

# THE SPOKESWOMAN

<https://davis-ca.aauw.net>

## UCD Tech Trek Camp Highlights

*By Estelle Shiroma*

Ninety rising 8th-grade girls from northern California experienced Tech Trek Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) camp at UCD during the week of July 9 to 15. Four girls from local junior high schools were awarded scholarships by the Davis branch in April. However, on registration day, a camper from another branch was unable to attend due to illness. This provided an opportunity for an alternate Davis Tech Trek contender to fill the vacancy, which was quickly approved by a quorum of board members helping with registration. The campers included: Alondra Ambriz (Harper Junior High), Laura Forchu and Kathya Garcia (Holmes Junior High), and Kami Ho-Lu and Grace Logan (Emerson Junior High). The Davis Branch was also represented by Sally Ho (Senior Counselor) and Nithmi Jayasundara (Junior Counselor), both UCD students and former Tech Trekkers.



**Davis Branch affiliated Tech Trek staff and campers. L to R: Sally Ho (Sr. Counselor), Alondra Ambriz, Kathya Garcia, Laura Forchu, Grace Logan, Kami Ho-Lu, Nithmi Jayasundara (Jr. Counselor)**

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## July\* - August Calendar

Saturday, July 8, 9:00 am: Book Group meeting

Sunday, July 9 to Saturday, July 15: UCD Tech Trek Camp

Saturday, August 12, 9 am: Book Group meeting (Zoom)

Sunday, August 13, 9 am to noon: Annual Board Planning Meeting

Saturday, August 19: Celebrate the 19th (TBD)

\*Due to Tech Trek camp activities, the monthly Board meeting and Celebrate the 19th were canceled.

## UCD Tech Trek Camp Highlights Continued

During the week, the girls attended exciting core classes in Anatomy and Physiology, Astronomy and Space, High Energy Engineering, Storytelling with Data, and Wearable Tech. The jam-packed schedule included special sessions in Forensic Science and Emergency Medical Technician/Paramedic training, along with tours of the Veterinary School, Mondavi Center, Chemistry Department, and Food Innovation Lab. The campers also participated in mindfulness and confidence-building activities. SAFE Credit Union held a Budget and Cents evening where the girls were assigned hypothetical families and learned to manage budgets. During a Professional Women's Evening (PWE) the girls explored STEM careers by talking to women who worked in the fields of engineering, veterinary medicine, forensic chemistry, firefighting, and more. Branch member Susan Collopy participated in PWE as a speaker. She is a landscape architect and works as the Associate Director for Engineering Projects in the Design and Construction Management Department at UCD. Susan shared examples of the type of work she does and brought a building plan of the room where PWE was held.

On June 13th, Visit Day, branch members and invited guests had a chance to observe the campers in core classes. Stephanie DeGraff-Hunt and Estelle Shiroma were among a group of more than 20 attendees who were led by junior counselors as they toured the classes. It was especially heartening to see the Davis Tech Trekkers problem-solving in the Storytelling with Data class, building solar cars in Engineering class, and coding wearable items in the Wearable Tech class. After the tour, Stephanie, Estelle, the five Tech Trek campers, Sally, and Nithmi enjoyed a delicious lunch at the Tercero Dining Commons. The smiles on the girls' faces, as they enthusiastically talked about their Tech Trek experiences, validated all of the hard work of our branch to provide this meaningful opportunity for these girls. Tech Trekkers will present reports of their camp experience at a gathering tentatively scheduled in late September; details are forthcoming.



*Laura Forchu (left) at the starting line for the solar car races on Visit Day.*

## Kudos to Tech Trek Volunteers

*By Estelle Shiroma and Juliana Wells*

The saying “Many hands make light work” rang true when 26 volunteers from eight AAUW branches in the Sacramento region helped with various activities, contributing to the success of Tech Trek camp. On July 8, the day before camp started, volunteers Isabella Yan (former Tech Trekker), Tanya Noda, and Susan Wheeler (Citrus Heights/American River aka CHAR) met to set up tablet computers for class use during the week. In past years, this has been a challenging task requiring many hours of work. This seasoned team got the work done in just a few hours. Numerous volunteers helped on registration day, SAFE Credit Union Budget Cents (formerly Financial Reality evening), and on the last day of camp when supplies and teaching materials are packed up and moved to storage.

