**AAUW Cedar Falls-Waterloo Annual Reports 2024-2025**

**OFFICERS**

**Co-Presidents**–Nancy Hasenwinkel & Maureen White

It was a busy and productive year for our branch. As co-presidents, we shared responsibilities.

**Nancy**

* Early in our term, Maureen White and I went to Veridian Credit Union to sign our accounts.
* Early in the fall of 2024, I met with Maureen, Ardelle Brown, and Susan Langan to discuss creating a new Facebook page for our branch. Susan and I created this new page and are the administrators. Through the year we have posted new entries and tried to encourage members to find and join this new group at AAUW Cedar Falls-Waterloo Iowa.
* Later in the fall, I worked with Maureen to submit our annual survey to National AAUW. This is a new requirement for branches, and helps determine our Five-Star Rating. We subsequently learned that our branch had met the criteria for a Four-Star Rating.
* Throughout the year I attended two Zoom meetings for Iowa AAUW Presidents and a webinar from National AAUW.
* During the spring of 2025, I began to contact several independent insurance agents for quotes on Directors & Officers and Liability Insurance policies for our branch.

**Maureen**

* Late summer work involved meeting with our webmaster Marcy Seavey and newsletter editor/past-president Karen Agee regarding website updates, meeting with Mary Dove to make updates for the Yearbook, and meetings to plan for the Kickoff. A new project involved compiling important information for a branch administration document for our future presidents.
* In early fall I began meeting with Women of Action & the Northern Iowa Student Government (NISG) president re: Senate District 38 debate planning for the November election. Our branch was again a co-sponsor of the debate.
* In late 2024-early 2025 I attended several meetings with branch and Way Up Board member Doreen Hayek and AAUW Iowa co-president Kim Folkers regarding AAUW Iowa collaboration or sponsorship of the annual Way Up Conference for women in higher education. Marcy Seavey and Pat Higby (AAUW Iowa co-president) attended one meeting as well. Way Up requested that AAUW Iowa assume official hosting of the conference due to concerns about diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) restrictions on universities imposed or under consideration that would limit UNI’s continued involvement.
* I attended the March 18, 2025 AAUW Iowa Lobby Day.
* Our branch was asked to host the 2025 AAUW Iowa State Conference and annual meeting, which we agreed to do, as well as provide volunteers to assist as needed.
* 2025 was the centennial year of the founding of the Cedar Falls branch. Susan Langan, Ardelle Brown, Mary Dove, and I planned and presented a power point at the April annual meeting highlighting events and people from the past 100 years. Mary also created a centennial booklet for our members.
* Throughout the 2024-25 member year, I attended the monthly AAUW Iowa branch president Zoom meetings. In addition, I viewed AAUW webinars on a variety of topics and attended a “Strengthening Your Organization’s Culture,” workshop at the Waterloo Center for the Arts.
* The FY 2025 Annual Branch Survey was completed by Nancy and I and submitted in June 2025. The names of 2025-26 branch officers were reported to AAUW prior to June 30.

**Co-Vice Presidents for Membership** – Jane Close and Bonnie Smith

The Cedar Falls-Waterloo branch is the largest in Iowa (2/1/25 report from national) with 75 members, up from 72 in 2024.

The Annual Fall Kickoff is planned by VPs of Membership and Program and the rest of the board members. It was held in August 2024 at the Waterloo Library. Thirty-five members and eight guests were in attendance. There were six new members as a result.

Recruitment continued throughout the year. Past due members were contacted and five members chose not to renew. AAUW business-size cards were used to help with new member recruitment. Cards were distributed to board members and all other members, as well as used at other events. They were convenient, easy to use and fairly effective. All prospective members were contacted in person, by email and/or given or mailed a branch brochure.

There were two college/university (C/U) members, University of Northern Iowa and Allen College (university). Contact is needed to let them know why they should continue their memberships. Hawkeye Community College was a past member and should be contacted to rejoin.

