

November 2024  
Volume 73, Issue 3



ROCHESTER (MN)  
BRANCH

# HIGHLIGHTS

AAUW DINNER MEETING

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 20, 2024

5:30 SOCIAL TIME

6:15 DINNER

7:00 MEETING & PROGRAM

ROCHESTER GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB

3100 COUNTRY CLUB ROAD SW

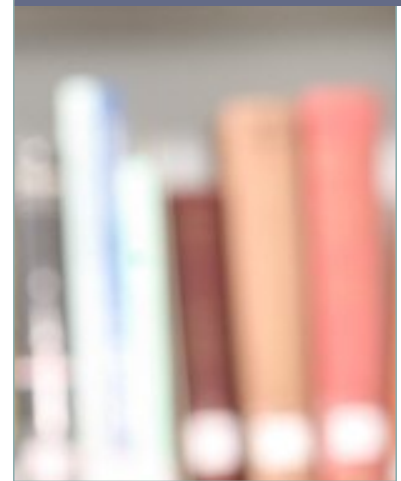
CRICKET CLUB ROOM

PROGRAM: DR. JOANINA GICOBI

THE LONG AND WINDING ROAD FROM KENYA  
TO ROCHESTER

MAKE YOUR RESERVATION BY NOVEMBER 14

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For important information about making your reservation for the dinner!

## Dinner Menu

Garden Salad (per person), Mixed Greens, Julienne Carrots, Tomatoes, Rand and House Vinaigrette Dressing, Dinner Rolls and Butter, Regular and Decaf Coffee, Hot Tea and Iced Tea available

### CHOICE OF

Grilled Salmon, Tropical Fruit Salsa and Lemon Butter, Wild Rice Pilaf and Seasonal Vegetable Medley

OR

Pork Tenderloin, Apple and Chipotle Demi, Wild Rice Pilaf and Seasonal Vegetable Medley

OR

Roasted Potato Gnocchi, Vegetables and Herbs

Mail check for \$42 made out to AAUW to be received by November 14 to:

Rosemary Bradshaw  
Shorewood Senior Campus  
2205 2nd St SW Apt 233  
Rochester MN 55902

Indicate your choice of salmon, pork, or gnocchi on the memo line of your check.

Questions? Contact Rosemary at 507-226-3945

### MEMBERSHIP

For information,  
please contact

Kathy Lawrence

507-285-9331

kathy-  
lawrence@charter.net

or

Jo Trachy

507-269-0091

### PROGRAM: FROM KENYA TO ROCHESTER

Growing up in rural Kenya, Joanina Gicobi was immersed in a culture of hard work and was willing to do her best to conquer any challenge that came her way. She had outstanding grades and had been admitted to a top secondary school in the country. The problem was that she couldn't afford the tuition. At that difficult time in her young life she met two of the people who would change her life by mentoring, guidance and opening doors for future education.

That resulted in Joanina coming to the U.S. for college and earning her Ph.D. in immunology at Mayo Clinic Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences in May, 2024. She is doing post doctoral research in Cancer Immunology and Immunotherapy Program.

Her resilience along the way has helped Joanina adapt to many changes. As a Ph.D. candidate, she had to adjust through the Covid-19 pandemic, and in 2022, becoming a first-time mother to her daughter, Amani.

Joanina is now focused on helping young students achieve their goals. She has mentored and supported Kenyan high school students and she has helped Rochester students as a STEM mentor. As she continues with her work as a scientist, she knows there is always a need to pay it forward.

The dinner will be held in The Cricket Club Room at Rochester Golf & Country Club. Enter through the main club door and take the stairs or elevator to the second floor.



## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

All branch members are invited to participate in any of the following groups. Please let the chair or discussion leader know in advance, if possible. Contact the chair, discussion leader, or host for additional meeting information.

### **BOARD MEETING—MONDAY, NOVEMBER 4—7:00 PM**

Location: Zoom. Board members: Notify Barb if you cannot attend.

President: Barb Knutsen 507-285-5122 (home); 507-535-9175 (cell); [bknutsen45@gmail.com](mailto:bknutsen45@gmail.com)

### **READING PLUS—MONDAY, NOVEMBER 4—9:00 AM**

Book: **James: A Novel** by Percival Everett

Leader and Host: Joyce

Location: ZOOM

Chairs: Ruth Stroebe 507-271-3240 [ruthstroebe@yahoo.com](mailto:ruthstroebe@yahoo.com) and Carol Hartley 916-712-8899 [chartley2@comcast.net](mailto:chartley2@comcast.net)

### **WHO'S WHO—DOES NOT MEET IN NOVEMBER**

Chair: Joyce Wenz [joycewenz@yahoo.com](mailto:joycewenz@yahoo.com)

### **BETWEEN THE LINES—TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 5—1:00 P.M.**

Book: **Small Things Like These** by Claire Keegan

Location: Zoom Contact Karen Krueger ([brkck@charter.net](mailto:brkck@charter.net)) for information

### **AFTERNOON READING—WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 13—1:00 PM**

Book: **Remarkably Bright Creatures**

Discussion Leader: Julie Troutman

Hostess: Judy Smithson Location: 2600 18th Ave SW, 258-7388

Chair: Judy Auger [judy\\_auger@msn.com](mailto:judy_auger@msn.com), 282-7922

### **WORDS WORTH—WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 13—1:30 PM**

Book: **Remarkably Bright Creatures** by Shelby Van Pelt

Location: Homestead, 1900 Ballington Blvd NW

Discussion Leader: Barbara Knutsen

Chair: Mary Ann Kleis, 507-251-4741, [makleis@aol.com](mailto:makleis@aol.com)

