

December 1, 2025

# THE MONTHLY MONITOR

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF AAUW ST. CLOUD (MN) AREA BRANCH



## Saint Cloud Area (MN) Branch Memo From The Board

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Hello all,

We have wonderful Fundraiser results to share with you! We have a profit of \$9,579.90 to allocate to our charitable projects. Last year we had \$10,893.14; however, we generally pick up some corporate donations in December – and we’re pitching the Optimist Club in January. So the total will be going up.

AAUW Minnesota and AAUW National have asked all of us to participate in a “push-back” to the government’s closing of the Department of Education. National has already done the following:

- Joined a multi-organization statement to Congress calling on lawmakers to reclaim their authority and block this unprecedented transfer of ED responsibilities. Read it [here](#).
- Joined shared disability rights principles affirming that ED must remain an independent, fully staffed and funded agency to oversee the federal education rights of children and youth with disabilities. IDEA and Section 504 guarantee students with disabilities a free, appropriate public education and protection from discrimination. Weakening ED’s capacity to enforce these laws would put those rights – and the resources schools need to uphold them – at risk. Read the principles [here](#).
- Action alert coming early next week. Our members will be asked to contact Congress and urge immediate oversight and intervention. Please watch for it and be ready to share widely.

It’s time to start considering whether you can help keep this Branch going. Yes, I’m talking about serving on our Board of Directors for the coming term: 2026-2028. The current term (2024-2026) ends on June 30, 2026 for everyone on our current Board. Since many are choosing to step down, we need folks to step up! Please see the Board flyer in this issue of the Monthly Monitor, and please use the online Nomination form. We need to vote on the new board at our May meeting, so we have to get going on this! Here’s a list of all the positions:

## December Program Details

**Date:** Tuesday, December 9, 2025

**Time:** 5:30–7:30 p.m.

**Location:** Alumni Room, Atwood Memorial Center

**Registration Deadline:** December 2, 2025

Join the SCSU AAUW Student Organization for an engaging and impactful evening focused on equity, access, and student support.

The program will feature:

- **A short presentation** introducing the AAUW Student Organization and highlighting the issue of food insecurity on campus.
- **A student panel** of 2–5 AAUW Student Organization members who will share their experiences, goals, and ideas for how the AAUW St. Cloud Branch can continue to support students at SCSU.
- **Equity Requires Access Food Drive**, benefiting the Huskies Food Pantry, with donations of non-perishable food and toiletry items accepted at the event.

### Did you know?

🍎 1 in 3 Huskies worry about having enough food.

📚 30% of Huskies say food insecurity has affected their academics.

❤️ The Huskies Food Pantry serves over 300 students each week.

Together, we can promote equity through access ensuring every SCSU student has the resources they need to thrive.



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## AAUW Student Organization at SCSU

 **SCSU AAUW Student Organization Is Hosting A...**

**EQUITY REQUIRES ACCESS**

# FOOD DRIVE

**ACCEPTING DONATIONS NOW**



**1 of 3**  
of Huskies report worrying about having enough food

**30%**  
of Huskies' academics were impacted by food insecurity

**300**  
Huskies served each week

**Drop-off Location:**  
College of Education and Learning Design Dean's Office (SH 365) or Herberger Business School Dean's Office (CH 118)

**LAST DAY TO DROP OFF DONATIONS**  
**12/09/2025**

**Thing you can bring to contribute the food drive**

 **Canned Food**

 **Hygiene Essentials**

 **Check or Cash**

**Have Questions?**  
Maria 320-295-6992 or Adit 763-286-2051

Learn more [www.stcloudstate.com/huskiesfoodpantry](http://www.stcloudstate.com/huskiesfoodpantry)

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# HOW TO MAKE A RESERVATION FOR A MONTHLY PROGRAM...

**Email:** aauwsaintcloud@gmail.com

**Subject Line:** Reservations

**Email Body/Message:** Please  
reserve [#] places for [Name] for  
the program on [Date]. I am a  
[Member, Student or Guest] and I  
require a  
[Special Dietary Needs] meal.  
Thanks!