**Co-Vice Presidents for Program**–Ardelle Brown and Mary Dove

2024-2025 programs theme – More Hot Topics

September 23 Speaker: Dr. Emily Boever, MD FACOG

Title: Trends and Updates in Iowa Women’s Health

Attendance: 42 Members: 35 stayed for the meal, 7 who attend for the speaker only

Place: Diamond Event Center

Caterer: Diamond Event Center; cost $18, we charged $20

October 28 Speaker: Joana Lwin (Stella Lwin and Re Mo)

Title: Empowering Refugee and Immigrant Youth (RIYO)

Attendance: 39 members;

37 stayed for the meal, 2 members attended for the speaker only

A new member came and joined the meal.

2 members couldn’t stay for the meal but took their meal home.

Place: Diamond Event Center

Caterer: Diamond Event Center; cost $18, we charged $20

November 25 Speaker: Blackhawk County Sheriff Tony Thompson

Title: Any Place but Here: The Uncomfortable Convergence Between Mental Illness

and the Criminal Justice System

Attendance: 46 in attendance: 40 members ate; 6 members attended for the

program only

Place: Diamond Event Center

Caterer: Diamond Event Center; cost $18, we charged $20

January 25 Speakers: Karen Agee lead an icebreaker. Public policy director Nancy

Henderson provided a legislative update. State AAUW Co-

Presidents Pat Higby and Kim Folkers shared about the state initiative, We Are Stronger Together.

Place – YWCA Black Hawk County, 425 Lafayette Street, Waterloo

Attendance - We had 35 on the list and we served 30. Bags and cups were

available for left overs.

Caterer – Rach’s Kitchen, We charged $15 per member to eat

February 22 Speaker: Dr. Sarah Diesburg

Title: Ramifications of Artificial Intelligence

Place – YWCA Black Hawk County, 425 Lafayette Street, Waterloo

Attendance – We had 44 on the list and we served 42.

The tables were told when to go to the buffet, with the speaker going first. Everyone served themselves with some help of some members.

Caterer – Rach’s Kitchen, We charged $15

March 22 Speaker: Dr. Peerman

Title: Leadership is tested in moments of uncertainty, but our ability to lead is

not defined by circumstances – it’s defined by our unwavering strength,

our commitment to what matters, and the power of our relationships. This

session will explore how to lead with confidence, support one another, and

use our collective influence to drive meaningful change, no matter the

obstacles ahead.

Place: Wartburg College – The Waverly AAUW branch invited to brunch

Attendance: 21 from our branch

Caterer: Wartburg College – cost $15

April 28 Speaker: Celebrating 100 years as a branch! PowerPoint presentation highlighting 100 years. Narrators: Susan Langan, Maureen White, Ardelle Brown, and Mary Dove. History Highlight of 100 years booklet was handed out. The Annual Meeting included Named Gift Honoree, Election of Officers, and recognition of members and officers.

Place: Diamond Event Center

Attendance: 44 members attended; 42 members were served a meal. 2 members

came for the program only.

Caterer: Diamond Event Center – cost $18 we charged $20

This was our first year holding our monthly meetings at the Diamond Event Center. We were pleased with the support, service, and quality of the meal. We were not charged a rental fee. Each meal cost $18 with gratuity included. Our branch was not charged a rental fee for our January and February meetings that were held at the YWCA thanks to the generosity of member Ardelle Brown. Catering for Jan/Feb was done by Rach’s Kitchen We charged $15 a meal.

We were informed in May 2025 that the per meal cost charged by the Diamond Event Center would raise to $20 starting in September 2025.

**Fundraising**–Maria Murphy and Lori Schneider, Co-Vice Presidents for Fundraising

Fundraising profit 2024 through April 2025 Part 1

Aug: $329.30 (Pizza Ranch)

Sep: $362 (Rach's Meals)

Oct: $460.43 ($170.43 Pizza Ranch; $290 Rach's Meals)

Nov: $674 ($200 game day; $474 Rach's Meals)

Jan: $347 (Rach's Meals)

Feb: $427 ($228 Pizza Ranch; $199 Rach's Meals)

Mar: $117 (Rach's Meals)

Apr: $346 ($165 Pizza Ranch; $181 Rach's Meals)

Total: $3062.73 ($1970 Rach's Meals; $892.73 pizza ranch; $200 game day)

Part 2 May and June 2025

May: $2,236 (plant sale, including donations to scholarship fund made at plant sale)

Total Parts 1 and 2: $5,298.73 ($1970 Rach's Meals; $892.73 Pizza Ranch; $200 game day; $2236 plant sale).

