positions. This is not due to the COVID-19 virus.

An interesting point this year: that due to our inability to award money to programs that were not functioning during the pandemic, we are starting our year with more funds than usual and have already started to award funding for STEM projects.

**EUGENE-LANE BRANCH**, Sheila Ramerman, President

Looking back at 2020-2021, our branch experienced many of the same changes and challenges others did: the move to Zoom for remote branch and board meetings, cancelled or postponed activities: Lunch Bunch, Dinner group, Book Club, 19th Amendment Centennial activities, support for a middle school girls' basketball team and a Mock Trial program in a local high school. A member moved to be closer to family; members who weren't comfortable with remote meetings curtailed their branch meeting participation.

***What hasn't changed is members' commitment to supporting the branch, AAUW's mission and programs, and each other.*** Our branch program topics last year were stimulating and stellar as always, and we have a full slate of great topics for this coming year. We try to identify guest speakers who can present remotely, if needed. Those who don't join remote meetings are ready to re-engage when we can meet in person again. We confirmed that our usual meeting place is available and open for us to meet in person, but who knows if that will be the case in a few weeks? Most of all, we're staying flexible and have asked our members to tell us what they're comfortable doing.

**SALEM BRANCH**, Joyce Zook, President

The 2020-21 COVID-19 pandemic lock-down did affect our branch's activities and our members as well! Our favorite project of the year, Speech Trek, had to be postponed until 2022. We did schedule a number of very interesting speakers/topics via Zoom during 2020-21. Zoom allowed state leaders to join our meetings easily. The board members have chosen to continue board meetings via Zoom in 2021-22. Although we plan to have in-person member/public meetings in the coming year, we may arrange one through Zoom connection. Venues have become expensive and difficult to access. We emphasized personal connections to members during holiday times, illness, and to alert each one about the national election.

We begin the year with an expanded board (two co-officers) and a new Public Policy Chair—welcome Peggy Shippen! Judy Coyle, Program Chair, tapped two new members to help plan and implement the monthly meeting topics (mission based) for the coming year. We are applying to AAUW National's 5-Star Award Program. The most exciting upcoming event for our branch is the Centennial Celebration. Salem Branch was founded in the Fall of 1922!

**YAMHILL COUNTY BRANCH**, Linda O'Hara, President

I truly believe that if COVID had arrived sooner, our branch might have a different set of challenges that could have been more devastating. We were just getting traction in the community via public events twice a year—recall we came to life in 2018—when the original lockdown occurred. A major issue was the fact that half our members resided in one of the local retirement communities therefore unable to leave for a significant period of time. But we were unable to have in-person events, so no major harm.

Zoom is our lifeline to each other, meeting every month to “check in” and “catch up.” Everyone is tired, of course, anxious to be in public for an event. Our fall plans are on hold due to the current crisis. Time will tell regarding the return to what we were once doing. “Seeing” each other is helpful but not the same as being in the same room.

## **North Central District—Mary Pat Silveira, Director**

In June, I organized an informal meeting with both outgoing and incoming branch presidents at a West Linn winery. The Online branch was represented by Penny Hoodenpyle. We introduced ourselves, discussed common issues, reviewed anticipated reporting and other requirements for the year, discussed the Oregon News with Ilga Ross and, of course, had a glass of wine. We were all optimistic at that time. Summer was here and, we thought, the coronavirus was on the wane. Most, if not all of the branches were planning in-person board and branch meetings.

Enter July and August, and we are back to planning either all Zoom or hybrid meetings for the near future. Sigh! Still, hats off to all the branches in this district for keeping membership numbers up, for finding ways to keep everyone connected and involved, and for being inventive in their programming and activities.

### **GRESHAM AREA BRANCH, Bonnie Jepsen and Peggy Taylor, Co-presidents**

As we prepared to write this Fall memo, a welcomed rain shower occurred. The long overdue heat is being pleasantly cooled!

Due to the COVID 19 / Delta virus our summer board and branch events have been held outdoors. On July 20th the branch celebrated with a picnic at a local park. Members were delighted to see one another in person. On August 18, we plan to celebrate with an ice cream social, a high light for all.

Membership, despite COVID 19, has changed our branch only in the loss of in-person contacts. Our continued contacts via cards, notes, E-Blasts, phone calls, and our newsletter have kept our members informed and up to date. Renewed memberships are stable, despite the loss of several members due to deaths or relocations. We continue to reach out to prospective members.

Fall will bring time changes for our branch meetings, be they virtual or in-person. Earlier time changes have been under consideration for many years.

Mt. Hood Community College recently announced our branch was chosen to receive their Heroes for Education Award 2021-22. The award recognizes the outstanding financial support our branch has established for the MHCC scholarship program.

Our board and membership have had a busy, fulfilling, and profitable year.

