

Hello AAUW members.

This month's newsletter is going out a few days later than normal...wishing everyone a December full of festivities, peace, and the beauty of the season. Please see details in this newsletter for more information on our Branch events and news.

Any questions or concerns? Reply to this email or contact me directly, JenniferL91@hotmail.com.

Jennifer Long
AAUW ESK Newsletter Coordinator



Newsletter | December 2025

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President's Message

Well, hello everyone! Yes, it's the December newsletter! Our year is half over and I've no idea, like most of you, where the time has gone!

I do know that doing good things, new learning, and developing partnerships with other organizations is a big part of it. I think that is part of why time goes so quickly; there's always a lot happening. No one person or group does it all but by working together we do a lot.

I want to take this time of seasonal celebration and reflection to thank you for being a part of the Edmonds SnoKing Branch in AAUW. Each member who I know has a fascinating story to tell and brings a richness to the group, whether it's in conversation, activities, or collaboration, that makes us all stronger, determined and committed to using our voices to bring justice and equity to all women. I appreciate you.

I look forward to seeing you at our Holiday Potluck and FUNdraising Gift Exchange!

Linda Clay
President



Programs

Mark your calendars for **December 13th, 10am-12ish** for our **Holiday Potluck**. It will be at Ann McNulty's house, 731- 198th Place SW, Lynnwood. Thank you, Ann, for offering your home to us again this year!

The "Auction" Gift Exchange is back! Please bring a wrapped gift of around \$20 value to be auctioned off to the highest bidder. You will be giving clues to the contents prior to bidding. Bids will begin at \$5.

Items can be from a trip, event, made by you, or even a regift of an

item--- no white elephants, please. Have fun thinking of what to bring and the clues you can give!

All money received will be added to the Branch funds for operations during the current year. Questions: Linda Clay, lindarclay@gmail.com or 425.293.7613



Outreach

We're looking forward to finding community engagement opportunities. If you happen to know of any, please send the info my way: elena.cervantes1@gmail.com

Elena Cervantes
Outreach & Scholarship Fundraising



Membership News

As we wrap up 2025 Pat and I want to thank all our members for making our Branch such a great community to be part of: successful fundraisers, donating to local charities through caring and sharing, and attending our informational monthly meetings are just some of what makes Edmonds SnoKing great. Thank you, members!!

We want to help you feel connected. Look for announcements in January to attend a game night or exploring the arts event! We look forward to seeing you at our Holiday Potluck at Ann McNulty's house on December 13th. If you are newer to our Branch this is a great

informal opportunity to get to know each other better.

Jodi Forsell & Pat Hooper



Sharing & Caring News

Our AAUW chapter has always shown a generous spirit when it comes to supporting those in need. This December, our Sharing & Caring Committee is organizing a Winter Warmth Drive to benefit individuals experiencing homelessness who rely on the Hygiene Station in Lynnwood.

We invite you to donate new or gently used socks, gloves, winter scarves, and beanies—or baseball caps—for both men and women. These essential items help provide comfort, dignity, and warmth during the coldest months of the year.

Donations can be brought to our Holiday Party on December 13th at Ann McNulty's home.

If you are unable to attend but would still like to contribute, please text or call Vicki O'Gorman at 408-502-0636 to arrange a pickup by December 10th.

Thank you for your generosity and for embodying the giving spirit that makes our chapter such a positive force in the community.



Notes From the Board Meeting

Several Branch members are resigning from their volunteer positions. Elena Cervantes will not be the fundraiser lead for next year. Also, Jennifer Long has resigned her position as the Newsletter lead. This opens up two important positions: Fundraiser lead and Newsletter lead. Anyone interested in either of these positions is advised to contact Linda Clay. Thank you, Elena and Linda, for leading our past fundraisers, and Jennifer for putting together our newsletters!

Lori reported (via Linda) that Edmonds College wants to discuss the criteria regarding "affirmative action" for our scholarship. Since there is no racial aspect to our criteria, it likely has to do with gender. Lori, Debby, and Helen plan to meet with representatives from the Edmonds College Foundation to discuss their concerns.