Fundraising Ideas for 2025-2026 (to be finalized later in the summer)

1. Frozen Dinners by Rachael—September, November, and March

* Meals delivered on day of our monthly meetings at Diamond Event Center.
* Estimated profit - $1,200

1. Texas Road House – Dine In or To Go- 3pm- 8pm, Receive 10% sales – Date to be determined. We do not work at this event (show flyer)

* Estimated profit- $160

1. Cedar City Creamery - % of sales for ice cream and treats. Date to be determined

* Estimated profit $100

1. Butter Braids - Lori will add details- $200
2. Game Day – Have at Prairie Wind Conference room for more space to invite more people.

* Estimated profit - $400

1. Dairy Queen – 10% sales for ice cream and treats, date to be determined.

* Estimated profit $100

1. UNI Student project to fundraise with Mother/Daughters—Style show through the Years. Working with University staff member Gayle Pohl. Event promoted and executed by students for class requirement.

* Date to be determined – Estimated profit – over $1,000

1. Plant /garden related items Sale

* May 2026 – date to be determined

Estimated profit - $2,000

**Public Policy**–Nancy Henderson, Public Policy Director

My plan for our branch this year was to have information about some public policy issue at each of the branch meetings and in the branch newsletter. At our Kick-Off Event in August, I gave a presentation on how women’s rights have changed since 1970 and then provided information on AAUW’s public policy priorities, the 2024 Voter Guide, the Two-Minute Activist, and the Iowa legislature.

I made presentations and/or had information posted at the branch meetings on the following:

September: AAUW’s positions on reproductive rights; Voters Guide; AAUW Public Policy Issues

October: Mental Health Issues; Iowa constitutional ballot initiatives

November: Tribute to Lilly Ledbetter and the Equal Pay Act/Equal Pay Day

January: Information on the beginning of the Iowa legislative session

February: Updates on Iowa legislative session

March: Updates on Iowa legislative session

I wrote articles for the branch newsletter on the following topics:

September: Reproductive Rights; Information about the November General Election and absentee voting

October: Voting Information for the General Election as well as the ballot initiatives for the state of Iowa.

November: Honoring Lilly Ledbetter and the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act of 2009

January: Special Election on Tuesday, January 28 for Black Hawk County; Legislative

Public Forum; Date for upcoming Iowa Lobby Day

February: Iowa Legislative Updates; Legislative Public Forum; Date for upcoming AAUW Iowa Lobby Day

March: AAUW Lobby Day at the Iowa State Capitol/AAUW Iowa Equal Pay Day; How to Take Action: Two-Minute Activist, 5Calls, Iowa legislative session updates email

April: How to Take Action; Keeping Track of Legislative Action

Emails about elections were sent to all branch members. These emails included information about the November 2024 General Election and the several special elections that were held for various county and local offices during the year.

Emails and newsletter articles provided information about the Cedar Valley Legislative Public Forums. The Forums are meetings where the public can ask questions of the state legislative members who attend. Twelve of the surrounding area legislators are invited to attend although only five of them regularly attend. AAUW Cedar Falls – Waterloo is a cosponsor of the Forums, along with about 25 other community organizations. The forums, held while the Iowa Legislature is in session, are held at Van G. Miller Adult Learning Center of Hawkeye Community College on a Friday from 4:30-6:30pm. The sessions are available for live streaming on Facebook. AAUW members are encouraged to attend each Forum.

The 2025 topics included:

January 24: Fiscal Policy

February 21: Hunger

March 7: Education

April 4: Health Care

Candidate forums were also held for the general election and for special elections. AAUW members were notified of these events via emails and were encouraged to attend.

Information about the AAUW Lobby Day was sent to all members who were encouraged to attend. Several members signed up to attend Lobby Day on February 12; unfortunately, it was canceled due to inclement weather. Three members of the branch were able to attend the rescheduled Lobby Day held on March 18.

Finally, during the state of Iowa legislative session, I monitored the proposed bills and kept track of those that were deemed of interest to women and girls. I updated this spreadsheet daily and shared it at least once a week with the branch board members and any others who were interested. Members were encouraged to contact their legislators to either oppose or support bills. We were in hopes that this year legislation to fund hygiene products in public schools would be approved. The legislation passed by a House Education subcommittee as well as an Appropriations subcommittee, but it did not advance any further in this session.