### **HILLSBORO-FOREST GROVE BRANCH, Donna Wellington, President**

Branch meetings and programs last year were done entirely by Zoom. We had no in-person meetings. As we approach this fiscal year, we hope to offer some events in-person in outdoor settings to maximize time in a safe environment while also providing activities that help members connect to each other and to the branch projects and programs. However, we will consult state and federal COVID 19 recommendations continually to plan our activities to ensure that the health of our members is not compromised in any way.



Interestingly enough, we have increased our branch membership during these difficult times and will continue calling individual members periodically (as we did last year) to provide referrals and ongoing support to our branch members.

#### **LAKE OSWEGO BRANCH, Catharine Hojem, President**

With the present downturn in the pandemic, we now will resume the use of previous safety measures used to combat this crisis. However, there were some 'silver linings' which emerged in this last year and a half for many in our branch: less can be more, kindness matters, families are priceless, friends too, the joy from helping others is not overrated, some board games are fun, Zoom can be a blessing, and sharing our stories helps to ease the isolation.

In June, our Board decided to try something new with our Scholarship award. The pandemic has had a disproportionate economic impact on women, most notably BIPOC, which will have long term economic results compounding the inequities of the existing gender wage gap.

LOAUWW has therefore decided to financially support and advocate for Oregon Tradeswomen. The training instructs them to obtain positions in fields that are very securely anchored in commerce, such as iron and line workers, plumbers, electricians, construction workers, H-VAC, and sprinkler-fitters. The relatively brief instruction period (about two months) allows women to join the workforce quickly by acquiring apprenticeships with living wages available from the outset, which will be a welcome economic solution for a post-COVID future

#### **PORTLAND BRANCH, Susan Marthens and Katie Raetz, Co-presidents**

AAUW Portland's reaction to the COVID-19 situation has varied—mostly as a result of the recent changes in the CDC guidelines. Our June 2021 board meeting was a virtual ZOOM gathering, and the decision was made to hold the August board meeting in-person if possible. This decision was made at a time when the number of cases was declining. In mid-July the branch held an outdoor coffee & pastries farewell for a significant branch member, Barbara Spencer, who is moving to San Diego with her husband to be closer to family. All went well; no one had to wear masks; a good time was had by all. Both the August board meeting and the annual branch picnic were held outdoors with in-person attendance.

We were hoping for an in-person meeting of the annual General Meeting scheduled for late September—but decided in mid-August that we would have to do the meeting via Zoom. All the board members thought this was a good decision, and we all agreed it was regrettable because it meant that in both 2020 and 2021, we could not introduce our new members to the rest of the branch. And we have new members!

#### **TIGARD AREA BRANCH, Ally Yoshioka and Ilga Ross, Co-presidents**

During these times, Tigard Area AAUW has made it possible to connect members when in-person contact was not feasible. Our branch learned new technological ways of communication and engagement. With activities resuming, Tigard Area branch has begun planning in-person hybrid meetings. Most branch members are vaccinated and eager to be in-person again and a few have rightful hesitations. We have also put significant recruiting efforts on a back burner due to the plan of hybrid meetings. As a smaller branch, we are moving forward safely with the option of individuals being present by Zoom for their comfort.

Ultimately, Tigard Area branch is a strong community of women who have become closer in the face of a pandemic. We have been able to continue having strong programs as ever. While social distancing and masking is still a reality, we look forward to being able to interact safely at an appropriate venue. The unending support of members and leadership has encouraged Tigard branch to stay positive.

## **Northeast District—Karen King, Director**

Northeast Oregon branches were looking forward to once again meeting in person, but with the surge of the Delta virus and low vaccination rates in much of eastern Oregon, especially Umatilla County, branches are once again considering Zoom meetings as an option.

**BAKER BRANCH**, Wanda Raffety and Heather Rudolph, Co-presidents

The big news is meetings are going from face to face back to Zoom. We were planning on face to face but I'm afraid we're back to Zoom. The Baker board will meet the end of August to discuss further.

**PENDLETON BRANCH**, Susan Doyle and Kathryn Chaney, Co-presidents

Pendleton Branch adapted to the changes COVID-19 brought to our community in 2020-21 with a successful year of programs and board meetings on Zoom. We had programs we might not have had in person, and we had large audiences that appreciated them. Board meetings were likewise better attended than they often were in person. Because of the current surge, we anticipate continuing with Zoom meetings for the foreseeable future. We had a few lunch gatherings outside during the summer and will continue as long as we can this fall. Until it is safe to meet again inside, we will continue adapting as best we can to keep our connections strong.

**WALLOWA COUNTY BRANCH**, Pat Hines and Susan Gilstrap

Wallowa County Branch has not much to report. There were not enough investment proceeds this past year in the Maxine Town scholarship fund, so we could not select a new recipient. The available funds were distributed to our past recipients who had reapplied. We will hope for a better outcome next year. We had one outdoor lunch meeting this spring. Hopefully, when COVID settles down, we will meet again.