The tentative program for the remaining Branch year is:

- December 13: Holiday party
- January 10: Public Policy
- February 14: Days for Girls (zoom)
- March 14: Politics of Bathroom Access
- April 10: AAUW ESK Annual Business meeting
- May 9: Jewelry fundraiser
- June: Scholarship Award Ceremony

There will not be a coffee and conversation get-together in December. "Advocacy Day" is planned for Monday, January 26, 2026. There are two bills in the works. They relate to: Student access to loans, and Single parents and returning students.

AAUW, League of Women Voters (LWV), the National Association for Women (NOW), and the Puget Sound Advocates for Retirement Action (PSARA) have a common lobbyist in Nancy Shapiro. So, there is

ongoing discussion on policy issues between our organizations.

As students often make the same simple mistakes when writing scholarship applications, Cathy suggested that we create a checklist for students on what to include in their application. Pat suggested distributing this checklist to juniors and seniors. Jodi pointed out that kids often do not have support at home for writing applications and suggested we meet several times with counselors at Meadowdale HS and make a presentation on this topic to the students before the scholarship applications are due.

Sita Bhaskaran

Secretary



Our Diversity Book Club will not be meeting in December. The book we will discuss in January is "The Briar Club" by Kate Quinn. This is a novel set during the McCarthy era. Our meeting will be on Monday, January 19 at 1:30pm at the home of Lori Cross. All Branch members are welcome to attend.



Public Policy Updates and Action

The Fall elections are over, and we enter this quiet month of preparation for the new year. Action and education continue at all levels of the government and educational institutions. I encourage you to enjoy the season and be ready to join us for Advocacy Day on January 26, when the days will be lengthening again.

NATIONAL

The U.S. Department of Education was created by Congress to protect students' civil rights and ensure equal educational opportunity for all. After making deep staff cuts, the Department announced plans to move the day-to-day functions of key K-12 and higher education programs to other agencies.

AAUW is responding to the Administration's escalating effort to dismantle the Department — releasing statements from AAUW CEO Gloria L. Blackwell and joining letters to Congress in coalition to expand our impact. Now we need you to make your voice heard. **Let your congresspeople know through AAUW National two-minute activist or the link [Here](#).**

STATE

The State AAUW team continues to meet to monitor legislation and plan for the next legislative session. We are reviewing bills, and always looking for more eyes to review, so give me a call if you have an area of interest. There is an active AI workgroup talking about legislation on this front. Given the data that AI replicates and will augment current biases, such as misogyny and racism, it is important that there be government review and legislation around the algorithms and deployment in the educational realm, so this is truly important work.

January 25 is the AAUW Advocacy Day - The State team will be prioritizing bills over this month and working with other advocates to make our advocacy as efficient as possible. If you are interested or willing to set up appointments with legislators in your district, please contact Lisa Utter.

Also importantly, Washington Attorney General Nick Brown announced the creation of a Worker Rights Unit to lead the effort to uphold our worker protections and address wage theft. At the Federal level, there has been a dismantling of the UW Dept of Labor by defunding enforcement staff. More information on that [here](#). It is also important to let the Attorney General's office know you support this protection of workers' rights. Call 360-753-6200, or email using the contact form [Here](#) or directly emailago@atg.wa.gov

LOCAL

Snohomish County Elections were certified on November 25th.

The Charter Review Commission will start work in January, reviewing the document that governs our county. Following past practice there should be a robust round of meetings to get public input.

New school board members will be taking office soon. As we approach this next year with the Federal Education Department being restructured and perhaps eliminated, AAUW will want to monitor important Federal funding sources for schools such as:

- Title 1 for schools that serve high numbers of low-income students with programs of academic and non-academic support that improve students' academic growth
- (ESSA) Every Student Succeeds Act and (IDEA) Individuals with Disabilities Act funding that supports students in low-income areas and the Federal government's ongoing contribution to special education.

Public Policy Team

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