



## The Magnolia

Spring 2019



Advancing equity for women and girls through advocacy, education, philanthropy, and research

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Louisiana



## Vivian's Views

The women's movement is alive and well in Louisiana and AAUW of LA is in the thick of it. On March 8<sup>th</sup> we presented 'The Simple Truth about the Gender Pay Gap' at **Roots Camp LA** to a diverse crowd of Louisiana activists. Also during March, which is Women's History Month, we are partnering with **Louisiana Women March Forward** to host **Women on Wednesday Town Hall Listening Sessions** in communities across Louisiana to listen to the voices in those communities, to learn more about how women's issues are impacting their lives and how women's organizations can best serve their needs. On March 26<sup>th</sup> our coalition will meet with **Representative Paula Davis**. See details about all of these events later in this newsletter and see p 7 for calendar and ticketing information.

We will be tabling at our College and University partners this spring including a visit to South Louisiana Community College (SLCC) and University of Louisiana at Lafayette (ULL) where I have been asked to speak as a panelist at their **Women's Leadership Conference** on March 21<sup>st</sup>.



On April 7<sup>th</sup>, in lieu of a convention we will host a **Legislative Session Kick-off Brunch** in Baton Rouge. We are honored to announce **Feminist Majority Foundation President Ellie Smeal** as guest speaker. Recognized throughout the nation as a women's rights leader, Eleanor Smeal appears frequently on television and radio, testifies before Congress and to diverse audiences on a wide variety of women's issues and on a broad range of feminist topics. Louisiana Progress and NOW are sponsoring this event along with AAUW LA.

Two days later on April 9<sup>th</sup> AAUW and LAW are hosting an **LA Ratify ERA Lobby Day** at the State Capitol with a march from the state library to the Capitol steps. Congress passed the Equal Rights Amendment in 1972. Thirty-seven states have ratified it; only one more is needed for it to become law. Louisiana could be the one. But we need you, a member of AAUW LA, to show up! (See page 5 for details.) New Orleans coalition and Unitarian Universalist Voices for Reproductive Freedom are sponsoring this event with us.

**This is the year that Louisiana could make a huge difference not only here but all across the country by passing the ERA.** If you ever cared about the ERA, equal pay and Title IX, know that now is the time to make your voice heard and show up at the State Capitol. We know the odds are long but we have spent 135 years fighting against gender stereotypes and for equity. There's so much more that needs to be done. Please join the march and contact your Louisiana legislators to tell them to support the ERA. If not now, when?



## 2019 AAUW LA Elections Call for Nominations

We are searching for new energetic leaders to join our board and I hope some of you will step up into leadership roles! We will hold a state meeting later to handle an election and other business.

The president elect, membership vice president, and treasurer shall be elected in odd years and we are actively looking for new leaders to help move this organization forward. Join our team in leading AAUW of LA. It is a great organization with a lot of great women to work with to improve the lives of women and girls in Louisiana.

In years without a convention, like this year, elections may be held electronically. Nominations from members may be submitted to the nominating committee in writing prior to the annual convention.

Nominations are open for these executive board positions:

**President-Elect** – This position is in training to be our next president. The president/administrator shall be the official spokesperson and representative for AAUW-LA and shall be responsible for submitting such reports and forms as required by the AAUW. The current president is term limited.

**Membership Chair** (2 year term) - The state membership vice president oversees efforts to recruit and sustain a diverse, active membership in the state and other such duties as the president and board shall direct.

**Treasurer** (2 year term). The treasurer shall be responsible for collecting, distributing, and accounting dues for the funds of AAUW-LA and for meeting specific deadlines.

**Secretary** – (1 year remaining in the term). The secretary shall record and make available upon request the minutes of each meeting and board meeting.

Contact Donna Bertucci-Rogers, Chair, Nominations Committee (see page 1 sidebar for contact information) by April 15 to find out more information or to nominate someone.