## **Northwest District—Susan Wahlke, Director**

**ASTORIA BRANCH**, Liz Bartell, President

Throughout 2020-21, the Astoria branch emphasized its programs as an opportunity for members to gather virtually. Program topics varied. Members learned how to handle Zoom meetings. We sometimes had better numbers in attendance at those programs than we previously had at programs offered in-person. However, a few people who regularly or sometimes attended in person did not attend Zoom program meetings as often or not at all.

We adopted a family nominated by a local non-profit for Christmas; 16 of our membership participated. In recent years, we've done this only one other time and had minimal participation. This was much better. Members were generous. The ED of the non-profit was impressed with our level of giving, and grateful on behalf of her client-family for assistance. The project was arranged so that members could drop off gifts to a centrally located enclosed porch. No person-to-person contact was necessary.

It's my belief that the hiatus in branch activity and thoughts about resuming branch activity at a pre-COVID level spurred the Astoria branch board to ask questions among ourselves and then pose a variety of questions to the membership regarding our current and future functioning and capacity.

We had two all member planning meetings. We all talked and listened. Based on feedback, we set out activities for the year. We determined that we would persevere in 2021-22 by doing fewer projects. Some old favorites will be trimmed to better match capacity. At those meetings, the need for new branch leadership and members for project leadership was clearly expressed to attendees.

## **South District—Pam Shay, Director**

The Southern District members worked diligently to fulfill their mission, keeping their spirits up despite the haze of smoke and threats of COVID resurgence and wildfire. Our own Lakeview Branch was directly threatened by the recently contained Bootleg Fire. President Deb Watts, unable to contribute an article at this time, reports that everyone is safe. She writes “We are still battling fires down here...We have not met as a group yet. We will be getting together in September, hopefully.” Our thoughts are with our Lakeview members.

### **ASHLAND BRANCH, Catherine Lutes, President**

As I write this, Jackson County’s COVID numbers are going through the roof. With that in mind, what I thought was true a month ago, is not such a sure thing now. We found a new, larger, brighter, nicer venue for our meetings, but may not be able to use it until the tide turns on COVID numbers here in the county. So, we may be back to Zooming. Our membership is down by 30 members since last year primarily due to relocations, but we are still at a robust 158, with seven new members. Phone calls are going out soon to the “great non-renewed.” So, to Zoom or not to Zoom, that is the question.

In spite of not being able to do as much as we wanted for Rogue Valley women in need because of the pandemic, we still accomplished great things last year. Our public policy team wrote a groundbreaking report on Women on Corporate Boards, which can be viewed on our website (<https://ashland-or.aauw.net/>). Several state senators are currently looking at ways to make it into law.

### **GRANTS PASS BRANCH, Kathleen Ramirez and Nancy Tenove, Co-presidents**

This past year and a half, everyone has been affected by COVID and our branch is no exception. We lost members due to the decrease in AAUW activities and a lack of interest in participating in Zoom meetings. Other members moved to be closer to their families. Recently, with the availability of vaccines and the decrease in COVID cases, we had high hopes that we could entice new members to join and old members to rejoin. We were optimistic that we would be able to meet in-person for our branch meetings and interest groups. But now, as COVID numbers increase, we will continue to utilize Zoom and meet only in-person with masks and social distancing until cases decline and it is once again safe to meet together without constraints.

In early August, we organized a garage sale with profits funding a scholarship program for our local community college. All items were donated by our members. The event proved successful due to the volunteers’ hard work, flexibility and good humor which are trademarks of AAUW members. So regardless of COVID challenges, we strive to keep our branch strong and vital..

### **MEDFORD BRANCH, Carol Koszyk, President**

What is the same in this COVID world? For the Medford Branch, it is the joyful, dedicated way that our members help women and girls. For the 2021/2022 year, we awarded a total of \$20,050 (funded by our Phantom Tea Party): 3 - \$2500 scholarships for Southern Oregon University (SOU) students; 4 - \$2500 scholarships for Rogue Community College (RCC) students; 10 - \$45 AWSEM awards (Advocates for Women in Science, Education and Mathematics)for 6th - 8th graders; and 6 - \$350 scholarships to Academy (a week camp at SOU) for students completing 5th - 8th grade.

Since COVID limited in-person gatherings, we switched to Zoom meetings and that has affected our membership total. The reasons for current members not renewing were poor health, no in-person gatherings and not wanting to attend by Zoom. Our membership vice presidents have done an amazing job soliciting new members, though, and we do have an upcoming safe, outdoor event for new and continuing members that we are happy to offer! We are also utilizing committees for the positions of Program VP and Newsletter Editor.

# AAUW of Oregon

## Mission

AAUW of Oregon promotes advocacy, takes action to empower women and girls, and connects National AAUW with branch members.

## Value Promise

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

## Vision

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

## We're on the Web!

<https://aauw-or.aauw.net/>

## Facebook!

<https://www.facebook.com/aauworegon>

## Instagram!

[https://www.instagram.com/aauw\\_of\\_oregon/](https://www.instagram.com/aauw_of_oregon/)

## Pinterest!

<https://www.pinterest.com/aauworegon/saved/>