



Lower Connecticut Valley Newsletter

lowerctvalley-ct.aauw.net

March 2017

CALENDAR

Mar 1	Wed	1 to 3 PM	Afternoon Book Group
Mar 2	Thu	7 PM	Evening Bridge
Mar 7	Tue	7 PM	Great Decisions
Mar 7	Tue	1 PM	Mah Jongg
Mar 8	Wed	6:45 PM	General Meeting
Mar 15	Wed		Gourmet Dinner Series
Mar 20	Mon	7 PM	Great Decisions
Mar 20	Mon	1 to 3 PM	Afternoon Bridge
Mar 21	Tue		Cultural Trip
Mar 28	Tue	7 PM	Evening Book Group

GENERAL MEETING

Date: Wednesday, March 8th
Place: Essex Public Library
Essex
Time: 6:45 PM

Our March monthly meeting, will be held at the Essex Library and will feature as our guest speaker, Kirby C. Stafford III Ph.D.

Dr. Stafford is the CT State Chief Entomologist at the Center for Vector Biology and Zoonotic Diseases. Dr. Stafford received his Ph.D. in medical-veterinary entomology from Texas A&M University in 1985 and studies the ecology and control of the blacklegged tick with a recent focus on natural, biological and integrated tick control. His presentation will be entitled: **"Tick-Borne Diseases: It is Not Just Lyme Disease Anymore."** Lyme disease is the leading arthropod associated disease in the U.S. with an estimated 300,000 human cases each year. However, the blacklegged

tick, a.k.a., deer tick, is the vector for at least five other human pathogens in CT that cause babesiosis, anaplasmosis, a recently recognized relapsing fever *Borrelia*, and Powassan encephalitis. Dr. Stafford will review the various tick-borne diseases, highlight personal protection measures, and briefly review CAES tick management research.

MEETING CANCELLATIONS

We decided at our last board meeting that if Old Saybrook Schools are closed or have early dismissal due to inclement weather the March meeting would be cancelled.

If there is a school delay / late opening the meeting will still be held at the same scheduled time and location.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

We lucked out this past month, having our afternoon meeting the day before the storm! Thanks to Sharon Howell for running the meeting followed by an engaging program presented by our own Eileen B.! We had 28 members attend - a good turnout given the winter forecast. Currently, our AAUW group needs to give our full support in helping Sara K. and her committee promote the upcoming April 1, 2017 authors luncheon. Bring a friend and spread the word on the importance of this scholarship fundraising event. If you are unable to attend please consider a donation to support young women in furthering their educational goals!

Stay warm - Spring is around the corner 🌸 Audrey

SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE

Last month, we invited Viktoria to attend the annual National Conference for College Women Student Leaders (NCCWSL) on June 1-3 at the University of Maryland. She accepted our invitation and is in the process of registering. The cost is \$500 per student. On behalf of our entire membership, we are pleased to present this opportunity to a student.

NCCWSL started in 1983 and this year marks the 32nd conference. It's recognized as the premier conference for students to "hone their leadership skills, make lifelong connections, and get ready to shape the world." For more than 30 years, NCCWSL has laid the groundwork for the next generation of leaders, many of whom have entered the corporate world, risen to high ranks within government, led nonprofit organizations, created new innovations, and more. From the beginning, the Women of Distinction Awards Ceremony is one of the highlights of the conference. Past honorees include an Olympic gold medalist, senator, journalist, academician, astronaut, reproductive rights advocate, CEO, entrepreneur, author, actress, and many more.

The three-day conference includes 40 skill-building workshops, graduate school and career fairs, and presentations by role models, keynote speakers, and Women of Distinction Awardees. It attracts over 1000 students, mostly from the US and also abroad. At the conference, attendees develop their leadership and professional skills through voice, skill-set, and mind-set while participating in interactive workshops. They gain a better understanding of issues affecting women and of AAUW's role in empowering women to take action, while knowing their personal identities and supporting diverse voices.

Rose
Chair

BOOK AUTHORS LUNCHEON

April 1st, no fooling, is our Book Authors Luncheon date! Get your reservations in as publicity will be appearing and posters are distributed. "Georgia" was mentioned as a top book club pick in Book Pages Magazine with this quote: "This acclaimed novel is a must read for art

fans and lovers of historical fiction." Don't miss the charming Dawn Trip author of the book. Michelle Hoover, a Brandies Writer-in-Residence, has authored "Bottomland" and "The Quickening." She and Dawn will discuss their writing processes and styles as well as the recent books in a "friends chat" presentation..

