

*The American Association of University Women advances gender equity
for women and girls through research, advocacy and education*



Wilzetta Bell and
Pam Meyers
Co-Presidents
Volume 54

Shirley Breeze
Program Vice President
December 2019

Carolyn Herkstroeter and
Carolynn Henning
Membership Co-Vice Presidents
Pat Kelemen, Editor

BOARD MEETING

The next board meeting will be held in January 2020.

HOLIDAY EVENT



The annual Holiday Event will be held from 2-4 pm on Sunday, December 15. It will be in the Parlor of the First Presbyterian Church in Ferguson. Entertainment will be provided by keyboard player Bob Row and singer/trumpet player Brian Casserly. As usual, a buffet of light food will be served. Come and enjoy the festivities.

PRESIDENTS' LETTER by Pam Meyers

December is here and the joyous holidays are upon us! Before we get too distracted trying to find the perfect gifts for our family and friends we should remember and appreciate the women who advanced the gender equity this month.

- December 1, 1955, Rosa Parks refused to give up her seat on the bus to a white passenger.
- December 10, 1869, Wyoming became the first territory to grant women the right to vote.
- December 25, 1806, Martha Wright, a feminist, abolitionist and signatory was born. She was a close friend of Harriet Tubman and harbored fugitive slaves in the Underground Railroad. Wright called the first women's rights convention in Seneca Falls in 1848.

The new year of 2020 will be an exciting time for everyone because of the Presidential Election, as well as the state of Virginia who will hopefully vote to pass the Equal Rights Amendment.

For all the Ferguson Florissant AAUW members, family and friends, may your holidays be a time to be joyful, a time to reflect, and a time to be at peace.

--Pamela Meyers, Co-President

Contact us by e-mailing Membership Co-Vice Presidents Carolyn Herkstroeter at herkcmw@att.net or Carolynn Henning at carhenning@att.net.

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Happy December birthdays are:

December 9, Lisa Taylor

December 14, Myra Talkington

GIFT WRAPPING

This branch will be gift wrapping at Barnes & Noble in Ladue on December 8, 23, and 24. This is our most successful and important fund raiser. If you have not chosen a time to wrap gifts, please contact Pat Kelemen at 314-504-3861 (cell) or pkelemen@hotmail.com. There are openings on all three days.

In addition, Interbranch Council (IBC) will be gift wrapping on December 21 and 22. AAUW members from all five local branches, including Ferguson Florissant, will be wrapping.

PUBLIC POLICY

Two members found this article on the Gender Pay Gap and thought it was appropriate to include in this newsletter. It was published in **USA Today** on Tuesday, October 29, 2019 on page 3B. It was written by Lyle Daly.

Despite improvements over the last 40 years. Women still earn substantially less than men. It is an issue that every state has in common—all of them have a pay disparity between men and women.

But the severity of the issue varies by state. When you compare the gender pay gap statistics in each state, there's a difference of more than 20 percentage points between those at the top and bottom of the list.

1. Delaware

Women's median salary: 79.35% of men's.

The state has worked hard to eliminate the gender pay gap, but most notably through a 2017 bill that banned employers from requesting previous salary information from prospective employees.

The state also made secrecy about wages illegal, meaning employers can't disallow employees discussing their wages. This pay transparency lets employees know if they're being paid more or less for the same job as a co-worker. That makes it easier to spot biases.

2. Florida

Women's median salary: 79.21% of men's.

Although Florida has the second-lowest pay gap, some of the reasons behind this aren't positive changes.

Wages in Florida have been declining for a decade, but men's median wages have decreased more than women's. A smaller wage gap isn't beneficial if it's because everyone is making less money.

To the state's credit, it had a 6.3% increase in women working in professional and managerial positions from 2004-15. However, with a women's labor force participation of 53.1%, Florida ranks 42nd in the United States.

3. Arizona

Women's median salary: 78.13% of men's.

In Arizona, more women are taking on professional and managerial positions.

Education levels have also risen, with 29% of women in Arizona age 25 or older having at least a bachelor's degree as of 2018. That may seem low, but it's seven percentage point higher than it was in 2000. Although college can be expensive it's

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also one of the best ways to increase your earning potential and be successful financially.

Despite that good news, Arizona also has one of the same problems as Florida—a low women's labor force participation rate of just 53.9%.

4. Maryland

Women's median salary 78.04% of men's.

Like Delaware, Maryland recently enhanced its laws on equal pay. In 2016, it passed the Equal Pay for Equal Work Act, which improved the protections offered by Maryland's previous income equality law.

The Equal Pay for Equal Work Act banned wage secrecy, making Maryland another state where employees are free to share salary information without worrying about repercussions at work. It also prohibits what's known as steering, a practice where employers provide less favorable employment opportunities based on an employee's sex or gender identity.

5. Vermont

Women's median salary: 77.58% of men's.

Vermont is notable in that it has both the fifth-smallest gender pay gap and the sixth-highest women's labor force participation rate.

Women in Vermont tend to have higher than average levels of education, with 38.4% of those 25 or older having at least a bachelor's degree. The state is also known for being progressive—in 2013, it had the second-highest percentage of women in its legislature at 40.6%.

Honorable Mentions

There were two areas of the United States that had smaller gender pay gaps than any states:

Washington, D.C. (88.69%)

Puerto Rico (101.42%)

You read that right—Puerto Rico is the one part of the United States where women have higher median salaries than men. This is in part due to their level of education. In Puerto Rico, 29% of women ages 25 or older had at least a bachelor's degree, compared with only 20% of Puerto Rican men.

TUESDAY AFTERNOON BOOK GROUP

Tuesday Afternoon Book Group will meet at Cannolis at 11:30 on December 10. This meeting will combine a discussion of *The Long Road Home* by Danielle Steel, led by Myra Talkington, and sharing favorite Christmas stories and poems. Lillian Boly will be the hostess. Contact Lillian to let her know if you will attend.

AFTERNOON AT THE MOVIES

The next movie will be in January 2020.

CALENDAR

December 8—Gift Wrapping at Barnes & Noble

December 10—Tuesday Afternoon Book Group

December 15—Holiday Event

December 23 and 24—Gift Wrapping at Barnes & Noble

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