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**Branching Out** is published monthly by the Bradenton Branch of the [American Association of University Women](#), P. O. Box 14009, Bradenton, FL 34280-4099.

### **March President's Message**

Spring is in the air, members! According to author and teacher Ernest Agyemang Yeboach, "Only those with tenacity can march forward in March." AAUW FL has adopted the motto, "We're **Tenacious and Trailblazing**. Advocating equity for women and girls in Florida since 1929." Tenacity is the name of the game as the legislative session begins. **Lobby Day, March 17<sup>th</sup>**, is a perfect time for us to act. The newsletter includes details about Virtual Lobby Day and the bills on AAUW's legislative agenda

including discrimination in labor and employment, human trafficking education in schools, and Medicaid coverage.

During February's branch zoom with **Ashley Brown, CEO and President of the Women's Resource Center**, Ashley reminded us that we could assist the WRC's policy advocacy about **Benefits Cliff legislation, SB 414: Economic Self-sufficiency**. The Cliff effect refers to the sudden and often unexpected decrease in public benefits that can occur with a small increase in earnings. When lost benefits outpace a wage increase, many families "park" or fall off the cliff's edge, stalling progression in their jobs and careers. The Bill has been filed this session. We can encourage our representatives to support it.

For information about WRC volunteer needs click on <https://www.mywrc.org/support/form/> or contact **Lori Gentile**, Director of Client Services at [lgentile@mywrc.org](mailto:lgentile@mywrc.org) or call 941-366-1700.

As you can see, March is a perfect month to actively support AAUW's purpose. Members who responded to the survey questions I sent you recently all noted a commitment to the mission of AAUW as their primary reason for joining our branch. If you haven't sent your response or called me about it, please do. Every voice matters! I have responses from 45% of us. What do the remaining 55% think? The Board will share the results shortly.

Speaking of membership, renewal of membership for 2021-22 begins on March 16<sup>th</sup>. National dues have increased \$3, but if you are like me since I have been homebound so much, I haven't spent much on socializing! State and branch dues remain \$12 each.

Some of you have let us know that you "don't do Zoom." Like most of you I look forward being with you in person again. Until then, I hope to "see" you at our March meeting.

Marcia Hill

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**SAVE THE DATE**

**March 4** - 1:30pm Book Group. See notice below for details.

**March 16** - 6:45pm Branch Monthly Mtg. ( )

**March 17** - Virtual Lobby Day! See article below for details.

**April 16, 17,18** - Virtual Florida Leadership Conference. More information to come

**April 20** - 6:45pm Branch Monthly Mtg. (Report from Virtual FL Leadership Conf.)

**May 18** - 6:45pm (TBA).

[Note: Women of Achievement 2021 has been postponed until 2022.]

## **March Guest Speaker:**

**The Bradenton Branch of AAUW is pleased to have Janene M. Amick, Chief Executive Officer of the Manatee Performing Arts Center and the Florida Cultural Group, Inc., as our guest speaker this month.**

In addition to being one of our own branch's **Women of Achievement**, Janene has been recognized as a grassroots leader in her community. Janene is a Past President of the Bradenton Kiwanis Club, a member of the Manatee Community Federal Credit Union Board of Directors, a recipient of the Ed Hunzker Hospitality Leadership Award (2019), Lifetime Achievement Award (2017 Presidential award for community volunteer service), Bradenton Sertoma's Service to Mankind award (2017) as well as one of the BIZ (941) 2012 People To Watch. Janene earned the designation of CFRE (Certified Fund-Raising Executive) from NCCA in 2016, holds a Certificate in Non-Profit Management from Winchester Center, received her CAP (Chartered Advisor in Philanthropy) designation in January 2020 and is working towards an Executive Education Certificate in Nonprofit Management from Harvard University. She is a member of Bradenton Kiwanis, IWF (International Women's Forum) VFW Women's Auxiliary, AFP (American Fundraising Professionals), and the Bradenton Areas Cultural Advisory Committee.