A reminder to everyone that the committee voted to keep the ticket price at \$50. Meal expenses have increased and we need to make more profits to meet our scholarship mission. Please contribute even if you cannot attend.

We also need more auction items and program ads. All of the forms are attached to this newsletter and our website. If you need information or want to discuss a donation. Please contact Sara K.

Think spring, forsythia and our wonderful annual luncheon. Bring your friends and be entertained by these accomplished women authors!

For anyone needing basket donation ideas, Dot has offered a form that is attached to this newsletter. When you are shopping or visiting your favorite salons, restaurants, merchants, classes or services, consider asking for a donation or gift certificate. These are easy and valuable ways we can increase our fundraising.

Sara

NATIONAL CONFERENCE

I am hoping to attend the National conference in Washington this June 14-17 and would love to have some of you join me. We could take the train down and I would love to share my hotel room with someone. Rooms are around \$250 a night so shared is only \$125. Conference fees are \$575 if you register before the end of March. It is a wonderful way to meet other members from across the country and share ideas and inspire each other. I have been to a few and highly recommend it. Hotel rooms may be a bit tight so we should decide soon!!! Let me know.

Dawn B. Or call me to chat about it!

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

Please welcome and add MaryAnn to your members' directory

Southern CT. U. BS Early Childhood Ed.
MA in Urban Studies
Southern CT. U. 6th yr Admin/Supervision
U. of MA Amherst 7th yr Ed. Law

EVENING BRIDGE

Tina L. will be hosting Evening Bridge on Thursday, March 2. Please let her know if you would like to come

MAH JONGG

Mah Jongg will be Tuesday, March 7th at 1:00 pm at Dot B's home. Please let Dot know if you plan to attend.

GOURMET DINNER SERIES

Gourmet dinner series – March 15th
Please contact Sharon for location and time.

EVENING BOOK GROUP

The evening book group will meet on Tuesday, March 28 at 7 pm to discuss Between the World and Me by Ta-Nehesi Coates at the home of Barbara H. If you plan to attend, please call or email Barbara. It should be an interesting evening! All are welcome.

AFTERNOON BOOK GROUP

The March meeting of the Afternoon Book Club will be on **Wednesday, the 1st at the Acton Library in Old Saybrook from 1-3pm.** The book for discussion is **Hidden Figures: The American Dream and the Untold Story of the Black Women Mathematicians Who Helped Win the Space Race** by Margot Lee Shetterly. All are welcome even if you have not read the book.

GREAT DECISIONS

Our second Great Decisions meeting is Tuesday, March 7th, and we will be discussing the second article in our Great Decisions book concerning the

US Trade Policy. Our third meeting is Monday, March 20th, and we will discuss the third article highlighting Conflict in the South China Sea.

We are moving our Great Decisions series to the Westbrook Library for the 2017 series. All programs start at 7:00pm. It is easier to get to the conference room at the library if you go to the back door.

Email Donna with any questions.

CULTURAL EVENTS

March 21st - Tuesday

Join us for a tour of the **Bush-Holley House** in Greenwich. The Bush-Holley House is a National Historic Landmark, constructed circa 1730 and in the late 19th century was a boarding house and the center of the Cos Cob Art Colony, Connecticut's first art colony. Our guided tour begins at **10:30 am** and includes the historic interiors of the house related to the Bush and Holley families as well as an American Impressionist art collection. **The fee for the tour is \$7** if our group is over 10 in size. And after our visit, we'll have lunch at a nearby restaurant.

Transportation: Carpool from Exit 65. We will meet/leave at 9 am and should be back before 3pm.

Contacts: If you are interested in going, please contact **Dot or Pat** no later than **March 17th**. Need to give a head count to the docent at the museum. Hope you can join us!

AFTERNOON BRIDGE

March afternoon bridge is scheduled for the 3rd Monday in March.
RSVP to Bonnie

WOMEN PLAYWRIGHTS INITIATIVE

I would like to offer our AAUW members free tickets to attend our Women Playwrights Initiative taking place next Friday, March 3 and Saturday, March 4 - both at 7pm. We are producing staged readings of four new plays. A poster is attached.

If anyone would like free tickets to either or both nights, please email me .

More information on this new Playhouse project can be found here:

<http://www.ivorytonplayhouse.org/women-playwrights-initiative-march-2017>

Krista



Women Playwrights Initiative – Friday, March 3 and Saturday, March 4, 2017 Ivoryton Playhouse

www.ivorytonplayhouse.org

The Ivoryton Playhouse (Ivoryton, CT) proudly presents:

Four One Acts by Four Fabulous Women Playwrights

Staged readings followed by Talk Backs and refreshments each night!

