



AAUW Youngstown Update

November 2024

We hope to see you at the next meeting on November 2, 2024 at Park Vista North Lounge (Basement) at 10 am. Free parking is available behind the North residential tower.

This presentation by Thomas G. Welsh, *“Staying Relevant: Positive Organizational Responses to the Mahoning Valley’s Transformation,”* will reveal how some communities and organizations in the Youngstown area have maintained visibility and influence amid challenging post-industrial trends. The talk will focus on two strikingly different communities, the local Jewish community and the Ursuline Sisters of Youngstown, both of whom have preserved a strong institutional presence and powerful sense of mission. The presentation will highlight specific strategies that have enabled these groups to pursue their goals in the face of tough circumstances.

The speaker is Thomas G. Welsh, a professional writer and editor based in Youngstown, Ohio. Since completing his doctorate at Kent State University, he has co-authored three historical narratives *“Strouss’: Youngstown’s Dependable Store,” “Classic Restaurants of Youngstown,”* and *“A History of Jewish Youngstown and the Steel Valley.”* He has also authored books including *“The Decline of Youngstown’s Catholic Elementary Schools”* and a biography of William M. Cafaro. Tom has served as an adjunct faculty member at Youngstown State University’s Department of Communications and now works for Windsor House, Inc., as an activities assistant.

October 2024 Meeting



A great panel discussion focusing on engaging students and faculty in initiatives that support civic engagement, community service, volunteerism, philanthropy and advancing the quality of life in our communities. Our panelists were Laura Dewberry, director of the Center for Nonprofit Leadership; Kathie Chaffee Gaige, chair of Voter Services for League of Women Voters; Cryshanna Jackson

Leftwich, professor of Politics and International Relations; Hazel Marie, Distinguished Professor of Mechanical Engineering; and Amy Weaver, Sweeney Professor of Nursing.



AAUW understands the need for people to vote and voice their opinions. That is why Issue 1 on the Ohio ballot is important to end the practice of partisan gerrymandering that unduly favors any political party. The plan to pursue this amendment was made after the current redistricting commission did not follow the reforms Ohioans passed in 2015 and 2018 and produced 7 voting district maps, all of which were judged to be unconstitutional. The language on the ballot is deliberately making the issue confusing to voters.

Pass the message: you need to vote yes on issue one to enable fair maps in Ohio and restore power where it belongs: with Ohio citizens, not politicians. The leaders of the "Vote No" campaign are the politicians who are protecting their political interests, not the people's. They stand to lose the most if Issue 1 passes. So do not be confused. Pass the word: **Vote Yes on Issue 1.**

I'M VOTING FOR



If you need access to a Voter Guide, the League of Women Voter's guide can be located by clicking: [Voting Guide for the Greater Youngstown Area](#). Learn about AAUW about issues supporting gender equity and so that you can cast your ballot for candidates who share your values, visit: [Take Action](#).

AAUW Membership Benefits

One of the benefits of belonging to AAUW or being a student or faculty member of a college/university that belongs is having access to fellowships and grants. For all inquiries related to AAUW's Fellowships and Grants, whether it is how to receive funding or to learn more about a potential recipient to speak at a program, email fellowships@aauw.org.



Student Loan Forgiveness Update

The Biden administration announced that more than 60,000 student loan borrowers will have their debts forgiven, totaling about \$4.5 billion in relief. The student loan forgiveness comes from a program intended to help public servants.

Borrowers enrolled in the Public Service Loan Forgiveness Program (PSLF) will have their student debts canceled. Also involved are borrowers who enrolled in a temporary waiver under PSLF in 2022, and others who benefitted from unspecified "improvements" made to the program earlier this year. PSLF is designed to provide debt relief for public servants like teachers, nurses, social workers, first responders, service members and others who have made 10 years of payments.

Hurricanes Helena and Milton

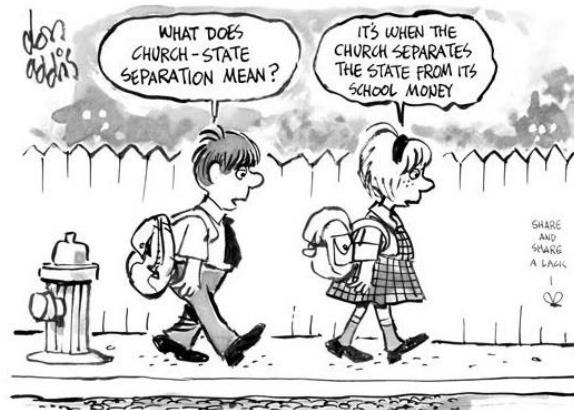
Our thoughts and concerns go out to those affected by the recent hurricanes Milton and Helene. Many have friends and relatives that have had devastating losses, especially those senior citizens that have no other residence. After a pair of devastating hurricanes caused unfathomable damage to states like Florida, Georgia, and North Carolina. Some Republicans are spreading conspiracy theories. While these false theories certainly can cause harm, they are not causing as much damage as some GOP lawmakers' refusal to move their state's voter registration deadlines.

AAUW Mission

AAUW opposes all forms of discrimination and supports constitutional protection for the civil rights of all individuals. AAUW believes that high-quality public education is the foundation of a democratic society and the key to improving economic prosperity and gender equality. That is why many educators have been concerned with EdChoice Vouchers which have been proven to hurt public education in Ohio.

According to the Ohio Constitution, Article VI, Section 2 : “The General Assembly shall make such provisions, by taxation, or otherwise, as, with the income arising from the school trust fund, will secure a thorough and efficient system of common schools throughout the state; but no religious or other sect, or sects, shall ever have any exclusive right to, or control of, any part of the school funds of this state.”

Five factors will further strain school budgets in the coming years: 1) recent state tax cuts, 2) diversion of resources to school voucher programs, 3) inadequate funding formulas, 4) elevated costs due to inflation, and 5) uncertain revenue outlook. It will lead to higher property taxes and more school levy approvals. The main problem that has developed is the increase in EdChoice vouchers. They have increased the availability of money to families who could afford tuition to private schools if they chose to use them. Also, the amount of money allotted to each student is higher than what is available for public schools (I.e. For example, for high school students, it is over \$8500 compared to \$4500 in some districts). Citizens can opt out of the public education system, but the state has no constitutional obligation to pay the education expenses of those who opt out. Not only do these private schools not follow any regulations or rules that public schools must adhere to, but the state is also giving millions in taxpayer dollars directly to private schools to help them renovate and expand their campuses. It may be the next frontier in the push to increase the use of school vouchers. The Ohio House is leading the assault on public education.



I would encourage you to contact your representatives and voice your displeasure with their support of EdChoice vouchers. A number of school districts belong to the Vouchers Hurt Ohio which will have a court hearing on the constitutionality of EdChoice Vouchers on November 4th. I would encourage your school district to participate in the suit. It is time to fix the school funding system and phase out vouchers and charters. These choice distractions have been a major hindrance to the development of a thorough and efficient system of common schools as required by the Ohio Constitution.

That is enough information to rattle your thoughts.

See you soon

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