

## Get Involved in DEI Issues

Dotty Juengst, AAUW Branch Committee Co-Chair

Members of the LWVGGB – It is my privilege to co-chair an AAUW committee on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, and I'd love for you to get involved. Here are a few ways for you to get started:

1. We'd love to take some **field trips** to points of interest as we reflect on DEI issues. Got some ideas? I'd love to hear them.
2. We're continuing our "**book club**" idea. Last year we read *The 1619 Project*. This year we're going to read *The Sum of Us*. We read and discuss a few chapters of the book each meeting. We meet via Zoom monthly from October to June. We invite you to participate.
3. Our committee and study group **will meet virtually on October 8 at 6:30 p.m.**, and we'd love for you to join us. To get the Zoom link, email Terri Gulyas at [tsgulyas@gmail.com](mailto:tsgulyas@gmail.com).

Now, about that book we plan to read and discuss, here's some more information:

We will be reading **The Sum of Us by Heather McGhee** this year. We'll discuss the Introduction and the first two chapters at our first meeting (October 8).

Heather McGhee's specialty is the American economy – and the mystery of why it so often fails the American public. From the financial crisis to rising student debt to collapsing public infrastructure, she found a common root problem: racism. But not just in the most obvious indignities for people of color. Racism has costs for white people, too. It is the common denominator of our most vexing public problems, the core dysfunction of our democracy and constitutive of the spiritual and moral crises that grip us all. But how did this happen? And is there a way out?

McGhee embarks on a deeply personal journey across the country from Maine to Mississippi to California, tallying what we lose when we buy into the zero-sum paradigm – the idea that progress for some of us must come at the expense of others. Along the way, she meets white people who confide in her about losing their homes, their dreams, and their shot at better jobs to the toxic mix of American racism and greed. This is the story of how public goods in this country – from parks and pools to functioning schools – have become private luxuries; of how unions collapsed, wages stagnated, and inequality increased; and of how this country, unique among the world's advanced economies, has thwarted universal healthcare.

But in unlikely places of worship and work, McGhee finds proof of what she calls the Solidarity Dividend: gains that come when people come together across race to accomplish what we simply can't do on our own.

McGhee marshals economic and sociological research to paint a story of racism's costs, but at the heart of the book are the humble stories of people yearning to be part of a better America, including white supremacy's collateral victims: white people themselves. With startling empathy, this heartfelt message from a Black woman to a multiracial America leaves us with a new vision for a future in which we finally realize that life can be more than a zero-sum game.