



website: <https://charlotte-nc.aauw.net/> Address: PO Box 26545, Charlotte, NC 28221

"Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much." Helen Keller

Mission Statement: Our mission is to advance equity for women and girls through advocacy, education, and research. AAUW empowers all women and girls to reach their highest potential.



LOOKING AHEAD

From President, Pamela Oviedo

As the year draws to a close, the holiday season reminds us of the importance of supporting one another and giving back to make a meaningful difference in the lives of others. Our branch can take pride in knowing that we have impacted our community through initiatives like the NC Resolves Campaign and by donating canned goods to those in need.

Looking ahead, our objective for the coming year is to achieve 5-star branch status. To reach this milestone, we plan to host an engaging lifelong learning workshop, increase our membership, and implement impactful programs that support women and girls in higher education. We will also partner with STEM professionals to conduct a mini-STEM camp and organize a silent auction scholarship ball to benefit a student entering college. These initiatives will position us to meet the criteria for becoming a 5-STAR branch.

I am grateful to have the opportunity to be in this branch. Your time, energy, and support have made a real difference in advancing education, equity, and opportunity for women and girls.

Have a wonderful holiday and a prosperous New Year!

DECEMBER EVENT—CHAT AND CHEW

Date: Saturday, December 6, 2025

Time: 11:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Location: Trio Restaurant, 10709 McMullen Creek Parkway, Charlotte

Description: This is a time to meet new AAUW members and catch up with existing members while enjoying a no-host luncheon.

Attire: Ugly Christmas Sweater

DECEMBER EVENT—HOLIDAY SOIREE

Date: Sunday, December 7, 2025

Time: 2:30 p.m.

Location: Grape and Wine Tasting Room, 30 Concord Commons Place SW, Concord NC

Description: This is a joint event with the Salisbury AAUW branch. We will join them in the festivities over food and wine. It's a great opportunity to share our thoughts, learn what another branch is doing to further the AAUW mission and establish new friendships.

AAUW NC PROGRAM

Most likely, our members have already received notice of this Zoom meeting directly from the NC State AAUW in another format. The hyperlink to the meeting is unchanged, but note that the Meeting ID and Passcode are new.

Date: Saturday, December 6, 2025

Time: 10:30 a.m.

Location: ZOOM

[Use this link on December 6th to join the Zoom session.](#)

Zoom Credentials:

Meeting ID: 856 2609 0667

Passcode: 775475

Description: Join AAUW NC STEM Chair, Laura Tew and Author, Andrea Alemanni-Grunenwald. Andrea Alemanni-Grunenwald's enchanting and informative book, *Ava Antibody Explains Your Body and Vaccines*, will be presented. Read more: www.avaantibody.com.

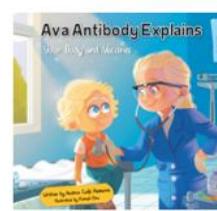
AAUW STEM Ed FOR GIRLS

Science All Around Us

Save the Date: December 6th: 10:30 AM – 12 Noon

Join AAUW NC STEM Chair, Laura Tew and Author, Andrea Alemanni-Grunenwald

Andrea Alemanni-Grunenwald's enchanting and informative book, *Ava Antibody Explains Your Body and Vaccines*, will be presented. [Read more: www.avaantibody.com](#). We will explore:



How to engage children in their health choices

- Immune system and vaccine basics for young attendees!

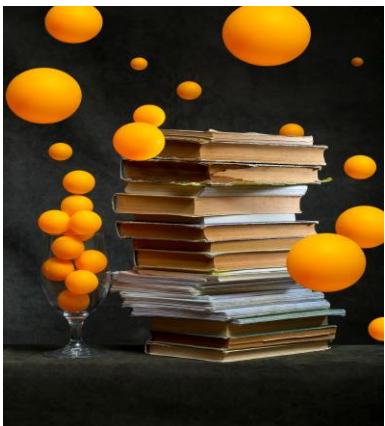
What's new in STEMEd for Girls in NC

- Science, health and you
- Avoiding hearsay!

Members and guests are invited to participate in this AAUW Tar Heel Branch program developed for AAUW NC. All are welcome! IN-PERSON LOCATION: Benjamin Branch Library, 1530 Benjamin Parkway Library, Greensboro, NC 27408. [RSVP](#) to AAUW NC STEM Chair, Laura Tew: stem@auwnc.org

No reservation required for Zoom. Zoom opens at 10:15; [ZOOM link for remote participation](#). Meeting ID: 856 2609 0667 Passcode: 775475

DECEMBER EVENT—PARK ROAD BOOKSTORE



Date: Saturday, December 13, 2025

Time: Noon

Location: Park Road Books, 4139 Park Road, Charlotte, NC

Description: Support education by purchasing requested books for students. The books and/or donations support Title 1 schools in our community.

SAVE THE DATE: APRIL 17-18, 2025

The AAUW Charlotte branch is hosting the AAUW North Carolina Annual Meeting/Spring Conference 2026!

This is exciting. Please plan to join us as this will be the first face-to-face conference since the pandemic. It is certainly one of the best opportunities to greet each of our fellow members face-to-face while we learn, build relationships, and just have fun together. Details will follow—from both the Charlotte chapter and the State AAUW Board members. Look for information in your digital communication and the Charlotte newsletter. The State Board members plan to share more details about this conference in a supplemental issue of Connect.

PUBLIC POLICY BRIEFS

From Lucille Howard

AAUW-US Advocacy

Last month, the Trump administration escalated its effort to dismantle the U.S. Department of Education (ED). On November 18, ED announced six “partnerships” moving the day-to-day work of major K-12 and higher education programs to other agencies, after slashing staff across the Department. This is not routine reorganization. It threatens students’ civil rights and access to opportunity. We need your voice now.

