

AAUW Kensington-Rockville January Program

Saturday, January 17, 2026, 10:30 to Noon

Ingleside at King Farm—Derwood Room
1615A Piccard Drive or 701 King Farm Blvd., Rockville, MD 20850

KR's Montgomery College Scholarships Women Architects—A Brief Look

After postponement from our December holiday gathering, we will begin with our annual update on AAUW Kensington-Rockville's commitment, led for years by Janet Crampton, to provide scholarships for mature women with dependents at Montgomery College. **Javiera (Javi) Alarcon**, the MC Foundation's Annual Fund Manager and our new contact, will briefly discuss the scholarship program and its vital importance to students. She will then introduce current recipient, **Laurent Amzallag**, who will address its significance to her life story and future endeavors.

. . .then, another MC connection . . .

In 2019, Anne Litwin (consultant in women's issues) published an article titled "Why Are There So Few Women Architects?" Truth is—very few were admitted to schools of architecture until the 1970s. Did you know that now, women comprise 50 percent of those admitted to schools of architecture? The story starts in the late 19th century when a few schools of architecture started admitting women—the best known, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT). **Ruth Manchester** will present the stories of famous women architects such as Sophia Hayden, Julia Morgan, Jane Counter and Zaha Hadid.

Ruth Manchester has an MA in the History of Art from the University of Maryland. Prior to that degree, she obtained a BSN in nursing and worked at Holy Cross for over 30 years. She loved to study and read about art—and was a docent at the National Gallery of Art—but her love of nursing was not an aside. So for 30 years she taught one course per semester at Montgomery College, Rockville, in the history of art and architecture. She now teaches in the Life-Long Learning Program, for which this lecture was developed.

Ruth was a long-time member of AAUW's Silver Spring Branch. When the Branch dissolved, she joined the Kensington-Rockville Branch. She and her husband now reside at Riderwood. They have two children and four grandchildren living close by.



Sophia Hayden. (Photo Credit: Wikipedia.)

From the President

Our December holiday potluck gathering turned out nothing like we had planned—yet I’m still smiling over the outcome, and I doubt I’m alone in that.

The wintry weather was iffy. We learned late that a number of key members couldn’t be there. We considered cancelling the event altogether—and did postpone our Montgomery College KR scholarship recipient presentations until January, with MC Foundation liaison, Javi Alarcon, in ready agreement.

I had also invited current AAUW Fellow Jingjing Xu (Elle), who is pursuing her doctorate in geography—actually “conservation, human geography, and environmental crime”—at the University of Maryland, to speak to us about her field and future plans. She holds the AAUW Maryland-endowed fellowship named in my honor. Elle responded with excitement and gratitude but, regrettably, could not attend. However, she generously offered to send a video.

We, a larger group than expected if smaller than hoped, watched it together in the Club Room. Elle’s ambition, enthusiasm, environmental commitment, preference for creating a better world over making money, and flawless command of American English (having been born and raised in rural China) left us awestruck. When I noted that Elle wants to meet me when she returns to the University of Maryland to defend her dissertation, I heard a chorus of, “I want to meet her, too!” Yes. Stay tuned.

We brought our delightful array of potluck goodies to the expanded big table and gathered around continuing our conversation about Elle’s inspirational testimony, the importance of AAUW’s historic support of higher education for women, and its heightened significance today. Other relevant topics emerged. To each we listened, responded, and learned in a model of group discussion rarely achieved. Thank you, All!

Thank you, Anita Rosen, for your tireless efforts in planning, arranging, and rethinking this challenging, ultimately memorable day of joy and generosity.

Looking ahead, how many women architects can you name? Our own Ruth Manchester knows enough to teach a course on them at Montgomery

College! She will enlighten us at our January 17 meeting, as well as introducing us to MC’s Women Studies program, where we might find opportunities to make a difference for the coming generation. Don’t miss!

Happy New Year

Dian Belanger

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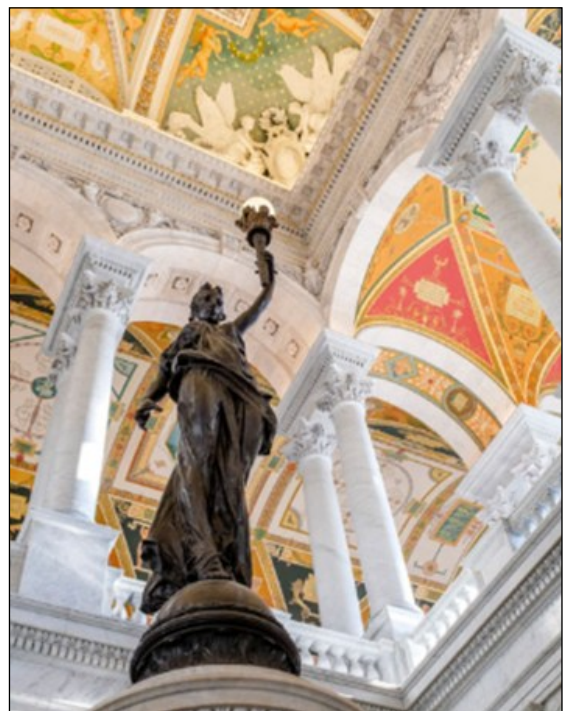
Library of Congress Tour Tuesday, March 10, 2026 (Rain date TBD)