***Budget and Cents Night Volunteers:*** L to R. Karen Lemcke, Rhonda Reed, Stephanie Degraff-Hunt, Estelle Shiroma, Isabella Yan (Former TT - UCD), Marlene Amador (former TT - Mills College), Meri McEneny (N. Lake Tahoe), Susan Collopy, and Sasha Eckstein (former TT - Stanford)



Juliana Wells (Davis/Woodland) shared her impressions of her volunteer experience on the first (Sunday, July 9) and last days of camp (Saturday, July 15):

“Registration for 2023 Tech Trek participants was held at Wall Hall on the UCD campus on Sunday, July 9. What a busy, happy experience we had welcoming these students and their parents (and siblings). Packets for each student (timeline, journal, T-shirt), prepared earlier by the junior counselors, were labeled and put within reach of the registration tables. Gail Johnson and Shahla Farahnak were at the A-D table. Juliana Wells and Carolyn Van Hoecke (Woodland) were at E-K table. Gwen Kaltoft (Woodland) and Susie Patterson (Nevada County) had the L-R table. Toni Brady (Davis branch UCD intern), and Misty diVittorio (Foothills of El Dorado County) worked the S-Z table. Directing students to Wall Hall were greeters Cathy Tkach and Trish Caldwell (CHAR). Camp Nurse Lauren had a friendly smile for everyone as she talked to each camper who brought medication or special health information.

## Kudos to Tech Trek Volunteers Continued

Following registration, several junior counselors escorted and directed the families to Potter Hall, the dorm where they resided during the week. These counselors, including Nithmi Jayasundara (former Tech Trekker), were so full of energy and excitement that it spilled over onto everyone. It was a happy occasion in total contrast to the last day of camp on Saturday, July 15. As Trekkers departed camp, we observed tearful goodbyes and hugs among newfound friends.

Stephanie DeGraff-Hunt, Barbara Durst (Davis/Woodland), Susan Collopy, and I helped bring packed-up materials to cars for transport back to the storage unit on Second Street. Estelle was the Volunteer Coordinator and stayed busy on both of the days I participated. Sally Ho (former Tech Trekker and past AAUW@UCD president), one of two senior counselors, was very popular with the Trekkers. We saw “Sally Fan Club” signs outside of her dorm room and thank you notes posted on a gratitude board. Estelle collected the 30 or so post-it notes singing her praises and gave them to Sally as a memento. The two packed cars then went to the storage unit after getting help from junior counselor Julia Dang (former Tech Trekker) and volunteer Marlene Amador (former Tech Trekker and AAUW@UCD board member). Success.

Volunteer next year to help and come away with good feelings and a sense of pride in the accomplishments of AAUW when we work together.”

Note: AAUW branch/affiliation is indicated in parentheses; if no branch is indicated, those mentioned above are Davis members.

## Recap of June 10 Book Group Discussion

*By Juliana Wells and Verena Borton*



Barbara Durst suggested and then led the discussion of the book “Listen World! How the Intrepid Elsie Robinson Became America’s Most-Read Woman” by journalists and authors Julia Scheeres and Allison Gilbert. Participating in the animated conversation, besides Barbara, were Karen Lemcke, Verena Borton, Carolyn Van Hoecke, Estelle Shiroma, Rhonda Reed, Stephanie DeGraff-Hunt and Juliana Wells.

The pioneering journalist Elsie Robinson (1883-1956), who created an eventual readership of 20 million, has been referred to as “the most popular writer you’ve never heard of.” And sure enough, there were many exclamations by group members to the effect of “I never heard of her! Why not?” The fact that so little was known about this adventurous, curious, intelligent woman whose readership ended up being twice the size of that of today’s New York Times - not to mention the shortage of women’s histories - encouraged Scheeres and Gilbert to do extensive research, and to incorporate in the text (in italics) much of Robinson’s own published writing from her memoir, poetry, newspaper columns, interviews and letters. Many of us felt these quotations enhanced the biography and gave us a flavor of Elsie’s personality and views.