### New Member Spotlight:

Rhonda Kim Gleason

She is a Louisiana native, with a significant part of her life raised in Chicago, IL although she now lives in Lafayette. Rhonda's been an educator in higher ed for over twelve years, a third-generation educator in Lafayette. Rhonda has been actively engaged with the Louisiana Legislature for over five years, volunteering time to lobby our representatives toward progress in Louisiana. Rhonda co-chairs the Education Committee for the League of Women Voters, Louisiana; she is a graduate of the inaugural Emerge-Louisiana class; is the former Social Media Lead and Lafayette Group Lead for Moms Demand Action for Gun Violence in America who honored her: "One Tough Mother" Louisiana volunteer, 2017. Rhonda hosted the Lafayette March for Our Lives 2018, in conjunction with the national movement. There is so much more to say about her but not enough time here. So happy to welcome her to AAUW LA!



### ***Women on Wednesday Town Hall Listening Sessions***

We are partnering with **Louisiana Women March Forward** to host a series of **Women on Wednesday Town Hall Listening Sessions** in communities across Louisiana to listen to the voices in those communities, to learn more about how women's issues are impacting their lives and how women's organizations can best serve their needs.

The purpose is to hear the actual voices of Louisiana women tell us what the issues are for which they would march. These events are open to the public and we seek diverse attendees. This event is an opportunity to meet fellow activists and organizers and to learn how to get involved with local organizations working to advance women in the state. Issue experts and community leaders will be available to answer questions from community members. Please attend and make your voice heard about the issues we need to focus on for women in Louisiana.

**Please see page 7 of this newsletter for all details on calendar events, including all Women on Wednesday Listening Sessions and page 8 for a Lobby Day Flyer (printable).**

|             |          |  |
|-------------|----------|--|
| Lafayette   | March 20 | 6- 8 pm SLCC 1101 Bertrand Dr, Lafayette LA 70506              |
| New Orleans | March 27 | 6- 8 pm First Unitarian and Universalist Church of New Orleans |
| Shreveport  | March 27 | 6- 8 pm Shreveport – Bossier Town Hall                         |
| Baton Rouge | March 27 | 6- 8 pm Bluebonnet Library                                     |

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### ***House Party with State Representative Paula Davis LA House District 69 Tuesday, March 26, 2019 6:00 - 7:30 pm***

AAUW of Louisiana in coalition with the Legislative Agenda for Women (LAW) organizations is having a house party for Representative Paula Davis House District 69 in Baton Rouge at the home of **Suzanne Besse**, 1242 Aurora Place (Tara Subdivision), Baton Rouge, LA 70806. The purpose of this gathering is to meet Representative Davis and for her to meet some of her female constituents and others who advance women's causes. We will share our mission and discuss the needs of Louisiana women.

Register [HERE](#) for a free ticket.

**To join a host committee, RSVP and/or ask questions, contact Vivian Guillory, [vlbg225@gmail.com](mailto:vlbg225@gmail.com)** If you are interested in setting up a meeting in your legislators' districts, let us know.



## *2019 Legislative Session Kick-off Brunch—April 7*

WHO: AAUW Louisiana  
WHAT: Legislative Session Kickoff Brunch, Full breakfast  
WHEN: Sunday, April 7, 2019 from 11:00 am – 1:00 pm.  
WHERE: Ruffino's De La Ronde Hall, 320 Third Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70801

Open to the public, tickets \$50, purchase [HERE](#) from Eventbrite. The deadline to purchase tickets is March 30.



We are honored to announce **Feminist Majority Foundation President Ellie Smeal as guest speaker**. Recognized throughout the nation as a women's rights leader, Eleanor Smeal appears frequently on television and radio, testifies before Congress on a wide variety of women's issues, and speaks to diverse audiences nationwide on a broad range of feminist topics. For over two decades, she has played a leading role in both national and state campaigns to win women's rights legislation and in a number of landmark state and federal court cases for women's rights. You won't want to miss this!

The brunch is an opportunity for AAUW members, supporters, allies and legislators to KICKOFF the session in a powerful way by gathering with legislators and others to table and share policy papers, lobby day announcements and organizational handouts. See the details in this newsletter.

Get your tickets now!!! \$50 for an individual or \$350 for a table of 8 (one free ticket included, plus an extra table for the organization to share information). Louisiana Progress and NOW are sponsoring this event along with AAUW LA.