Mark your calendars for an exciting, free tour to be given by docent David Weisz. The tour will begin at 10:30 am, lasting approximately 1.5 hours. It will include an introduction to the library (the largest in the world!), a tour of the Thomas Jefferson Building, and the art and architecture of the building. The tour will involve significant standing and walking (steps can be avoided) plus walking from Metro (Capital South or Union Station) to the Library. An alternative would be Uber, if a few were interested. Getting together for lunch afterward is being explored. Here are two links that will certainly spark your interest:

<https://www.loc.gov>

<https://www.loc.gov/visit/audio-guide>

If interested, please contact Carol Fivozinsky (carolfivo@gmail.com) or Maritsa George (maritsageo@verizon.net) by February 2nd.



Support Our Scholars

The AAUW Kensington-Rockville Branch Scholarship Fund at Montgomery College needs our support. Our scholarships sustain women with families who return to school to improve their jobs and their lives. To give by check, make it payable to Montgomery College Foundation, with AAUW Kensington-Rockville Scholarship on the memo line. Mail it to:

Montgomery College Foundation
9221 Corporate Blvd, 3rd Floor
Rockville MD 20850

To give online, go to

<https://www.montgomerycollege.edu/alumni-friends-donors/foundation/index.html>

and click on DONATE. Indicate AAUW Kensington-Rockville Scholarship as the destination for your gift. Gifts received now will aid scholars for the Fall Semester.

Janet Crampton
janet.crampton@wap.org

From AAUW National

Our chief executive Gloria Blackwell's monthly message for December places our historic commitment to higher education as key to our mission to advance equity for women and girls, reminding us to contribute as we individually and collectively can.

Incidentally, Gloria wants to meet Jingjing Xu, our Maryland Fellow, too! We might see her at our proposed luncheon for Elle. Gloria headed AAUW's Fellowships and Grants program for many years. It lives in her heart still.

AAUW is warily tracking Department of Education proposals to reshape many aspects of public education. When comment periods open, do let your members of Congress know how you feel. We have advocated "public support for public education" since the beginning.

In 2025 AAUW celebrated the 50th anniversary of our Capitol Hill Lobby Corps's advocacy for

issues vital to women. We've earned congressional respect for our research and fact-based information and enjoyed some important successes amid a plethora of disappointments. Dian says this as an original Lobby Corps member in 1975 and an avid, if sporadic, participant since. Try it; it's an awesome experience.

AAUW Is and Does . . .

AAUW's self-descriptions and goals are tweaked over time, but these fairly current versions can be helpful in sharing who we are and what we do:

AAUW advances equity for women and girls through advocacy, education, philanthropy, and research.

Our Mission: Higher Education & Economic Security for Women

Our Vision: to be a powerful advocate and visible leader in equity and education through research, philanthropy, and measurable change in critical areas impacting the lives of women and girls.

AAUW has been empowering women as individuals and as a community since 1881. For 144 years, we have led the fight for gender equity in higher education and beyond. With a strong record of advocacy and action, AAUW continues to break barriers and defend the rights of women in education and the workplace.

In principle and in practice, AAUW values and seeks and inclusive membership, workforce, leadership team, and board of directors. There shall be no barriers to full participation in this organization based on age, disability, ethnicity, gender identity, geographical location, national origin, race, religious beliefs, sexual orientation, or socioeconomic status.

**AAUW empowers women and girls by
championing their success in higher
education and pushing for policy solutions to
create lasting change.**

AAUW 2025 Strategic Plan

Interest Groups

Great Decisions

Our next discussion will take place Friday, January 23 at 10 am in the Derwood Room at Ingleside King Farm. We will be discussing Chapter 1 of

America's Global Role: America First Versus Liberal Internationalism

All are welcome and are encouraged to join us for lunch in the Café afterwards. The 26-minute video Master Class will be on Zoom Thursday, January 22 at 7:30 pm. The URL will be sent prior to the meeting. If you would like to join in, contact Anita or Bobbe.

Anita Rosen
anitarosen123@gmail.com

Bobbe Mintz
bobbeandherb@comcast.net

Le Groupe Français

Our Zoom meeting will be on Monday, January 12 at 7:30 p.m. We will continue reading:

La Bourse by Honoré de Balzac. The story is contained in the author's *La Comédie Humaine*

The link to the reading:

https://beq.ebooksgratuits.com/balzac/Balzac_03_La_bourse.pdf

The Zoom Meeting Link:
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88611044596?pwd=aW5FRHhmc2lZQ0F0UkdhTTdqRzVadz09>

Ruth Spivack
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Kensington–Rockville's Vote for the 2026 Maryland Legislative Agenda for Women

Thanks to all who voted for their top 10 of the 21 Bills up for consideration by MLAW. Below is how the branch voted.

