



West Harris County Branch

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITY WOMEN

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March Newsletter deadline:

February 15, 2025

Stay informed!

Branch website: aauw-whc.org

National website: aauw.org

AAUW WEST HARRIS COUNTY BRANCH GENERAL MEETING

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 15th

from 9:30 a.m. to 12 p.m. at the

TRACY GEE COMMUNITY CENTER

One Woman, One Suit, and One Job can change the world. Dress for Success Houston (DFS Houston) will join us on Saturday, February 15th to celebrate its 26-year mission of creating change by equipping thousands of Houston area women each year with the resources needed to attain long-term employment and success - ultimately building skilled leaders in our community. You may know they provide a woman with a suit for an interview, but that is just the beginning of DFS-Houston's plans. DFS-Houston's 20+ programs offer women an opportunity to participate in workshops based on their individual needs, including job search skills, professional and career development, continuing education, and job retention. In 2024, DFS Houston provided services and resources to over 2,903 women all at no cost to their clients. Kelly Moneyhan, Director of Development for DFS Houston will be a part of the program, highlighting opportunities and ways we can all engage and support Houston Women on Their Paths Forward. Please see flyer on the next page about how to donate to DFS Houston.



Kelly Moneyhan

Kate Conlan, Program Committee member



DRESS FOR
SUCCESS
HOUSTON



DONATION DRIVE *benefiting*



DRESS FOR SUCCESS[®]
HOUSTON



WAYS TO MAKE AN IMPACT

Donate professional attire

High-need items are:
gently used handbags,
closed-toe shoes, and
plus-sized attire



purchase high-need items



donate to Her Path Forward

Contact Kelly Moneyhan at kelly@dfshouston.org with donation questions.



President's Message



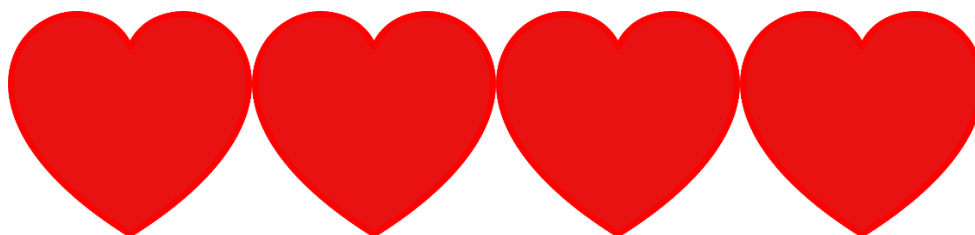
Happy Valentine's Day to everyone! I wish all of you much love and thanks for the great and generous time and money you all give to our WHC Branch and to AAUW National.

At the January Branch meeting, we had a most generous response to Ann Amador's request for facilitators to help junior and senior high school girls to find a good "College Match". Check with Ann for more information. Also, Kate Sullivan-Conlan presented her proposal for "Member Stories," so that we can learn about our fellow branch members as she gathers our bios and interests and contributions to our spheres of influences, professions and communities. Look for further information from Kate about this project.

Later this spring will be the AAUW National Fundraiser Style Show at Chico's. Helen Santire and Maureen Kraker have a real treat for all that attend!!!

On a sad note, keep in mind two members, Barbara Butler and Julia Ray, who we lost in January.

Jo Glidewell, President



HAPPY VALENTINE'S

THANK YOU, WEST HARRIS COUNTY BRANCH MEMBERS! CELEBRATING YOUR GENEROSITY IN 2024 AND LOOKING AHEAD TO 2025

THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITY WOMEN (AAUW FUNDS) EXTENDS ITS HEARTFELT GRATITUDE TO EACH OF YOU FOR MAKING 2024 A TRULY REMARKABLE YEAR! YOUR SUPPORT, DEDICATION, AND GENEROSITY HAVE PROPELLED OUR MISSION FORWARD AND EMPOWERED COUNTLESS INDIVIDUALS TO THRIVE THROUGH EDUCATION, EQUITY, AND ADVOCACY.

2024: A YEAR OF GENEROSITY AND IMPACT

****STYLE SHOW SUCCESS****

OUR ANNUAL STYLE SHOW WAS MORE THAN A SHOWCASE OF FASHION—IT WAS A CELEBRATION OF COMMUNITY! YOUR PARTICIPATION, TICKET PURCHASES, AND DONATIONS TURNED THIS EVENT INTO ONE OF OUR MOST SUCCESSFUL FUNDRAISERS. TOGETHER, WE NOT ONLY ENJOYED AN EVENING OF FUN AND INSPIRATION BUT ALSO STRENGTHENED OUR CAPACITY TO SUPPORT SCHOLARSHIPS AND OTHER PROGRAMS.