**Deadline to make reservations is ONE WEEK from  
the date of the program.**

## November Program Review

**November was Transgender Month**

**Our November Speaker was Charlie Curtis**



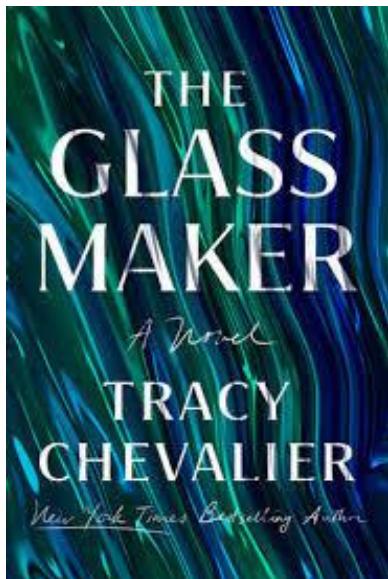
**Photo: Kathryn Gainey, Charlie Curtis, and AAUW President Barb Wismer**

Charlie Curtis, Director of the LGBT Resource Center and Interim Director of the SCSU Women's Center spoke at the November meeting of the American Association of University of Women. Charlie covered some of the bills aimed to limit the right of trans, non-binary, and gender non-conforming individuals; and how these bills affect the rights of everyone, especially girls and women. Trans people make up approximately 1% of the US population, but the impacts of the current wave of anti-trans legislation extend far beyond this small minority.

Members had a chance to ask Charlie questions regarding how we can be supportive of those who identify as a Transgender person. How can others be supportive of those undergoing transitioning, especially family members.

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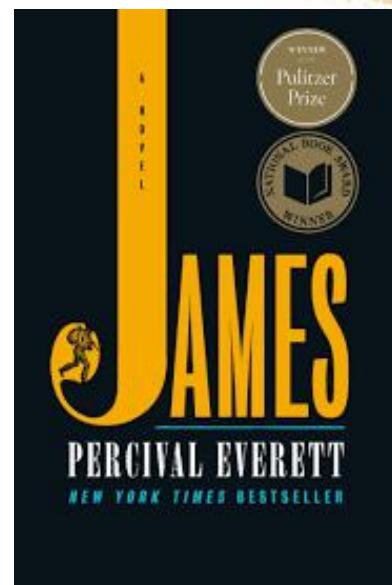
## AAUW Book Clubs



The Thursday AAUW Book Club meets next on Thursday, December 18, 2025 @ 6:30p.m. to discuss "The Glassmaker" by Tracy Chevalier. Hosted by: Mary AAUW members can contact Mary Harlander-Locke if they are interested in joining.

The Wednesday AAUW Book Club meets next on Wednesday, December 3, 2025 @ 1:00p.m. to discuss "James" by Percival Everett

Hosted by: Joyce  
Presenter: Joyce  
AAUW members can contact Mary Harlander-Locke if they are interested in joining.



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# AAUW MN State Meeting

**The 97<sup>th</sup> AAUW of MINNESOTA STATE MEETING**

**April 24-25, 2026, Brainerd Lakes Area**

**Ruttger's Bay Lake Resort**

***“Growing Together: Rooted in Strength”***



## CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

+

***AAUW of Minnesota Needs You!***

***Get on Board!***

Consider joining the AAUW Minnesota State Board - an enjoyable group who gets things accomplished! Share your talents by joining this team effort to implement the AAUW mission.

We are seeking candidates to serve on the 2026-2028 state board of directors for the following positions and for the Nominating Committee for 2027 Elections:

- Vice President for Membership, 2026-2028
- Vice President for AAUW Fund, 2026-2028
- Secretary/Historian, 2026-2028
- Nominating Committee, 2026-2027 for 2027 elections (3 members and 1 alternate)

The members of the Nominating Committee are Mary Schwanke, Owatonna Branch, Barb Wonson Liukkonen, Ely Branch and AAUW MN VP Funds, and Teresa Sagen, Ely Branch and AAUW MN Administrative Assistant and Finance Chair. Please feel free to contact any nominating committee member if you have questions or contact board members who currently hold the position in which you are interested at [aauwminn@gmail.com](mailto:aauwminn@gmail.com)

All you need to apply is a strong belief in the mission of AAUW and a willingness to learn and grow. Rewards for state service include leadership development, camaraderie and teamwork with other leaders. **An applicant may be self-nominated, nominated by your branch or branch board of directors, or any individual.**

Nominations are open until **January 30**. The nominating committee will present a slate of candidates to the membership by email no later than February 25, 2026 (60 days prior to AAUW MN state meeting).

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## Call for Nominations for St. Cloud Branch Board

### Call for Nominations – Board Positions Opening July 2026

Our branch thrives because of dedicated members who lead, inspire, and help drive our mission forward. As we approach the end of the current board cycle, we are seeking nominations for several open leadership positions beginning July 2026.

#### ★ Open Positions Include:

- President
- Recording Secretary
- Recording Secretary (Alternate)
- VP of Communications
- VP of Finance
- VP of Programs
- Website Manager (Alternate)
- Newsletter Editor
- ...and more!



# NOMINATIONS

If you have a passion for equity, leadership, advocacy, and supporting women and students in our community, we encourage you to consider stepping into one of these roles or nominating someone who would be a great fit.