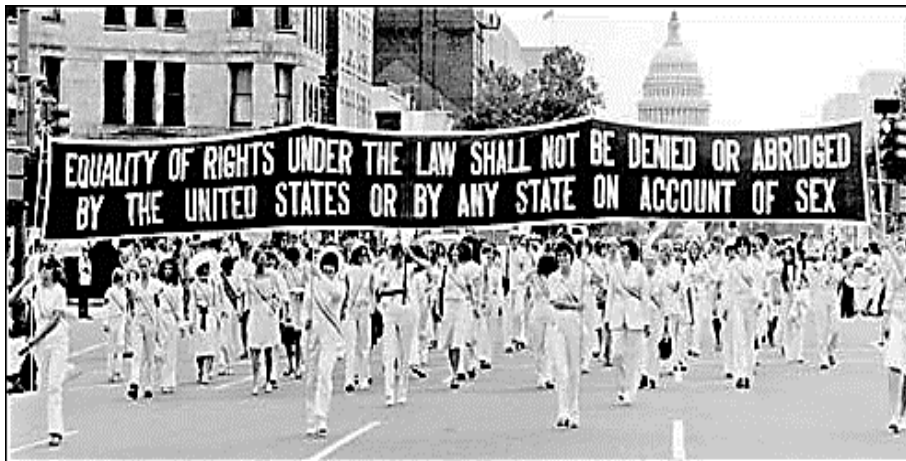
## *LA Ratify ERA Lobby Day — April 9*

On Tuesday, **April 9**, LA Ratify ERA will rally, march, and hold an ERA Lobby Day at the State Capitol. Everyone who supports ERA ratification is invited. See the "ERA Lobby Day Agenda" on the next page. Feel free to reprint it, add it to your FB page, or email it to your members.

There is also a Coming Events announcement on the **La Ratify ERA FB page** that gives more details and allows you to register at eventbrite (registration and the lunch are FREE).

You can also click [HERE](#) to register for tickets. Louisiana Coalition and Unitarian Universalist Voices for Reproductive Freedom are sponsoring this event along with us.

We need your support and urge you to promote the ERA Lobby Day to your organization. **And remember to WEAR WHITE to let the legislators see how many people support ERA ratification!**



## *LA Ratify ERA*

*Lobby Day  
April 9th*

Join the *LA Ratify ERA* Coalition for a Lobby Day, April 9, 2019, at the State Capitol, Baton Rouge.

Rally, march, lobby, and educate the Louisiana State Legislators, the media, and the public on the critical need for ERA ratification.

So we'll know how many to expect for the FREE lunch register on [Eventbrite Lobby Day Tickets](#)

|                         |   |   |
|-------------------------|---|---|
|                         |   |   |
| 8:00 a.m.               | ERA RALLY                               | STATE LIBRARY<br>701 N. 4 <sup>th</sup> ST. |
| 8:30 a.m.               | ERA MARCH                               | TO CAPITOL<br>900 N. 3 <sup>RD</sup> ST.    |
| 9:15 a.m.               | ADVOCACY BRIEFING                       | CAPITOL ROTUNDA                             |
| 9:30 a.m.               | LOBBYING                                | VARIOUS COMMITTEE ROOMS                     |
| 11:00 a.m.              | LEGISLATORS SPEAK ON ERA AND FREE LUNCH | CAPITOL 4 <sup>TH</sup> FLOOR PRESS ROOM    |
| 1:00 p.m.-<br>3:00 p.m. | LOBBYING                                | SENATE CHAMBER                              |







## LA Ratify ERA

A Coalition Supporting Ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment  
FB: LA Ratify ERA email: laratifyera@gmail.com

*"Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any state on account of sex."*



### WHAT IS THE ERA?

The ERA is a proposed Constitutional Amendment that guarantees gender equality. It was introduced in 1923 and finally passed by Congress in 1972. Since then 37 states have approved it. Ratification by one more state is needed to implement it.