## MARCH IS WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH!

AAUW is a partner with the NATIONAL WOMEN'S HISTORY ALLIANCE.  
Check out their latest issue of [Women's History](#)!

# Women's History

NATIONAL WOMEN'S HISTORY ALLIANCE | 2021



Extending the Women's Suffrage Centennial through 2021



ADVOCATE

# AAUW FL

## Virtual Lobby Day

17 March 2021  
10:00 - 11:30 a.m.

Join us in our mission to secure equity for women and girls.

- Identify State Legislators at: [myfloridasenate.com](http://myfloridasenate.com) and [Myfloridahouse.com](http://Myfloridahouse.com)
- Review Legislative Agenda at: [aauw-fl.aauw.net](http://aauw-fl.aauw.net)
- Sign-up To Become a Two-Minute Activist:  
<https://www.aauw.org/act/two-minute-activist/>

[REGISTER HERE](#)

AAUW Florida Public Policy Committee (PPC), has scheduled a **Virtual Lobby Day on Wednesday, March 17, 2021.**

After registering, you'll receive a confirmation email with the information needed to join the meeting.

## VIRTUAL LOBBY PLANS FOR THE DAY

- From 10 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. you'll hear speakers on our 2021 legislative agenda; participate in a short workshop on bill tracking; an information session on bills and the impact of their related committees; and get tips for virtual lobbying.
- We'll distribute a state Action Alert for the priority bills on our legislative agenda. Be sure to sign up as a [Two-Minute Activist](#) so you'll get the alert.
- For the rest of the day, branch members may meet with their legislators or call them to discuss our legislative agenda. Talking points will be available.

### How to prepare

What will it mean to engage in virtual lobbying?

- Identify your [legislators](#) and call or email them or their legislative aides to arrange meetings.
- Identify your [county legislative delegation](#) by AAUW branch.
- Provide information about AAUW. The state public policy committee will provide guidance.
- Sign up to be a [Two-Minute Activist](#).
- Review [AAUW Quick Facts](#).
- Review top priority bills on our legislative agenda that we're tracking and plan talking points.

#### – **Discrimination in Labor and Employment:** [HB107/SB256](#)

Prohibits employer from providing less favorable employment opportunities to employees based on their sex; provides civil penalties; prohibits employer from taking employment actions against employees; prohibits employer from engaging in certain activities relating to wages and benefits, and from requiring employees to sign certain waivers and documents; authorizes employer to confirm wage or salary history under certain conditions.

#### – **Human Trafficking Education in Schools:** [HB 519/SB 554](#)

Revising required health education in public schools to include information about dangers and signs of human trafficking; specifies minimum requirements in curriculum.

#### – **Medicaid Coverage:** [SJR 276](#)

Proposes new section in state constitution to requirement amending state Medicaid plan to provide Medicaid to those under age 65 with incomes equal to or below 138 percent of federal poverty level.

**We are tenacious and trailblazing —  
advocating for women and girls since 1881 and into the future!  
Together, we can achieve a vision of equal opportunity for all!**



## Virtual Leadership Conference and Annual Meeting April 16, 17, & 18

### *"Women Together in the Sunshine State"*

#### April 16th - Late Friday Afternoon

- Branches share their 2020 highlights.
- Announcement of Named Gift Awards.
- Hear keynote speaker, Janet Petro, Deputy Director, NASA, Kennedy Space Center - **"Adapting to New Challenges"**.

#### April 17th - Saturday Morning

- **Session on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion**
  - Review the DEI Tool Kit online at [aauw.org](http://aauw.org).
  - Learn how to start difficult conversations.
  - Explore key terms and concepts.
- **Session on Economic Security**
  - Define financial literacy for women at all stages of their lives.
  - Investigate resources.
  - Discuss policy implications.

#### April 18th - Sunday Morning

- View video of branch successes.
- Annual Meeting - Election of officers; review of proposed bylaw changes; and pros and cons of membership initiative.