****CAMPAIGN OF GIVING****

YOUR GENEROSITY TRULY SHINED DURING OUR CAMPAIGN OF GIVING! THANKS TO YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS IN NOVEMBER AND DECEMBER, NATIONAL AAUW MATCHED OUR EFFORTS, DOUBLING THE IMPACT OF YOUR DONATIONS FOR THOSE TWO MONTHS. THESE MATCHED FUNDS WILL EXPAND OPPORTUNITIES FOR WOMEN AND GIRLS IN EDUCATION AND LEADERSHIP, FURTHERING THE CHANGE WE ALL WISH TO SEE. FINAL RAISED FUNDS WILL BE PROVIDED IN THE MARCH NEWSLETTER ONCE A TRUE ACCOUNTING IS RECEIVED FROM NATIONAL.

LOOKING AHEAD TO 2025:

BUILDING ON SUCCESS

YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT, ENCOURAGEMENT, AND PARTICIPATION WILL ENSURE THAT THE 2025 SEASON WILL WITNESS MORE SUCCESS AND GROWTH. TOGETHER, WE CAN EXPAND OUR EFFORTS TO PROVIDE SCHOLARSHIPS, ADVOCATE FOR EQUITY, AND DELIVER VITAL PROGRAMS THAT EMPOWER WOMEN AND GIRLS TO ACHIEVE THEIR DREAMS.

HERE'S HOW YOU CAN HELP:

- ATTEND AND VOLUNTEER: JOIN US AT OUR EXCITING 2025 STYLE SHOW WHERE SOME FORTUNATE PERSON WILL WIN A 3-DAY, 2-NIGHT STAY AT GALVESTON'S HISTORIC TREMONT HOUSE,
- FALL CAMPAIGN OF GIVING: SUPPORT OUR UPCOMING FALL CAMPAIGN OF GIVING TO ENSURE THE CONTINUATION OF REACHING GOALS THAT ARE SET IN OUR MISSION.
- ENGAGE AND ADVOCATE: HELP US ADVOCATE FOR POLICIES AND PROGRAMS THAT ADVANCE EQUITY FOR ALL.

EVERY HOUR VOLUNTEERED, EVERY DOLLAR DONATED, AND EVERY VOICE RAISED BRINGS US CLOSER TO REALIZING OUR MISSION. TOGETHER, WE CAN MAKE 2025 A YEAR OF EVEN GREATER PROGRESS AND IMPACT.

YOUR IMPACT MATTERS

TOGETHER, WE'VE MADE STRIDES TOWARD CLOSING THE GENDER GAP IN EDUCATION, PROMOTING EQUITY, AND FOSTERING LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES. YOUR INVOLVEMENT FUELS OUR WORK, CREATING MEANINGFUL CHANGES IN OUR COMMUNITIES AND BEYOND. FOR QUESTIONS OR HOW TO JOIN AAUW FUNDS COMMITTEE, CONTACT:

HELEN SANTIRE
(713) 468-6531
HELEN.SANTIRE@GMAIL.COM

MAUREEN KRAKER
(713) 498-3549
MAUREENKRAKER@GMAIL.COM

KATHY BLISS
(713) 851-2558
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THOMSEN-BAKER-TELFER UPDATE FROM A 2024 SCHOLARSHIP WINNER

Thomsen-Baker-Telfer Scholarship Fund is getting ready to begin another season of selecting scholarship recipients from HISD, Alief and Spring Branch school districts. In 2025, the Thomsen-Baker-Telfer Scholarship Fund amount for each scholarship will be \$4,000. The online application will be live on February 1st. If you know of any young women graduating from one of these school districts and planning to major in a stem field in college, please encourage them to review the scholarship requirements at <https://westharriscounty-tx.aauw.net/about/scholarships/2025-scholarship-application/> and submit an application starting February 1 at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/TBT-application>

Below is a letter we received from Fathia Fakoya, one of the three 2024 Thomsen-Baker-Telfer Scholarship winners, on her first semester at Texas A&M University (TAMU). It is rewarding to see how well she is doing and how involved she is in not just academic endeavors but also community outreach. As we receive updates from other Thomsen-Baker-Telfer recipients we will publish them.



Good morning.