### **US FOREIGN POLICY —THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 21 —1:00 PM**

Contact Sara to topic and leader information

Location: ZOOM

Chair: Sara Staab 507-261-9803 [jeff.sara.staab@gmail.com](mailto:jeff.sara.staab@gmail.com)

### **READING WITH A PURPOSE—WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 4—2:00 PM**

Book: **The Covenant of Water** by Abraham Verghese

Discussion Leader: Jo Trachy

Host: Ione Schloegel, 2837 Wellington Ln SW

Chair: Julie Caesar 288-9209; [rstgardener@gmail.com](mailto:rstgardener@gmail.com)

## FROM THE PRESIDENT —

### BARBARA KNUTSEN

bknutsen45@gmail.com

507-285-5122

507-535-9175 (cell)



We are entering the seasons of thanks and giving. We are thankful for the work AAUW continues to do in advancing equity for women through awarding fellowships, researching issues affecting women, and education and training on salary negotiation and STEM projects. Soon you will be receiving a letter from Sara Staab, AAUW Funds Chair, asking you to contribute to AAUW. Please see her outline of the various funds in this newsletter and support this work. To learn more of what AAUW stands for and works toward, go to the website [AAUW.org](http://AAUW.org)

On the state level we have two opportunities to award young women whose project or activity specifically addresses equity issues of women and girls. A college winner receives \$1000 and a high school winner receives \$500. Last year a Young Women of Equity award was given to a Rochester student. Criteria for this award are: The nominee must exhibit leadership that reflects the AAUW Mission. Measurable outcomes should be identified providing evidence of the impact of the action or event. Nominations must be made by a branch member using information given by the candidate. Nominations are due in March.

I encourage you to attend our November dinner meeting to meet last year's NCCWSL student and hear about her experience attending the young women's leadership conference. We hope AAUW will continue to offer this experience to student leaders. HAPPY THANKSGIVING!

### **From AAUW Funds Vice-President, Sara Staab:**

Look for the annual Holiday Letter from AAUW Rochester in your mailbox in early November. Last year we switched the letter to a Thanksgiving theme in order to get donations to the national office before their tax year deadline in early December.

Each year our branch is able to name people as "Named Gift Honorees." The number we can name in a year is based on the total dollar amount of donations from individuals in the branch and the branch itself. Previous honorees are listed in the back of the Rochester Yearbook/Directory.

For the last several years, AAUW National has preferred donations made to its Greatest Needs Fund so it has more flexibility in directing resources at a given moment. This year, National is allowing donations to any of the following funds to count toward the Named Gift Honorees: #9110 Greatest Needs, #4449 Economic Security Fund, #4450 Education and Training Fund, and #4452 Leadership Fund.

According to the AAUW MN Funds VP, by contributing to one of these four unrestricted ("umbrella" funds, we allow AAUW staff more flexibility in responding to needs within those areas and can still support some of our favorite causes, such as the Eleanor Roosevelt Fund, LAF case support, NCCWSL, or Start Smart.

# SPOTLIGHT

## MEET UMR STUDENT HEIDI NGUYEN 2024 NCCWSL PARTICIPANT

The experience at NCCWSL empowered my identity as a woman. Even though I am at a school with women as the majority, it was still empowering to see other women in different fields from mine (healthcare) who participate in leadership. This conference allowed me to reflect on myself as a student leader at the University of Minnesota-Rochester, and not only in student government or as a teaching assistant but



also allowed me to reflect on my personal life about how I myself can be a leader or apply the skills and knowledge I gained from that conference.

I also got the chance to connect with other students like me. One I met was previously a nurse and decided that she wanted to go to law school to help patients with the law. I resonated with her deeply because I also want to make an impact using my medical/healthcare knowledge. Another is the person I roomed with and she talked about her experience in Duluth and I learned more about her culture!

What I took from this conference (it was a bit ago) was how to shape my future through side projects, I was very intrigued because I have always wanted to do something on the side, especially at a non-profit level. I also went to sessions that were empowering female voices and heard stories that I related too, some were stories of being the only English speaker in their family and having to find financial scholarships/assistance. That session I gained a lot of insight on because the speaker spoke about their experience about scholarship writing and how to make your statements essay clear. I hope to use for my following peers and I am so thankful for this opportunity given by AAUW!

Heidi Nguyen

University of Minnesota-Rochester

Bachelor of Science in Health Sciences 2025

President of Rochester Student Association 2023-2025

Research Assistant-Gastroenterology & Hepatology-Mayo Clinic

**Come to our November meeting to visit with Heidi and learn more about her NCCWSL experience. Thank you, Heidi! We look forward to meeting you in person.**

AAUW ROCHESTER

626 GATES LN SW

ROCHESTER, MN  
55902

**Web sites:**

National AAUW:

[www.aauw.org](http://www.aauw.org)

MN AAUW:

[aaumn.net](http://aaumn.net)

AAUW Rochester:

<https://rochester-mn.aauw.net/>

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You are receiving this e-mail as a member of the Rochester Branch of AAUW.

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

Our newsletter mailing address is

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626 Gates LN SW

Rochester, MN 55902

Rochester branch email

[aauwrochmn@gmail.com](mailto:aauwrochmn@gmail.com)

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