Friday, March 3, 2017

Readings at 7PM

Saturday, March 4, 2017

Readings at 7PM

Her Scientific Discovery: Support

By ANJELICA L. GONZALEZ FEB. 25, 2017

The critically acclaimed movie “Hidden Figures,” about three African-American women who were instrumental in the success of the Apollo 11 space mission, hit close to home for me. Since its release, I have frequently been asked why there aren’t more people like me in my field.

You see, I am an African-American and Mexican-American woman who works as a scientist and a professor. The combination of these factors is a rarity that isn’t lost on the students I teach in the classroom or in my laboratory.

But when I think about it, I’ve spent my life around scientists, mathematicians and engineers, even though they would never call themselves that.

My father is a diesel mechanic who showed me the value of using your hands to rebuild an engine or repair a transmission. My mother is a blackjack dealer who taught me that mathematics and statistics were necessary to excel in a job that was crucial to feeding her family.

And my grandfather was a farmer and director of irrigation in a farming community. I was able to learn firsthand from him that understanding basic principles of fluid dynamics and mechanics could mean the difference between seeing water flooding a street because of a burst pipe or enjoying the fruits of a well-irrigated farm field.

While none of these experts in my family had a college education, each of them showed me that hard work, math and science are simply a part of life, and can be used in a job to feed a family, contribute to society and accomplish work to be proud of.

And yet, when I went to graduate school in the early 2000s, one of my professors told me I was unlikely to succeed in science because I had a poor work ethic. I thought about all the outings I had missed with friends and all the nights I had stayed up late studying, and I knew that wasn’t true. So why did my professor think this about me?

Slowly I came to understand why. I had been unaware that in contrast to my undergraduate experience, I was expected as a graduate student to come up with research questions, investigate them in the laboratory and publish my findings in scientific papers. In my professor’s eyes, this was so obvious that it didn’t need to be stated, so he saw my failure to do these things as laziness.

Because my professors and some of my peers hadn’t seen someone like me succeed, they were unlikely to believe that I could. As a student with

less experience than they had, I was inclined to believe them. It is basic differences and misunderstandings like these that contribute to the low numbers of women and minorities in the sciences.

Data shows that women and minorities are [selectively sorted out of engineering, math and science careers](#). Talented women enroll in challenging science courses with the goal of learning all they can to excel in a technical career and yet the institutional support they need is unavailable.

When women are infrequently, rarely or never exposed to someone like themselves in the classroom, as a peer or as a professor, it is difficult to imagine themselves succeeding in that environment.

Additionally, when they do speak up and exhibit their skills, young women are often overlooked or blatantly dismissed. I've seen the same dismissive attitudes toward women and their contributions in meetings and grant review panels.

Studies have evaluated whether hard work is rewarded in a fair manner, and determined that cultural norms and implicit biases in many cases prevent equal reward for equal efforts. The perceived challenges that prevent many people from pursuing careers in technical fields are not a figment of their imagination, but real barriers to success.

Numerous efforts have been made to encourage women to thrive in the sciences. Programs like [Imagine STEM](#) (short for science, technology, engineering and mathematics) and [Black Girls Code](#) are preparing young women for careers in technical fields by encouraging their love of science, building confidence in their abilities, and giving them solid technical training that will move them through education and into technical careers.

These programs are valuable, but they are not enough. We also need to teach professors, peers and others to be better mentors and advocates. My career shows how important it is to have that kind of support, and I have tried to be such an advocate, in turn. Were it not for people who were willing to step up at critical points and vouch for my abilities and potential as a student, scientist and teacher, my

expertise and experience would not be applied as they are today.

My advocates have acknowledged the obstacles I have faced. They recognize that networking and specific privileges have benefited the majority of successful white men in science and engineering careers, and that without those connections, the achievements of people who are not part of that group are easily overlooked.

As a scientist, my experience has made me an expert in the small vessels that feed the organs of our bodies. In the way my grandfather focused on water flow to support farms, I have helped engineer artificial blood vessels that deliver blood and oxygen to vital organs.

The influence of my father's mechanics and my mother's mathematical acumen gave me early exposure to math and engineering concepts that I now use on a daily basis.

My advocates have appreciated that — like the women featured in "Hidden Figures" — my particular background contributes unique insights into questions that are important to advancing science.

Anjelica L. Gonzalez is an associate professor of biomedical engineering at Yale University.

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