As soon as the final MLAW vote is announced I will share that information with you. Be prepared

to let our state legislators know how you feel when MLAW's slate of bills come before committees. Also here is the URL to read a more detailed explanation of each bill. All the Bills were important.

<https://mdlegagendaforwomen.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/11/mlaw-2026-proposals-for-ballot.pdf>

K-R's Top 10

1. Stop Silencing Survivors: This bill creates additional protections from retaliatory litigation for sexual assault survivors.
2. Prescription Privacy Protection Act for Abortion Medication: This bill protects abortion providers from out-of-state criminal, civil, and administrative penalties (e.g. Texas) by shielding their identities, as pharmacies would be allowed to withhold a provider's name and identifying information from the prescription label of abortion medication.
3. Prohibition of Certain Handgun Sales (title TBD): Legislation would prohibit the future sale of handguns that can easily be converted into fully automatic machine guns through the installation of a Glock switch.
4. Protection of Identity of Victims of Sexual Assault: Protects identifying information of a victim of sexual assault from appearing in public court documents
5. Family and Law Enforcement Protection Act: The Family and Law Enforcement Protection Act closes gaps in Maryland's protective order system by requiring earlier relinquishment and, when necessary, removal, of firearms from respondents to domestic violence protective orders.
6. Safe Act: Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting (title TBD): The bill aims to address female genital mutilation/cutting (FGM/C) in Maryland by amending the 1998 FGM/C law to strengthen prevention and response measures
7. ICE Enforcement Activities (title TBD): The bill will seek to sunset and prohibit 287(g) agreements in the state; these agreements allow for local law enforcement to be deputized by ICE to carry out immigration enforcement activities.
8. Timing of Hearings between TPO and FPO, and Relief for Financial Loss: This bill would put Maryland in line with the majority of states which have longer than our current seven days between temporary protection order hearings and final protection order

9. Granny's Law: Correcting Historical wrongs in the Estates and Trust area: A Matter of Equity for Women and Minorities hearings, as well as adding repayment for financial loss to the relief that can be ordered in a protection order.
10. Protection of Students from Sexual Exploitation in Schools: This bill closes a loophole in Maryland's sexual offense statute by prohibiting sexual conduct between a school resource officer (SRO) and any student at the school to which the officer is assigned, recognizing the inherent power imbalance and duty of care owed to students.

Anita Rosen
anitarosen123@gmail.com

Upcoming Special Events

Mark Your Calendar

Women's Legislative Agenda

January 25, 2026 (Saturday this year)
 Universities at Shady Grove
 9630 Gudelsky Drive
 Rockville 20850

2nd Biennial

Atlantic Regional Conference

(Program details forthcoming.)

Lancaster, PA

September 25-27, 2026

Make your hotel reservation at:

[https://urldefense.com/v3/_https://www.marriott.com/event-reservations/reservation-link.mi?id=1758841025555&key=GRP&app=resvlink_!!FOfmI8qiWcWBHqypJtzENF0!ytBxRkqyN8HUmUjfnYj3moemAZaTWjQRS8yILvsig5HlJcjlSQoNemYhW_UuKVYvRN22-qcBnONMIkkCharFX4r224chUkg\\$](https://urldefense.com/v3/_https://www.marriott.com/event-reservations/reservation-link.mi?id=1758841025555&key=GRP&app=resvlink_!!FOfmI8qiWcWBHqypJtzENF0!ytBxRkqyN8HUmUjfnYj3moemAZaTWjQRS8yILvsig5HlJcjlSQoNemYhW_UuKVYvRN22-qcBnONMIkkCharFX4r224chUkg$)

Let Dian know if you are thinking of attending, or you just want more information. If the first regional conference is any indication, this will be great!

**February 2026 Newsletter
 Submission Deadline:
 February 24th**

Women Found on Envelopes

Over the years, U.S. postage stamps have, now and then, featured women and women's issues. Here are some examples:

Martha Washington was the first American woman to appear on a stamp (1903 issue).



She appeared again on a 1½ cent 1938 stamp.



Elizabeth Stanton, Carrie Chapman Catt, and Lucretia Mott were honored on this 1948 stamp.



This 33-cent women's rights stamp was issued in the 1970s.



Map and Directions - December Meeting

Free parking is available on both sides of King Farm Blvd., and in the rear parking lot. The latter can be reached from King Farm Boulevard by driveways on either side of the building, or from Picard Drive. Use the 1615A Picard Drive entrance. Once inside, a concierge can direct you to the Derwood Room.