I hope you are doing well. I am writing to give an update on myself for the fall semester. I apologize for sending this late; I intended to provide up-to-date information on my proceedings, and I can only be sure of the facts now.

My first semester at Texas A&M University started amazingly. I immediately had great social connections, as I met like-minded people and applied for great organizations. I am now a committed member of the Minority Association of Pre-Health Students (MAPS), which is a top-pioneer organization for minorities who are looking to enter any healthcare field. I am also a member of the 12th Can- a student-run food pantry that makes food accessible to the students and faculty of TAMU who need it.

My academic performance started great as well. The classes were challenging with a much heavier workload than I was used to, so it took me a while to get used to the flow of things. At the end of the semester, I passed all my classes and obtained a 4.0 GPA.

I look forward to a few more things next semester: such as my trip with MAPS to a medical conference called AMEC for exposure and networking with healthcare professionals, and my research assistant position with a public health professor who deals with rural occupational healthcare.

The first semester has come to an end, and I feel grateful to have been given a chance to experience it fully without much worry about my financial situation. I will continue to uphold excellence through my endeavors.

Thank you so much,

Fathia Fakoya.



West Harris County
Empowering Women in Houston
since 1976

MEMBERSHIP

Weaving in and out of imtemperate weather has been a challenge this month, but we managed to get out and stimulate our brain cells. Winter is harder on us: we don't want to slip and fall, we don't want to get freezing wet, and we like snuggling in our warm and cozy homes.

When I made phone calls to members to confirm RSVPs to the "Newer Members" event, ladies let me know about their current lives. Some were recovering from different ailments, some were caring for spouses, some were so busy that they texted me on the run. My conclusion was that we live fulfilling lives out of necessity or desire.

Let me know if you have any questions or ideas about our Branch. We are always looking for input and we believe in hearing from everyone who has joined AAUW.

Kris Bybee-Finley, Membership Vice President

AAUW WHC members get together



Newer members attend January Afternoon Delight



January meeting at Tracy Gee Community Center



Breanna Haile and Katy Vittoria – our guest speakers from the Hay Center



Soup before Books Dinner Party for book club leaders



Lunch with the Garden Divas



Garden Divas visited the Thomson + Hanson Stone House



Garden Divas get a demonstration on making a succulent bowl

The Texas Legislative Session



The 89th Texas Legislature's regular session runs from January 14 to June 2, 2025. Unique as a part-time legislature, both the Senate and House of the Texas Legislature meet every other odd-numbered year.

The nonprofit Texas Impact developed a YouTube series called “Faith in Democracy.” The newest 11-minute episode walks viewers through the stages of a regular Texas legislative session, using the metaphor of a symphony to describe the flow of legislative activity. The Legislative Calendar tracks the

“movements” of the session from Start through Slog, Split Screen, and Sprint, ending with the Coda of the veto period. The Legislative Calendar | Faith in Democracy | Episode 4

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t7uD1VCqSbs>

Other You Tube videos in the Texas Impact series “Faith in Democracy” give information on how the legislature works, how the Legislative sessions are structured, and much more. Most are only a few minutes long.

Become a Volunteer Deputy Voter Registrar

Online voter registration is only available in Texas when you obtain a driver’s license. In order to encourage voter registration, Texas law allows County Voter Registrars to appoint individuals, known as Volunteer Deputy Voter Registrars (VDVR), to assist eligible persons to vote. VDVRs operate under State rules and the supervision of the County Voter Registrar.

Becoming a VDVR is an easy and meaningful way to contribute to the democratic process and civic engagement. By registering voters, you ensure that more eligible people vote in elections, which promotes a diverse and representative democracy.

To be eligible to serve as a Volunteer Deputy Voter Registrar, you MUST:

- be at least 18 years of age
- be a citizen of the United States
- be a resident of Texas
- complete a training session in its entirety

For those who live in Harris County, the Harris County Tax Assessor-Collector is responsible for the duties of voter registration and VDVRs. The procedure for registering to be a VDVR in Harris County and attending VDVR virtual trainings is at <https://www.hctax.net/Voter/Deputy> Upon completion of the training, you will be deputized for the 2025-2026 term. Opportunities to register voters are available through Harris County, the League of Women Voters, and many other organizations.

If you live outside Harris County, check with your county website regarding completing the training which may use a study guide, in person class, or virtual classes.

Reminder: If you were trained previously, you must reapply and take the training again as ALL VDVR appointments expired at the end of 2024.

