

MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 13, 2021 MEETING VIA ZOOM

Present: Maria Jones, Zenobia Harris, Gloria Bastidas, Kenya Eddings, Maria Avalar, Sandra Smith, Diana Glaze, Lula Brooks, Sylvia Brown, Maureen Terrafranca, Lottie Adams, Arlene Rose, Amanda Potter Cole, Mary McGehee, Melissa Sawyer, Debra Tillery, Dee Sanders, Candace Williams, Jean Pennucci, Susan Holt

11:05 AM – The meeting was called to order by Maria Jones.

Gloria Bastidas, AAUW Diversity Chair, introduced the meeting's program which has a goal of promoting an understanding of diversity and everyone's being “invited to the party.”

Lula Brooks was the first panelist. She has been a member of AAUW since 1982 and serves as Policy Chair. She is involved in several community organizations in addition to AAUW. She noted that the definition of diversity reaches across many dimensions – not only race. One example is student diversity with nontraditional students.

Panelist Sylvia Theodon of Arkansas Foundation for Medical Care, who is bilingual, is involved with a number of community organizations. She reported that, having come to the United States at age 5, she realized she was different; and, this diversity helped with school, work, and understanding. She is now learning a 3rd language. She finds the idea of diversity's being the “what” and inclusion's being the “how” to be a helpful one.

Panelist Dr. Diana Glaze is a retired educator and a lifetime member of AAUW. She is involved in many areas and activities. She noted that ethnic diversity for her began in childhood in her neighborhood. In 1959, she saw segregation in Florida and was appalled. Later in California, she learned about Hispanic cultures and, later, Asian cultures. She said Little Rock elementary schools were not integrated until 1971, and this shaped her in her own life, having seen this segregation. She noted she is now 82 years old and her diversity experiences are not over. She advised staying involved and making a difference.

Dr. Joel Tumilson has been a member for 3 years. He experiences diversity in his home; his wife is from Honduras. He presented in a video for the meeting.

Panelist Maria Avalar is a Community Outreach Specialist and is a voice for the Latin community; she works at the Arkansas Foundation for Medical Care. She said she was born in Mexico and diverse representation is very important. She noted her job role shows the importance of all cultures in order to have a better community. She values education and believes people should be bilingual because it helps with understanding.

Panelist Kenya Eddings works with the Arkansas Department of Health where she works with wellness programs. She is involved with multiple organizations and, as a member of the Junior League of Little Rock, has experiences with women from different backgrounds. She described going to see the movie, “Selma” with a group of them. They discussed it, and she and a white woman 11 years older than she went to Selma. They were there when then-President Obama, Dick Gregory, and John Lewis were marchers. She shared that it meant a lot to be there with someone of a different generation.

In a question/answer session following panelist presentations, the following information re: how to

move forward based on experiences was provided:

- 1) Keep more of an open mind.
- 2) Don't just go through the motions – be intentional.
- 3) Diversity is enriching in life and is amazing.
- 4) Living in another country with challenges (reading store and parking signs, for example) opens our points of view when we take time to listen.
- 5) If we get to know each other, we can erase stereotypes.

Announcements –

Amanda Potter Cole is chair of the Holiday Rummage Sale on November 20. This is the biggest fundraiser for AAUW this year. The sale will be held at the Unitarian Universalist Church, 1818 Reservoir Road, from 11 AM to 3 PM. If it is raining, the sale will be indoors. Volunteers are needed to help set up Friday from 2 PM to 6 PM, Saturday from 8 AM to 4 PM to set up, clean up. The sale starts at 11 AM. Volunteers can help watch tables, serve at an information table, and welcome guests. Volunteers will wear blue and will have name tags.

Pulaski County Clerk, Terry Hollingsworth, will present at the Greater Little Rock Federation of Women's Clubs on November 16. Lunch is at noon and the cost is \$12.

The Little Rock School District will have the annual Jane Mendel Reading Day on Tuesday, November 16. Volunteers will read (in-person this year) to children.

Mary McGehee is working on the membership list for the Little Rock branch directory. Mary is checking with the national data base to help update the list.

The next AAUW meeting is scheduled for December 11, 2021.

Meeting was adjourned.