## Recap of June 10 Book Group Discussion Continued

Starting during childhood in 1880s Gold Rush - oriented Benicia, during an exceedingly painful marriage in Vermont and a hard-fought divorce while laboring as a miner in the Sierra Nevada foothills, and continuing throughout her life's challenges, writing and drawing were important emotional outlets for Elsie, eventually becoming her source of income. She did the work of many men and while she became the highest paid newswoman in the Hearst organization, she was not shy to point out the inequities regarding pay and promotions (and famously wrote to William Randolph Hearst complaining about her crushing workload and repeatedly being denied a raise and vacation).

In 1918 Elsie noticed that the Oakland Tribune didn't have a children's section and convinced the paper to hire her to create one. Writing and illustrating "Aunt Elsie's Magazine" made her wildly popular among children and their families, and led to spinoffs in other newspapers. She intrigued and enriched children's minds, inspired initially by efforts to entertain her sickly son.

There are frequent passages that describe specific aspects of life at the time. We were aghast at descriptions of the time-consuming multiple layers of clothing women were required to wear according to society standards in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, often hampering movement, breathing and gastric health. With the years dress requirements lightened up a bit, notably by eliminating corsets, enabling women to ride bikes. Realizing that skirts are not practical in mines, Elsie cleverly devised a way to make her long skirts into pants, a revolutionary move. She loved nature and wrote evocative descriptions of the hillsides of her youth and the flora of the foothills. Her accounts of life with biased New England in-laws and an uncommunicative husband who was rigid in his attitudes, while trying to be a "proper" wife, daughter-in-law and mother, are painful to read. Her worries about her son's health, her devotion to his wellbeing and her incredible efforts to win custody were remarkable.

Anyone interested in typewriters will be fascinated with the detailed description of the very old typewriter that Elsie was able to borrow from the postmistress in Hornitos, enabling her to learn to type during evenings after a day in the mine.

Although Elsie wrote columns of advice for adults, the group suggested she could have done better at advising herself regarding the choice of husbands. The last one used up practically all her money. We found it interesting that she sold her house in Sonora to the Girl Scouts (which in turn sold it to the Stanislaus County Department of Education in 1974).

One comes away from reading this book with a great deal of admiration for Elsie Robinson's accomplishments despite major adversity, astonished at her perseverance, talent, enormous output and innovation and even some gratitude for the steps she took to get recognition for the role of women. Nevertheless, the reader also puzzles over the fact that this trailblazing woman is not known. Why? The authors give three primary reasons: "sexism, carelessness and a lack of foresight." She outlived her family members, so no praise for her achievements came from relatives. No friends are quoted in her personal writings. Neither Elsie nor her employers archived her writings, and so this book is a first effort to make us aware of "the most popular writer you've never heard of."

## Recap of June 10 Book Group Discussion Continued

Research Note by the authors:

This book is based on more than eleven years of reporting and research. Because it is the first biography of Hearst syndicated newspaper columnist Elsie Robinson, there was no birth-to-death accounting of her life to follow as a roadmap. It fell to us to factcheck her version of events and fill in the tremendous number of gaps. We're sharing our extensive list of source documents and interviews here in case they can be useful to future historians.

Details of Elsie's life and career were challenging to uncover because so little of her writing has been digitized. Instead of Googling, we exhumed her body of work by combing through microfilm and library offsite storage facilities. This list, for now, is the only complete paper trail of her life and accomplishments.

## Recap of July 8 Book Group Discussion

*By Juliana Wells and Verena Borton*

Karen Lemcke graciously invited us to her back porch on University Avenue for this first in person book discussion in several years. Enjoying Karen's hospitality (including donuts and beverages) and the calm of the backyard were Carolyn Van Hoecke, Barbara Durst, Juliana Wells, Verena Borton, Estelle Shiroma, and Stephanie DeGraff-Hunt.

Prompted by the location there was considerable discussion about Davis home values, parking issues due to confusing signage, past owners of Karen's house, and interesting twists in life stories.

Readers' reactions to "Hello Beautiful" varied and the discussion skipped around quite a bit. Some had read it a while ago, others didn't finish or did not read it yet at all, making the review less coherent than, say, on the previous book. Some of the highlights of the discussion were:

- While the central theme might have been considered mental health issues, particularly of the William character throughout, we learned about some of the possible causes and about quite drastic aspects of the disease, but did not feel that we came away with much in the way of constructive insights for remedies.
- For those of us who grew up without siblings or in a small family, it was difficult to fully understand or empathize with the excessive closeness of the four Padavano sisters while growing up.
- Because of this closeness, it was equally perplexing to understand why some of the sisters later, after intervening incidents, completely distanced themselves from each other for as much as a quarter century.