### WHY DO WE NEED THE ERA?

**AAUW** points out in its publication "Quick Facts: Equal Rights Amendment": The majority of Americans mistakenly believe that women and men have equal rights under the Constitution. The 14th Amendment of the Constitution explicitly states that men are guaranteed equality under law but is poignantly silent about women. The advancement of women's equality continues incrementally through patchwork legislation and court decisions, but women's equality under law remains illusory because these laws can be changed or even revoked at the whim of legislators and judges. The ERA provides the constitutional guarantee that all men and women are truly equal under the law and that these rights cannot easily be abridged.

**NOW**, in its publication "Is the Equal Rights Amendment Relevant to the 21<sup>st</sup> Century?" discusses the difference the ERA could make in areas such as:

**Equal Pay** – The ERA could help move pay equity legislation that has been stuck in Congress for several years.

**Employment Discrimination** – The ERA would provide a more effective tool for sex-based employment discrimination litigation.

**Military Policy** – The ERA would force the military to meet the needs of women soldiers in providing career advancement pay, retirement compensation, training and medical services. It could help curb the epidemic of sexual assault of women in the military.

**Education and Athletics** – The ERA could enhance and solidify Title IX protections that promote equal opportunity in academic and athletic programs.

**Reproductive Rights** – Although opinion is divided, the ERA could negate hundreds of laws that have denied legal and appropriate medical care for women.

**Curbing Violence Against Women** – Rape and sexual assault persist at high levels—one out of every six women has been a victim of attempted or completed rape. The ERA could force law enforcement and the judiciary to respond more effectively.

**Poverty** – One in seven women lives in poverty. This is the result of occupational segregation in low-paying jobs, lack of access to reproductive healthcare, and unaffordable child care. These women need the ERA!

2/16/2019



## AAUW LA Calendar 2019

### Wednesday, March 20

**Lafayette Women on Wednesday Listening Session, 6 to 8 pm** [Click for free tickets](#)

South Louisiana Community College  
1101 Bertrand Dr, Lafayette LA 70506

### Monday, March 25

**North Shore Women's Listening Session, 6 to 8 pm** [Click for free tickets](#)

Women's Center for Healing and Transformation  
716667 Leveson St., Abita Springs LA 70402

### Thursday, March 21

**Women's Leadership Conference at University of Louisiana at Lafayette**

### Tuesday, March 26

**House Party with Representative Paula Davis House District 69, 6 to 8 pm**

Register [HERE](#) for ticket (details are on ticket)

### Wednesday, March 27

**New Orleans Women on Wednesday Listening Session, 6 to 8 pm** [Click for free tickets](#)

First Unitarian and Universalist Church of New Orleans  
5212 Claiborne Av., New Orleans LA 70115

**Baton Rouge Women on Wednesday Listening Session, 6 to 8 pm** [Click for free tickets](#)

Bluebonnet Library  
9200 Bluebonnet Blvd. Baton Rouge LA 70810

**Shreveport-Bossier Women on Wednesday Listening Session, 6 to 8 pm** [Click for free tickets](#)

Red River Brewery  
1200 Marshall Dr., Shreveport LA 71101

### Thursday, March 28

**Alexandria Women on Wednesday Listening Session, 6 to 8 pm** [Click for free tickets](#)

Main Street Community Center  
708 Main St., Pineville LA 71360

**Women's Empowerment Panel & Resource Fair, 10am to 2pm**

South Louisiana Community College  
1101 Bertrand Dr, Lafayette LA 70506

### Sunday, April 7

**Legislative Session Kickoff Brunch**

Purchase ticket [HERE](#), details on ticket

### Tuesday, April 9

**Equal Rights Amendment Lobby Day at the State Capitol**

Register [HERE](#) (free) for lunch ticket

### Wednesday, May 1

**Job interviewing techniques**

Nicholls State University

*AAUW of Louisiana Presents...*



# 2019 LEGISLATIVE SESSION KICKOFF BRUNCH

*Featuring Ellie Smeal, President  
of Feminist Majority Foundation*

**When:** April 7th, 11-1

**Where:** Ruffino's De La  
Ronde  
312 Third Street  
Baton Rouge, La 70801



*Purchase Tickets here:*

**Reservation:** \$50 a seat or  
\$350 for a table of 8