**Diversity Director**–Susan Langan

1. July 2024-Distributed the rest of the Reproductive Kits from the Juneteenth Celebration table to the Allen Women’s Center in Waterloo.
2. In February, I watched the national AAUW webinar, "Table Talk: Tips for Bold Conversation."
3. In April, I presented "Difficult Conversations: Tips to Be Bold" at thez
4. AAUW Iowa State Conference. This presentation is based on a webinar from the AAUW National Inclusion and Equity Committee that was shared in January. It covered five principles that offer tips and insights on navigating tough conversations, finding common ground, and building stronger community connections. Table talk discussion, practice, and questions were included.
5. Viewed the Iowa Human Trafficking webinar in May. Participated in monthly AAUW Diversity Directors meetings with Suzanne Young Mercer.
6. National Inclusion and Equity Committee Annual Goals

Goal #1: Increase resources available to Diversity Officers

Goal #2: Develop, present, and launch two additional “plug-and-play” programs and associated webinars for branch and state affiliate use.

Goal #3: Strengthen collaboration between other AAUW Committees and Task Forces and the Inclusion and Equity Committee for shared events and communication.

Goal #4: Better publicize DEI events and accomplishments.

Goal #5: Create and solidify internal training and management

processes for Inclusion and Equity Committee Members.

**Scholarship Committee–** Marilyn Drury, Chair

2024-2025 Committee Members: Mary Dove, Nancy Henderson, Linda Morgan

1. The Scholarship Guidelines and Application were reviewed and approved with the requirement for a 2.5 grade point average by applicants added to the Scholarship Application.
2. Late in 2024, the Scholarship Application was made public. Working with representatives from each of the institutions, (Allen College, Hawkeye Community College, and the University of Northern Iowa), the Application or information about the Application was distributed. Additional information distribution included the local AAUW newsletter and website, as well as announcements in Cedar Valley regional newspapers.
3. Thirteen completed applications were received and two awards were approved for the 2025-26 academic year. Those awards went to:

* Naomi Macke from Cedar Falls, Iowa. Naomi is attending Hawkeye Community College (HCC). She has a cumulative grade point average of 4.0 She has worked in health care for 17 years and plans to complete her RN at HCC this next year—with the eventual goal of a BSN or MSN.
* Shelby Jenkins from Waterloo, Iowa. Shelby is a first generation, non-traditional student who has been studying Liberal Arts, emphasizing Social Work, at HCC. With a 2.5 grade point average, she plans to transfer to the University of Northern Iowa this fall to study social work and psychology. Her goal is to earn both a BA and an MA in social work.

1. Each award is $2000 with $1000 being paid for each semester beginning fall 2025, contingent on each recipient continuing to meet the requirements. The Scholarship Committee thanks all the members of the organization for their generosity in contributing to the fund.
2. For the 2025-2026 year, the Scholarship Committee will be composed of Marilyn Drury (Chair), Linda Morgan, Nancy Henderson, Lorene Wellnitz, and Susan Langan.

**COMMUNITY ACTION PROJECTS**

**Cedar Valley Discuss and Discover Diversity (CV3D) Book Discussion Group**–Judy Beckman, Ardelle Brown, and Mary Dove, Chairs

CV3D had another successful year discussing books that focused on diversity and strong women characters was accomplished. CV3D averaged 12 people at our monthly discussions. This year’s co-chairs were Ardelle Brown, Dr. Judy Beckman, and Mary Dove. CV3D meets the second Monday of the months from September to November and January to May from 4:30-6:00 in the conference meeting room at the Cedar Falls Public Library. Some discussions were offered as a hybrid; in person or Zoom. Participants in the monthly meetings are welcomed whether or not they have read the selection.