There is **NO FEE** to participate in the Leadership Conference by Zoom.  
Registration will open March 15.  
Pre-Registration is required. You will be sent a Zoom invitation.

**Members and guests are welcome!**

**Watch for Updates!**

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For more information about AAUW Florida contact  
Patricia Dewitt, AAUW Florida President, [aauwfldewitt@gmail.com](mailto:aauwfldewitt@gmail.com)  
Bea Holt, AAUW Florida Director for Programs, [beaholt45@gmail.com](mailto:beaholt45@gmail.com)



## You May Be Interested...

### [Manatee County seeking public feedback on policy updates aimed at climate change.](#)

Following a series of policy revisions aimed at mitigating climate change issues, Manatee County is now accepting public comment on the updates.

Over the course of 18 months, county staff have worked with a consultant to create and suggest policy changes for the Manatee Board of County Commissioners to approve. The policies focus on minimizing the impact of sea-level rise, climate change, improving water quality and [other environmental safeguards](#).

Residents are invited to [review the 47-page document](#) and give feedback on the changes via an online portal by visiting [www.MyManatee.org/hazard](http://www.MyManatee.org/hazard). Public comment will be accepted until March 31.

### **Special Interest Groups**

Most Special Interest Groups are not yet meeting regularly.

### **No March Birthdays**



**The Book Group will meet Thursday, March 4th at 1:30 at Blackstone Park in Palmetto. Ruth Qualich will lead our discussion of "Education". Visitors are welcome to join us. For information call Carolyn Reynolds at 941-720-6575. .**



## ZOOM Meetings

We will continue to meet via ZOOM through the end of 20-21. To join the meeting, click on this link between 6:45 and 7:00 on February 16:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/6030763851>

If you are unfamiliar with using ZOOM, there is an excellent tutorial at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QOUwumKCW7M>.

Test your microphone and speaker when prompted. Make sure your camera video is enabled.

Please call or text Meg Newsome (941-704-2707) or Judy Griffin (941-323-4639) for individual assistance.

### **Bradenton Branch Leadership**

Website: <http://bradenton-fl.aauw.net>

Facebook Page: <https://www.facebook.com/AAUW-Bradenton-Branch-103388217778483>

#### ***Branch Leadership 2020-2021***

President - Marcia Hill: [mshanerhill@gmail.com](mailto:mshanerhill@gmail.com)

Past President - Judy Griffin: [jdthgriffin@gmail.com](mailto:jdthgriffin@gmail.com)

Director of Finance (acting) – Mickie McElroy: [mickiemc@gmail.com](mailto:mickiemc@gmail.com)

Secretary – Fay Murphy: [faymurph@aol.com](mailto:faymurph@aol.com)

Director for Programs – Judy Griffin: [jdthgriffin@gmail.com](mailto:jdthgriffin@gmail.com)

Director for Communications – Meg Newsome: [meggnewsome@outlook.com](mailto:meggnewsome@outlook.com)

Director for Public Policy – Mary Schmidt:

[mcsrealtor@aol.com](mailto:mcsrealtor@aol.com)

Scholarship Foundation President – Elaine Graham: [ebebeg@aol.com](mailto:ebebeg@aol.com)

Scholarship Information: [aauwbscholarship@gmail.com](mailto:aauwbscholarship@gmail.com)

Bylaws Chair/ Parliamentarian – Ruth Qualich:

[qualir@yahoo.com](mailto:qualir@yahoo.com)

Bridge Group: Lois Blevins at [lwblevins@msn.com](mailto:lwblevins@msn.com)

Book Club: Carolyn Reynolds: 941-720-6575

Just for Girls: [deeisnice@gmail.com](mailto:deeisnice@gmail.com)

*AAUW promotes equity for women, education and self-development over the life span, and positive societal change. AAUW values and seeks a diverse membership. Founded in 1881, membership is open to all graduates who hold an Associate or equivalent or higher degree.*



## **Important to Know**

***National AAUW***

<http://www.aauw.org/>

***Florida AAUW***

<http://aauwfl.aauw.net/>



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