## Recap of July 8 Book Group Discussion Continued

- The novel deals with a variety of family structures, from William’s complete rejection by unloving parents, to the initial Padavano family of parents with four daughters, to a single parent family where the child is made to believe the father died in an accident, to a lesbian family.
- Charlie, the Padavano dad, initially comes across as weak because he doesn’t provide adequately for the family; it is not until after his death that we learn more and more about what he meant to his children and the good deeds he did for others in the community.
- Rose, the Padavano mom, was a striver for her family, but also a strict morals controller and a grudge-holder that kept her from being close to some of her children and prevented her from knowing one grandchild until the child was grown up.
- Basketball features all through the novel, foremost as the one skill William developed, was successful at and was proud of, as well as through the brotherhood of fellow sports professionals who were the support group that stood by William through thick and thin, taking the place of family.
- It was hard to understand and accept William’s total abdication of parenthood, and similarly his wife’s immature belief that a baby would solve all problems.
- To some of us the book seemed repetitious in parts and considerably longer than it needed to be to tell the story.

The August selection is “The Midnight Library” by Matt Haig, to be discussed via Zoom on Saturday, August 12 at 9 a.m.

# Celebrate the 19th - Juneteenth

*By Juliana Wells and Stephanie DeGraff-Hunt*

We arrived at the Tres Hermanas outdoor patio for the scheduled 5:30 p.m. event one at a time, starting with Sally Ho (recent UCD graduate and outgoing president of AAUW@UCD) and Juliana Wells. Next to arrive, on foot, was Verena Borton, followed by Gail Johnson, Stephanie DeGraff-Hunt and Rhonda Reed (also on foot). We were then joined by intern Toni Brady and her fellow UCD student Linda. It was the first time we all met Toni in person, having only interacted with her on zoom until then. The last member to join the group was Karen Lemcke. Estelle Shiroma had to cancel attendance at the last moment after being alerted to a possible Covid exposure - a reminder that infections still “lurk” in unexpected places.

Lively conversations, membership renewals and other AAUW information exchange took place while we enjoyed a variety of Mexican foods and marveled at the cool June breeze. When it was time to leave we realized we had not touched on the planned topic: Juneteenth. Stephanie mentioned having heard several podcasts about the holiday and was asked to write up a brief summary of the interesting facts gleaned from the podcasts.

## ***Stephanie’s report about Juneteenth:***

On June 17, 2021, President Biden signed Senate Bill S. 475, making Juneteenth the eleventh federal holiday. The signing of the Juneteenth National Independence Day Act into law on June 17, 2021 commemorates the emancipation of enslaved African Americans. The federal holiday is celebrated on the anniversary of Major General Gordon Granger's proclamation of freedom for enslaved people in Galveston, Texas on June 19, 1865, two and a half years after President Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation was issued on September 22, 1862.

President Lincoln announced that the Emancipation Proclamation would go into effect on January 1, 1863, promising freedom to enslaved people in all of the rebellious parts of Southern states of the Confederacy. However, the Emancipation Proclamation did not free slaves in border states such as Delaware, Maryland, and West Virginia, nor in certain counties or parishes in otherwise rebellious states because, although the Emancipation Proclamation declared an end to slavery in the Confederate States, it did not end slavery in the states that remained in, and loyal to, the Union. As a result, for a short while after the fall of the Confederacy, slavery remained legal in Delaware and Kentucky. Those enslaved people were not freed until the ratification of the Thirteenth Amendment to the Constitution, which abolished slavery nationwide, on December 6, 1865.

When President Abraham Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation on January 1, 1863 to free enslaved African Americans it took time for word to spread. Though the Emancipation Proclamation was made effective, it could not be enforced in secessionist states still under Confederate control. Enforcement of the Proclamation relied upon the advance of Union troops.