[Write to your members of Congress now to intervene and ensure the Department of Education can fulfill its responsibilities to students.](#)

AAUW-NC

The AAUW's new strategic plan for 2025 focuses on advancing equity for women and girls through three key priorities: funding higher education, removing barriers to success, and strengthening AAUW's reach.

Charlotte Area AAUW

Advocacy continues for full funding of education in North Carolina. Members are signing petitions, writing post cards to legislators and sending as many messages as possible to NC Senators and Representatives across the state urging that they pass a budget and put public money into public schools.

NOVEMBER FOOD DRIVE



The November Food Drive was a success!

Our members enjoyed a very nice luncheon at Leroy Fox restaurant and brought food to share with those in need.

Our President, Pamela Oviedo, delivered the food to the Mathews Help Center.

Thank you for your generous donations.

Please Welcome Our New Members

Let me introduce our two newest members, **Adlore “Addi” Casseus** and **Jacqueline Jenkins**.

Ph.D. Candidate | Scholar, Writer, and Leadership Coach | Founder of Ascend Revenue Group & The Empress Addi Podcast

Adlore “Addi” Casseus is a dynamic scholar, writer, and leadership coach whose work bridges education, culture, and consciousness. A Ph.D. candidate in Leadership and Change at **Antioch University**, her research explores **epistemic justice and decolonizing knowledge** through Haitian Vodou as an epistemological framework—reframing ancestral, spiritual, and communal ways of knowing as legitimate sources of wisdom and leadership.

Professionally, Addi has served as **Director of Humanities Pathway Partnerships** at **Miami Dade College**, **Strategic Account Manager** at **DeVry University**, and **Executive Coach and Founder of Ascend Revenue Group**, where she empowers visionary entrepreneurs and teams

through empathy-driven leadership and communication frameworks. Her signature program, *The Ascend Method™*, integrates mindful strategy, conscious sales, and transformational leadership.

A passionate storyteller and communicator, Addi is also the **creator and host of *The Empress Addi Podcast***—a thought-provoking platform centering Black women’s voices, spirituality, and the intersections of culture, identity, and healing. Her writing, which spans essays, blog features, and academic publications, examines liberation, authenticity, and the power of narrative to inspire social change.

Beyond her professional and academic pursuits, Addi is deeply committed to community service, mentorship, and cultural preservation. She is an active member of the **Charlotte Professional Haitian Network (CHPN)**, where she supports professional development initiatives within the Haitian diaspora **And The Order of the Eastern Star**. Her broader mission is to cultivate spaces—scholarly, spiritual, and entrepreneurial—where women can lead with wholeness, purpose, and power.

Addi believes that women’s voices are catalysts for transformation. Through her research, leadership, and creative expression, she continues to advance the principles that AAUW stands for: **equity, education, and empowerment for all women and girls**.

Career & Technical Education - Ms. Jenkins

Introduction:

Hello, my name is Jacqueline Jenkins and I have been teaching at South Mecklenburg High School for approx. 11 years. I am originally from New Jersey and moved to Charlotte in 2008 from Orlando, Florida where I graduated from the University of Central Florida with a B.S. degree in Liberal Arts. I also earned a Master's of Secondary Education degree from Grand Canyon University. Teaching has always been my passion and I love sharing my knowledge with others. I consider myself a lifelong learner always seeking new ideas, challenges and experiences. During leisure times I like to cook new recipes, put together lego with my grandson, and spend time with friends and family. My favorite quote is:

Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.

Nelson Mandela



QUEEN THOMPSON: Living a Powerful Legacy

Queen Thompson has been a member of the AAUW Charlotte branch for many years and was recently featured in the East Charlotte Quarterly by *Salem Macknee*.



Queen Thompson's address on Lawrence Orr Road in east Charlotte holds a wealth of family history and Charlotte history. Thompson, 79, is one of the oldest surviving grandchildren of Orr, a strong advocate of education and land ownership for Black people in the area. An elementary school bears his name and a placemaking grant from the city will feature Lawrence Orr in a local history display planned at Albemarle and Farm Pond roads. To learn more about him, look for a film on YouTube, "Lawrence Orr: Chronicle of a Life Fulfilled."

Thompson grew up on Sharon Amity Road near Vernerdale, which she calls the Hezekiah Alexander property after a slave owner who bought her ancestor Bet, age 5, for his wife. Thompson worked in other states and in Charlotte as a teacher, counselor, and social worker.

Her husband, Melvin, retired from the Air Force. In 1983 the couple moved to the house on Lawrence Orr Road, neighbor to relatives who also own houses on the family land. For several years, Thompson portrayed a slave in re-enactments at Rosedale Plantation. These days she writes about the legacy of slavery and about growing up Black in east Charlotte, and stays active in community affairs.

2026 CALENDAR

January	Mini-tech month—sign up for online courses of interest. For example, Intro to AI, Social Media Essentials, Google Account & Free Software Tools, etc.
February	Partner with Johnson C. Smith University to celebrate Black History Month.
March	Engage a guest speaker to celebrate Women's History Month and talk about opportunities for women in the workforce.
April	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• April 17-18 Annual NC AAUW Conference• Recognize Financial Literacy Month. Program yet TBD.
May	Mother/Daughter Tea.
June	End of year Luncheon.

AAUW Charlotte Area Branch 2025-2026 Board Members

President	Dr. Pamela Oviedo
Membership Vice President	
Finance Officer	
Public Policy Chair	Lucille Howard
STEM Chair	
Recording Secretary and Newsletter Editor	Janet McClay
Past Co-Presidents	Rita Law and Marleen Hansen



Prepared by Janet McClay

Janet.mcclay24@gmail.com