Georgia Kimmel, Public Policy Chair

FEBRUARY 2025 ACTIVITIES & INTEREST GROUP NEWS

Sharon Jorgeson, Activities Coordinator

Garden Divas



The Garden Divas are going to have a lesson on topiaries for our February adventure. The River Oaks Plant House, located at 1201 Birdsall, will host us on **Tuesday, February 4th**. From their flower delivery services to eye-catching topiaries for landscaping, River Oaks Plant House strives for pure excellence in every service offered. Furthermore, the patented topiary designs have become popular worldwide. They have supplied flowers and topiaries to Disneyland, Disney World, Warner Brothers, the White House, and

other highly distinguished clients. Their topiaries can also be found around the world! We will have lunch at Mary's Mediterranean Cuisine on Washington. Their menu is packed with authentic Lebanese dishes, all made from scratch with care. The address is 4500 Washington Ave, #200. We will carpool from the West side of town, leaving the Memorial City parking lot off Barryknoll at **9:30 a.m.** For divas living closer to River Oaks, I will send a list of potential carpool options the weekend before. If you are interested in joining us for this trip, please email me, samboone@gmail.com, and I will include you in the lunch count. Happy Gardening,
Susan Boone

Byway Birders

On **Saturday, February 1st**, the Byway Birders will go to Brazoria NWR and San Bernard NWR. We will meet at San Bernard NWR Bobcat Woods at **9:30 a.m.** We will have lunch at Dido's restaurant in Brazoria. Please contact Miriam Vyles at mvyles123@gmail.com or 713-501-7945 if you plan to go on the birding outing, for more information and if you would want car-pooling options.

Hiking Honeys

On **Thursday, February 20th**, our hiking destination will be the Houston Arboretum and Nature Center. The Arboretum was established in 1967 and includes five miles of nature trails winding through native prairie, savanna, wetland and riparian habitats. Field Stations are located throughout the site with information about local plants and wildlife. Ponds and wetland areas provide ample opportunities for wildlife sightings. Mary Ann McMordie will lead us through the Arboretum by combining a series of connecting trails. More information, including where to meet at the Arboretum and lunch plans, will be provided to the Hiking Honey roster members closer to the date of the hike. We will carpool from the lot on the south side of Barryknoll across from the movie theater in Memorial City Mall and plan on leaving at **9:30 a.m.** For those carpooling from Memorial City Mall and anyone planning to meet at our destination, please arrive by 10:00 am. Please contact Mary Ann McMordie at mamcmordie@gmail.com if you would like to join us.



Culture Group



Visit the Clayton Family History Center and Summer Home on **Friday, February 21st**.

After a long absence, the Culture Interest Group will return to our city's renown Genealogy Center in the Museum District. If you are interested in family history research, OR wish to explore the William Clayton Family history, OR tour their lovely summer home on Caroline Street, this is your trip! Starting as a small special collection of the Houston Public Library in 1921, the genealogy research center relocated in 1968 to land on the Clayton estate in Houston's historic Museum District. William Clayton was a Houston businessman and statesman. Built in 1916-17, the Clayton's Georgian Revival house features Tuscan columns, paneled pilasters, an elliptical fanlight over the front door, and fan lit dormers on the roof. The home became a Texas Historic Landmark in 1988. A special guest on our tour will be a descendant of the Clayton family, who will share stories of growing up in the area. There is no cost for this event except for lunch at Cleburne's Cafeteria at around 12:30 p.m.. Send an email to Elizabeth Martin (elizamart349@gmail.com) for more information or to sign up. We will meet at the Memorial City Parking lot on 12161 Barryknoll at **9:10 a.m.** where we will carpool to the Museum District. You can also meet us at the library at 5300 Caroline St, Houston, TX 77004 at 9:50am.

Metropolitan OPERA Opportunities

SAVE THE DATE— *Fidelio*

On **Saturday, March 15, at 11:55 a.m.** at Cinemark Theatre Memorial City, HD transmissions will continue to enthrall those attending opera performances at Cinemark Theatre on select Saturdays. *Fidelio*, the only opera written by Beethoven, was a failure when first performed in Vienna in 1805. It was completely reworked by Beethoven and was reintroduced after many revisions in 1814. This is Beethoven's only opera and features the Prisoners' Chorus and some remarkable arias. The music is powerful and impressive and should not be missed.

Three Ways to Get Tickets:

- Send a \$25. check at least 10 days before the opera to Rose Ennis, 1607 Prairie Mark Lane, Houston, TX 77077, or
- Purchase ticket at Cinemark Box Office upon arrival, or,
- Purchase on-line with Fandango.