#### ★ How to Submit Nominations

You may nominate yourself or another member using the nomination survey below:

👉 <https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=xscRULQKq0ae9PrnSpIaf5RktXxfS1BPjGFdg5-tH5BUNUtWVIM2TDVGVEkzWUQyQU9JNzJGMkJZRC4u>

#### 💡 Why Serve?

- Strengthen our mission and impact
- Build leadership skills
- Connect with a network of passionate advocates
- Support our student organization and community partners
- Help shape the direction of the branch for years to come

#### 📅 Deadline for Nominations:

Monday, May 25, 2026

We appreciate your willingness to lead, support, and inspire.

Our strength comes from members like YOU.

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# Board Member Position Descriptions



## AAUW Saint Cloud Branch Board of Directors *Position Descriptions*

### Voting Members

The **President**, as the official representative of the Affiliate, shall preside over all programs, meetings, and public events including but not limited to the monthly Board of Directors meetings, executive committee meetings, and represent the Affiliate at the AAUW Minnesota State Convention.

- Schedules, conducts, and creates agenda for monthly Board meetings, held the last Tuesday of every month, September – May.
- The Branch President, the Vice President of Finance, and one Board member shall be responsible for writing the annual budget
- The President oversees planning for the next season's programs and program chairs.
- The President assists in planning the Annual Fundraiser, along with the Fundraiser Committee.
- The President sends out reservation deadline reminders for each program, and creates the Reservation Register for each program meeting.

The **President-Elect**, or **Co-President**, assists the President in all duties and services, and serves as President at the end of the current term.

The **Vice President for Finance** serves as custodian of all funds, securities, business papers, and manages IRS status compliance and State registration for the Affiliate known as the Saint Cloud Area (MN) Branch. The VP Finance shall:

- Keep an itemized account of all receipts and disbursements, in both QuickBooksOnline and Excel.
- Submit a financial report monthly to the Board of Directors.
- Monitor the Branch's P. O. Box in Waite Park
- In December, re-register the Corporation with the State of Minnesota
- In December, renew the Branch's Liability Insurance with AHT Insurance
- In early June, form the budget committee.
- In early July, at the end of the fiscal year (6/30), file the 990-N postcard with the IRS and create the Archives items for the fiscal year. Set up file folders for the months of the upcoming fiscal year.

The **Finance Assistant** assists the Vp for Finance at meetings with payment collection and registration, along with balancing and reporting at the request of the VP Finance. This is a non-voting position.

The **Recording Secretary** shall record minutes of the Affiliate at the Board of Directors meetings and promptly submit them for approval to the Board via email.

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## Board Member Position Descriptions



### AAUW Saint Cloud Branch Board of Directors *Position Descriptions*

The **Alternate Recording Secretary** shall fulfill the duties of the Recording Secretary for every Board of Directors meeting for which the Recording Secretary is unable to attend. The Alternate will also be responsible for creating, distributing and collecting the ID badges and lanyards at every month program meeting.

The **Vice President for Membership** shall make and record the dues payments on the AAUW website, forward dues payments to the VP Finance, and assist members with renewals as needed. Will also provide roster information and regular reports to the Board of Directors.

The **Vice President for Public Policy** shall report to the Board regarding national and state matters concerning AAUW's mission, and is responsible for reporting any State communications to the Branch as needed.

The **Monthly Program Chairwomen** shall secure and coordinate a program speaker, describe the planned program for use in advertising the program, and introduce the speaker at the Program meeting. Each program chair has submitted ideas for upcoming programs at the May monthly meeting. **Monthly Program Chairwomen** are voting members of the Board of Directors.

The **Social Chairwomen** will coordinate facilities, catering, and registration for the monthly Program Meetings, held September through May. This includes initial arrangements for the scheduled meetings (held on the second Tuesday of each month), and communicating reservation counts to Catering for each meeting. Social Chairwomen also create the program registration check-in form, gathering data from the [aauwsaintcloud@gmail.com](mailto:aauwsaintcloud@gmail.com) email (userid: [aauwsaintcloud@gmail.com](mailto:aauwsaintcloud@gmail.com); password: AAUWStCloud6032). Reservation names are added to the standard Registration form, arranged alphabetically, and copied to the Finance VP for check-ins and Kathryn Gainey for the ID badges. The reservation count is used to advise Chartwells Catering of the expected number of attendees. Social Chairs at the program will personally greet new members and guests, and help ensure that the Speaker has all this is needed for the program.

The **Vice President of Communications** shall lead and support the Communications Team, all of whom are voting members of the Board of Directors. This team consists of:

- **Website Administrator**
- **Monthly Newsletter (The Monitor) Publisher**
- **Social Media Poster**
- **Meet-a-Member Writer**
- **Branch Directory Collation and Currency** (including updates to the National roster)
- **Branch Marketing & Advertising Creator**

The **College/University** Representative will serve as a member of the membership committee, and as the liaison of AAUW to retain and develop potential college/university memberships. The

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## Board Member Position Descriptions



### AAUW Saint Cloud Branch Board of Directors *Position Descriptions*

position facilitates and assists with the renewal of C/U affiliation annually, and will communicate the concerns of the college/university representatives to the Branch Board of Directors.

