

The Kentucky Agate

The Kentucky Agate is known for its hardness and resistance to acids and weathering as well as its fineness of grain and brightness of color. As such, it represents the grit and determination we bring forth to create Equity in Kentucky.



A message from Gae Broadwater, AAUW State President:

Welcome to a new year and a new look for AAUW of Kentucky!

I hope each one reading this had something wonderful happen over the summer. For me, it was the first time I was successful in growing hollyhocks. Perhaps you planted your first garden patch, tried a new restaurant, participated in a community event, read a book that made you think, recruited one new member for AAUW, and the list goes on.

Your dedication to equity for women and girls is the inspiration for me and others who have accepted responsibilities as state board members and branch officers. We want to share your branch stories in the coming year. Our state newsletter editor, Laura Seroka (Berea Branch Member) and I will be calling on branches to submit an article during the coming year. We are planning for four newsletters and are appreciative of Owensboro Branch being our first volunteer.

This fall is full of election buzz--local, state, and federal officials will be elected and ultimately responsible for setting the course for our shared futures. I want to see each branch be involved in some way with [Get Out the Vote](#) to educate voters.

Please consider what you can do in your community.

In Kentucky, new voters have until October 7 to register--can we each one reach one?

Candidate forums will be taking place and AAUW members can pose important questions that address our public policy priorities. [Issue forums](#) are another area AAUW can play a role. We have taken a stand on [Constitutional Amendment 2](#) to protect funding for our public schools. Let's make AAUW visible in Kentucky by our thoughtful presence.

As we work through the challenges of the new program year, please make sure your membership and officer rosters are up to date in the [AAUW Community Hub](#). Help us identify new leaders within your membership for state and local roles. Continue to promote your activities so others will see AAUW is a force for positive change.

How can we connect our energy to make a difference for women and girls in Kentucky? I know what you are capable of. Let's do this!

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PHOTOS COURTESY OF OWENSBORO BRANCH

Branch Spotlight - Owensboro

Members of the Owensboro Branch of the AAUW remained active and collaborative with their community as they celebrated their **70th year** as a chapter! A huge kick-off to the milestone included a poster contest highlighting local women founders and a celebration at Owensboro Community and Technical College (coordinated by Veena Sallan) including guest speaker Lt. Governor of Kentucky Jacqueline Coleman in March. This branch also achieved 2* status in the FY23 AAUW Five Star Recognition Program.

Some of their additional accomplishments include:

- Provided information about the AAUW at a local **Multicultural Festival**
- Attended **Women's Equality Day** at the Daviess County Courthouse, witnessing special speaker Virginia Woodward's discussion of the 100th anniversary of the introduction of the Equal Rights Amendment, and participating in a sing-along of songs from the suffrage movement
- Led a workshop (Lisa Vaughn) on holding effective meetings using Roberts' Rules of Order to assist local non-profit community leaders and act as a fundraising-event.
- Planned a celebration (Katie Kolonich) at **Girls Inc.** (a national youth development organization for girls) in honor of Eleanor Roosevelt's birthday
- Coordinated the annual **Jolabokafloð** (Judy Adams), an event which gives each member of Girls Inc. a new, wrapped, age-appropriate book as a holiday gift
- Earned a special recognition from Girls Inc. during the **Athena Awards** ceremony
- Raised **\$1,000** through volunteer efforts at the BBQ & barrels annual event
- Awarded Erin Waller, the Director of **Daviess County Public Library (DCPL)** an AAUW membership (national, state, and local). The DCPL has faced challenges in the past year due to political action by a small group of residents. The library has numerous programs in place to meet the needs of all Daviess County residents.
- Assisted with **election** duties



Membership

The Owensboro branch climbed from 34 to **46 members**. Welcome!

Thank
You

Officer Changes

A reception honoring longtime treasurer, **Sandy Hallman**, was held in the Western Kentucky Botanical Gardens. **Jenn Vogel** has now stepped into that position for the Owensboro chapter. Thank you both for your service!

SB181 & HB649: Sextortion in KY

By Teena Halbig,

AAUW of KY Secretary, AAUW of Louisville BOD, President UNA-USA KY Division, KY Statewide HTTF Prevention & Awareness Committee, TeenaHal@aol.com

AAUW of Louisville Board Members received information about Sextortion/Sexual Extortion in a board meeting in 2024; this aligns with AAUW National Public Policy and can include sexual assault, stalking, violence, human trafficking, etc.

In the 2024 KY General Assembly, the United Nations Association of the USA Kentucky Division and People Against Trafficking in Humans formed a Sextortion Coalition to have legislation in the Senate as **SB181**. Also **HB649** was filed in the House. While neither bill passed, they can be refiled in **January 2025**. We hope more folks will want to help advocate and educate the public and legislators about harms when sexually explicit photos are shared on Instagram, Facebook, Snap Chat, gaming or video chats. And insist everyone be vigilant to close the camera lens on cell phones and computers – especially when undressing or changing clothes.

What is sextortion?

Sextortion is a form of exploitation that occurs when a person obtains sexually explicit images of an individual and threatens to release them unless their demands (monetary, sexual, or other requests) are met.

There is a steep climb in 14 to 17 year old boys being targeted for Sextortion by adult predators pretending to be young girls, though all genders and ages are at risk. Predators feign a romantic interest in potential victims on gaming platforms, apps and social media sites in an attempt to solicit sexually explicit virtual photos/videos. The predators then threaten to release the images to teachers, classmates, friends, parents, etc. unless (mainly) money is sent to the predator. Sextortion can also lead to trafficking of victims in lieu of financial payments.