Please let Diana Guarniere or Rose Ennis know in advance if you are planning on attending so we can send the synopsis of the opera to you.

guarniered@gmail.com or 832-465-5578, roseennis@att.net or 281-755-6483

Bridge Group



Fun and friendship await you in the active AAUW bridge group. If you are interested in getting on the sub list or would like more information, contact the coordinator. We meet on the **3rd Thursday (10:30 a.m.)** each month. Peg McNealy, 281.679.7299.

Great Decisions: Afternoon and Evening Groups

Great Decisions inside the loop started in January. For more information. Please contact Pat Thomsen patthom75@ATT.net or Linda Marlin. LMarlin505@gmail.com.

The 2nd and 4th Wednesday Group meets at 7:00 pm via Zoom. The meetings start in February. The first topic, American Foreign Policy at a Crossroad will be on **Wednesday, February 12th**. The second topic, U.S. Changing Leadership of the World Economy, will be on **Wednesday, February 26th**. For more information or to be placed on the contact list, please contact Willette Norman at 281-450-8875 or willetten@gmail.com.



Gourmet Groups – Classic and Nouveau Combined

The Gourmet group does not meet in February. Please join us in March for a St. Patrick's Day dinner. For further information, please contact the co-chairs: Barb Cook 713-705-7832 or Kris Bybee-Finley 304-610-8708.





Afternoon Contemporary Literature

We will meet on **Wednesday, February 5th at 1:00 p.m.** for lunch at Eagle's Trace, Austin Square/Waterloo Restaurant, 14703 Eagle Vista Drive. At 1:30 p.m., we will discuss Harry's Trees by Jon Cohen. Please contact Co-coordinator Linda Morgan at 281-989-6499, amorgan352@sbcglobal.net, or Co-Coordinator Cheryl Smith at 402-651-2445, ccherylesmile@gmail.com, for more information.

Contemporary Readers

On **Wednesday, February 5th at 1:00 p.m.**, we will discuss Banyan Moon by Thao Thai. Our group will meet at MDUMC West Campus, 13186 Memorial Drive, Room 462, in the TJ Maxx shopping center., For more information, contact Coordinator Sharon Pope, 713-376-0940, spope576@gmail.com or Co-Coordinator, Cathy Urquhart, 832-454-5017, curquhart80@gmail.com.

Enjoying History Book Club

We will meet on **Monday, February 10th at 1:30 p.m.** in the library at Tracy Gee Community Center. We will discuss Retracing the Iron Curtain by Timothy Phillips. Cindy Hickock will lead the discussion. Please contact Nancy Guilloud with any questions, nanguilloud@aol.com.

Evening Contemporary Literature

Please join us on **Monday, February 3rd at 5:00 p.m.** at Los Tios Restaurant on Kirkwood and Memorial. We will discuss the Book of Queens: The True Story of the Middle Eastern Horsewomen Who Fought the War on Terror by Pardis Mahdavi. Pat Farnell will lead the discussion. Please contact Coordinator Carole Ballew at caroleballew@yahoo.com or call 832-656-0775 for more information.

Mystery Book Club

We will meet on **Tuesday, February 18th at 1:30 p.m.** at the Tracy Gee Library to discuss White Heat by M.J. McGrath. The discussion leader is Kris Bybee-Finley. Please contact Pat Pease, 713-824-1681, popease@aol.com, or Kris Bybee-Finley, 304-610-8708, brazitku@gmail.com for more information.

Zoom Eclectic Book Group

ZOOM Eclectic Book Group will meet on **Thursday, February 20th at 2:30 p.m.** to discuss The Bear and The Nightingale by Katherine Arden. Willette Norman will lead the discussion. All meetings occur on ZOOM. Members and guests are welcome to join us for one or all the books. Please contact Carolyn Morris carolynmorris16@gmail.com 713-560-1889 or Pat Thomsen, Co-coordinator, patthom2@sbcglobal.net, 713-302-8899.



FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

Cynthia Behelfer	Feb 04	Fatima Abdulla	Feb 12
Julia Dombrowski	Feb 04	Sheila Jaynes	Feb 12
Diane Clarke	Feb 05	Karen LaVelle	Feb 16
Sharron Maler	Feb 07	Janis Groves	Feb 20
Marietta Hostak	Feb 10	Elaine White	Feb 21
Ann Teague	Feb 10	Judith Peterson	Feb 22