Each member of the board of directors should be prepared to sign a Conflict of Interest policy, annually

The **Financial Review Chair** conducts an annual financial review of the VP Finance records for the previous fiscal year. This Chair is a Board member, and the review will include additional Branch members. This review will occur in the Fall succeeding the close of the previous fiscal year.

The **Archivist** is responsible for gathering and delivering our documents to the Archives at SCSU on a yearly basis (generally after the end of the previous fiscal year on June 30<sup>th</sup>, and once the annual Financial Review has been conducted).

Items to be included for each fiscal year's package:

- All Board Minutes\* (secured from the **Recording Secretary**)
- List of Board Members (secured from the **Recording Secretary**)
- All Monthly News Bulletins\* (secured from the **Vice President of Communications**)
- Major project documents – summarized and dated including any pictures, fliers, brochures, etc. (secured from the **Committee Chairs** for each event)
- Financial Summary for the year (secured from the Vice President for Finance)
- Directory or Branch Roster (secured from the **Vice President of Communications**)

\*Items marked with an asterisk can be digital and stored on a thumb drive.

### Non-Voting Members

The following persons attend meetings of the Branch Board of Directors and provide timely reports, but are non-voting positions. They are held as Committee Chairwomen, in order to facilitate and support the events and programs sponsored and funded by the AAUW Saint Cloud Area Branch. These crucial positions are meant to be leaders who do not hold sole responsibility for the event. The positions are:

- **Annual Fundraiser Committee**
- **Scholarships for Young Leaders Chairs (one for each C/U affiliate)**
- **Flash Funds Chairwoman**

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## Meet Your Board Members

### Executive Board Members



Barb Wismer  
Branch President



Jan Bensen  
Co-VP Finance



Mary Harlander-Locke  
Co-VP Finance

### Executive Board Members



Leah Stanek  
Co-VP membership



Jan Bensen  
VP Public Policy



OPEN  
VP Programs



Molly Ewing  
Recording Secretary



OPEN  
Recording Secretary  
Alternate



Pat Obstarczyk  
Co-VP membership



OPEN  
VP of  
Communications

### Voting - Standing Board Committee Chair Members



OPEN  
Monthly Program  
Chair



Caroline Williams  
Co-Social  
Chairwoman



Joyce Hummel  
Co-Social  
Chairwoman

### Voting - Standing Board Committee Chair Members



OPEN  
Meet-a-Member



Kathryn Gainey  
Directories



OPEN  
Ads & Fliers



Rene Kaluza  
Website



Jamie Swenson  
Monthly Newsletter



Cecilia McNair  
Social Media



Joanna Pucel  
Archives



Chris Lepkowski  
SCSU Representative



Whitney Court  
CSB Representative

### Non-Voting Advisory Board



Jan Bensen  
Tech Savvy Event  
Chair



Keshia Anderson-King  
JEDI (Justice, Equity,  
Diversity, & Inclusion  
Chair)



OPEN  
NCCWSL Event Chair



OPEN  
Start Smart Event -  
SCSU



Christi Siver  
Start Smart Event - CSB



OPEN  
Student Membership  
Liasons - SCSU



Joyce Hummel  
Fundraising  
Committee



Kathy Kampa  
Fundraising  
Committee



Cindy Leigh  
Fundraising  
Committee



Whitney Court  
Scholarships for  
Young Leaders



Barb Wismer  
Flash Funds Chair



Keshia Anderson-King  
8th Grade Graduation



OPEN  
Student Membership  
Liasons - CSB



Fay Bolin  
Fundraising  
Committee



Peggy Lodewyk  
Fundraising  
Committee



OPEN  
Fundraising  
Committee



OPEN  
Fundraising  
Committee



OPEN  
Fundraising  
Committee

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AAUW Newsletter Welcomes New Submissions

**Do you have a special  
announcement or event  
you would like to share  
with all the AAUW St.  
Cloud Area (MN)  
Branch members?  
Want it included in our  
next Monthly  
Newsletter???**

**SEND YOUR ANNOUNCEMENTS AND EVENT DETAILS WITH  
PHOTOS TO JAMIE SWENSON [JAMIE\\_2992@YAHOO.COM](mailto:JAMIE_2992@YAHOO.COM)  
BY THE 15TH OF THE MONTH TO BE INCLUDED IN THE NEXT NEWSLETTER.**

**Disclaimer: There is no guarantee that your information will be shared but we  
will do our best to get it shared in the following newsletter.**