* September 9 - The Women by Kristin Hannah. Discussion Leader Gloria Tollefson
* October 14 - Lessons in Chemistry by Bonnie Garmas. Discussion leader Lorene Wellnitz
* November 11 - A Woman of No Importance: The Untold Story of the American Spy Who Helped Win World War II by Sonia Purnell. Discussion leader Kathryn Rogers
* December – off
* January 13- Crow Mary by Kathleen Grissom. Discussion leader Mary Dove
* February 10- Grandma Gatewood Walk: The Inspiring Story of the Woman Who Saved the Appalachian Trail by Ben Montogomery. Discussion leader Ardelle Brown
* March 10- Hello Beautiful by Ann Napolitano. Discussion leader Anne Schuessler
* April 14 - A Woman's Life is A Human Life: My Mother, Our Neighbor, and the Journey from Reproductive Rights to Reproductive Justice by Felicia Kornbluh. Discussion leader Maureen White.
* May 12 - Finding Me: A Memoir by Viola Davis. Discussion leader Joan Ogden

Thank you to those who have volunteered to lead a discussion. We are so thankful for all the support CV3D receives from our membership. We are especially grateful and indebted to Ardelle Brown who always has our backs.

**Gotcha Covered. Period.–**Amy Hoyer and Maureen White, Co-Chairs

1. In the fall,a folder containing procedural information, information related to period poverty, expense reimbursement forms, and sheets for recording items purchased, amounts, cost, etc. was provided to each of the members who work with this project.
2. Information about our project was shared in the fall of 2024 with the Keokuk branch and later in the 2025 with the Loess Hills branch.
3. Maureen met with a student at Cedar Falls High School who started working with the district in 2022 on a project to provide period products in the bathrooms as a project for a Girl Scout Gold Award. We discussed ways to coordinate our efforts and agreed to keep her informed about legislation to provide period products in public school bathrooms.
4. Maureen emailed Representative Timi Brown-Powers regarding sponsoring legislation requiring providing period products in schools and allocation of funding for them and was in contact with other legislators throughout the session.
5. House Education Committee leaders were emailed re: HF 333 and HF 543. HF 543 was approved by the House Education Committee, renumbered and referred to the House Appropriations Committee. Funding for period products in public school restrooms was not in the final appropriations bill adopted by the legislature, therefore, our branch will continue this project for the 2025-26 school year.
6. Total donations specifically for Gotcha Covered. Period. this year were $239. The total expenses for 2024-25 were $832, $717.62 of which was for the Waterloo Community School District.

**Promoting Global Awareness/Great Decisions**–Gloria Tollefson, Chair

Our group is in its 16th year of reading and discussing “Today’s Most Critical Issues” using the Great Decisions program. We meet at the CF Public Library every third Tuesday evening of the month…except during the summer. Attendance has been 14 to 18 members. Eight AAUW members are active while 14 are from the community. (One member has only missed twice in 16 years!)

An order is made in November permitting members to purchase the new book at a group rate. The Cedar Valley United Nations Association reimburses us for the DVD which accompanies the program and is used every meeting, so there is no cost to our branch.

The library fully supports this program. But now I can only make reservations three months ahead. I am no longer putting information in the newspaper as they do not want the room overcrowded and the larger room does not promote discussion. Members changing their email addresses at different times has made group mailings difficult.

**STUDY/INTEREST GROUPS**

**Literature Discussion Group**–Joan Bunkofske, Facilitator

Literature group meets third Monday of the month at the home of Joan Bunkofske at 1:30 p.m. We meet at the same place for the convenience of the members. One member reviews a book she thinks everyone would like to read. Due to many reasons, we have eight members currently. We are looking for more readers.

**Women in Motion**–Jane Close and Bonnie Smith

WIM is a social group for members to get to know each other in a small informal setting. We met for Women & Wine on fourth Wednesdays (W4WW) at 5:30 p.m. at the OP on University Avenue for conversation, appetizers and/or dinner. The group met seven (7) times throughout the year. Attendance ranged from two (2) to eight (8) members. There was some very frigid weather in the winter that kept members at home. Ten (10) members participated at least once during the year. Plans are to continue WIM in 2025-26, but perhaps with a similar or different activity.

**CO-SPONSORED PROGRAMS**

**Cedar Valley United Nations Association**–Maureen White

The chapter has diminished in membership and is less active than in previous years. The only program was held in September, 2024 which was the annual meeting. A UNI nursing student originally from Pakistan, Muhammad Tulha, shared the story of his journey from medical school in Ukraine when Russian attacked to finally making his way to UNI.