From 2015-2018, the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children's (NCMEC's) CyberTipline received **5,017 reports** of Sextortion of minors. In 2022, the U.S. Justice Department noted an increase of **3,000 more minor victims**, with over a dozen committing suicide.

How to get help:

The FBI issued a national public safety alert and is the right choice to call for help (they also have removal methods): **1-800-CALL-FBI**. Additional Help: **Call or Text 988 free-of-charge to connect with suicide prevention, mental health, and substance abuse counselors**. Available to all Kentuckians 24/7/365.

References: AP, 12-19-2022, Lindsay Whitehurst; 2024 Sextortion flyer of Sextortion Coalition; Sept. 2019 U.S. Dept. of Justice and FBI brochure



AAUW Public Policy Priorities

The public policy priorities of AAUW underscore the mission to advance gender equity for women and girls through research, education, and advocacy. and include:

- Equitable access to education including and climates free of harassment, bullying, and sexual assault.
- Economic, social, and physical well-being of all persons.
- The right to privacy and freedom from violence.
- An end to white supremacy and structural and systemic racism.
- National and international policies against human trafficking and that promote peace, justice, human rights, sustainable development, and mutual security for all people.

For more information on AAUW's public policy priorities visit their [extended policy descriptions](#).

Contact Your Congressional Legislators

U.S. Senate

Sen. Mitch McConnell 202-224-2541 - Washington
502-582-6304 - Louisville
859-224-8286 - Lexington
859-578-0188 - Fort Wright
606-864-2026 - London
270-781-1673 - Bowling Green
270-442-4554 - Paducah

[Contact Sen. Mitch McConnell](#)

Sen. Rand Paul 202-224-4343 - Washington D.C.
270-782-8303 - Bowling Green
(all other offices closed)

[Contact Sen. Rand Paul](#)

U.S. House

Rep. James Comer, 1st District (202) 225-3115 - Washington D.C.
(270) 487-9509 - Madisonville
(270) 408-1865 - Paducah
(270) 487-9509 - Tompkinsville
or [Contact Online](#)

Rep. Thomas Massie, 4th District (202) 225-3465 - Washington D.C.
(606) 324-9898 - Ashland
(502) 265-9119 - LaGrange
(859) 426-0080 - Northern KY
or [Contact Online](#)

Rep. Brett Guthrie, 2nd District (202) 225-3501 - Washington D.C.
(270) 842-9896 - Bowling Green
or [Contact Online](#)

Rep. Hal Rogers, 5th District (202) 225-4601 - Washington D.C.
(606) 679-8346 - Somerset
(606) 886-0844 - Prestonsburg
(606) 439-0794 - Hazard
or [Contact Online](#)

Rep. Morgan McGarvey, 3rd District (202) 225-5401 - Washington D.C.
(502) 582-5129 - Louisville
or [Contact Online](#)

Rep. Andy Barr, 6th District (202) 225-4706 - Washington D.C.
(859) 219-1366 - Lexington
or [Contact Online](#)

Take Action: Get out the Vote & Protect Our Schools

There are many ways your branch can become involved in voting on issues on equity in your community:

- Visit [Protect Our Schools KY](#) to get involved in advocacy **AGAINST** Constitutional Amendment 2 and follow the Protect Our Schools [Facebook Page](#)
 - Organize an [Issue Forum](#) to bring up important issues to your legislatures
 - Write [Letters to the Editor and Op-Ed Articles](#) to bring issues important to the AAUW to the attention of your community!
 - Participate in **Get Out the Vote!** The last day to register to vote in KY for the general election is October 7th.
 - Visit [AAUW Election Resources](#) to learn more about voter engagement
 - And be sure to note Get Out the Vote [Do's and Don'ts](#) for AAUW members
 - Review the [2024 AAUW Voter Issue Guide](#) which outlines public policy priorities and provides questions to ask candidates.
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AAUW Leadership In Kentucky

Kentucky Branch Presidents 2024-2025

Ashland Area	Patricia Hall
Berea	Jackie Burnside
Bluegrass Central	Stephanie Cason
Louisville	Kathy Matheny
Maysville	Sue Ellen Grannis
Owensboro	Mary Cupp

Kentucky State Board 2024-2025

President	Gae Broadwater (Bluegrass Central)
Vice President	Open
Treasurer	Robinil Jameson (Bluegrass Central)
Secretary	Teena Halbig (Louisville)
Website Manager	Randolph Hollingsworth (Bluegrass Central)
Bylaws	Sharon Marcum (Bluegrass Central)
Newsletter Editor	Laura Seroka (Berea)
College University Rep.	Jamieca Jones (U of L)
Public Policy/Historian	Gae Broadwater (Bluegrass Central)

EVENTS & REMINDERS

- If your branch recruited new members during FY24, you may be entitled to free national memberships. [Claim free membership](#) by September 30
- The Empowering Women Through Innovative Programs webinars began this September. Check the [calendar](#) for upcoming dates and times.
- The next Kentucky State Board Meeting is October 1 at 8 p.m. EDT.

Keep us in the know:

If your branch has news they would like featured in the next newsletter, please [Submit News](#) or reach out to Laura Seroka, Newsletter Editor, at SerokaL@berea.edu.

Stay in Touch