## Celebrate the 19th - Juneteenth Continued

As the most remote state of the former Confederacy, Texas experienced expansion of slavery as the presence of Union troops decreased throughout the Civil War, which meant the enforcement of the Emancipation Proclamation was pretty much under wraps prior to Granger's order. It wasn't until more than two years later on June 19, 1865, (five months after Congress passed the 13th Amendment), that Major General Gordon Granger arrived in Galveston Bay, Texas, with 2,000 Union troops to proclaim that more than 250,000 enslaved Black people in the state were free.

Early celebrations of Major General Granger's order date back to 1866, at first involving church-centered community gatherings in Texas, which spread within the Southern states and became more commercialized in the 1920s and 1930s. Those who moved north in the Great Migration tended to bring these celebrations to the rest of the country. However, during the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s, these celebrations were eclipsed by the nonviolent determination to achieve civil rights, but again grew in popularity during the 1970s with a focus on African-American freedom and African-American arts.

Beginning with Texas by proclamation in 1938, and by legislation in 1979, every state and the District of Columbia has formally recognized the holiday in some way. The holiday is considered the "longest-running African-American holiday" and has been called "America's second Independence Day." Juneteenth celebrations often include lectures and exhibitions on African-American culture. The modern holiday places emphasis on teaching about African-American heritage. Celebratory traditions often include public readings of the Emancipation Proclamation, singing traditional songs and reading of works by noted African American authors. Historian Mitch Kachun considers that celebrations of the end of slavery have three goals: "to celebrate, to educate, and to agitate."

The AAUW spin on the passing of the legislation to make Juneteenth a federal holiday really seems to boil down to the passion and strength of a strong minded 96-year old woman named [Opal Lee](#).

When the legislation was passed with a landslide House vote on June 17, 2021, approving Juneteenth as a federal holiday to commemorate the end of slavery in the United States, Opal Lee said that she and her ancestors had been waiting for this "celebratory dance for 155 years, 11 months and 28 days." Opal Lee proudly stood by President Biden as he signed the legislation into law.

So how did Opal Lee make this happen?

[Opal Lee](#), now known as the Grandmother of Juneteenth, recalls her decades of work in the Juneteenth movement working with the Tarrant County Black Historical and Genealogical Society, which oversaw local Juneteenth celebrations. After more than 40 years as a community activist, she said, "I really doubled down in 2016" by "going bigger." At the age of 89, Opal Lee decided her new life mission was similar to that of Major General Granger: "I knew I just had

## Celebrate the 19th - Juneteenth Continued

to spread the word about Juneteenth to everybody." The best way she felt she could do that was to make sure that Juneteenth was accepted as a national holiday. To attain this goal she decided to initiate a walking campaign for Juneteenth holiday awareness. Aged 89, Opal Lee began her symbolic walk in September 2016 from Fort Worth, Texas to Washington, D.C., where she finally arrived in January 2017. Over the course of her journey she was invited to speak in various cities where she led 2.5 mile walks to symbolize the 2.5 years that it took for enslaved people in Texas to learn that they were free. "I thought maybe, if an old lady started out, somebody would take notice," she said at the start of her walk, according to Houston Public Media. "And maybe the President and Congress would say we don't want that woman dying on our watch, get on up here so she can go home."

Opal Lee popularly became known as the Grandmother of Juneteenth as her annual walks culminated in a trip to the Capitol carrying a petition signed by 1.6 million Americans urging Congress to pass legislation for a federal holiday. She continued to promote the idea by leading 2.5 miles walks each year. After walking thousands of miles to bring attention to the importance of Juneteenth, Lee inspired a message of perseverance. "Remember: together, we can conquer the world."

On June 17, 2021, at the age of 94, her efforts finally succeeded as a bill to make Juneteenth a federal holiday was passed by Congress and signed into law by President Joe Biden. She was an honored guest at the bill signing ceremony, receiving the first of many pens Biden used to sign the document. On the first federally recognized Juneteenth, June 19, 2021, Lee told the audience that the work is not done. "This is the beginning of our getting the disparities out of our communities so we can work as one. If people can be taught to hate, they can be taught to love. I'm so grateful for all your beautiful people. Please, please continue the kinds of things you know we need to become one people. It's not a white thing. It's not a Black thing. It's an American thing."

At 96 years old, Dr. Opal Lee is still determined to see the Juneteenth national holiday be a reflective point of the year where we ask "Are we free yet?" because as she puts it "None of us are free if we're not all free." One way of being sure that we reflect on Opal Lee's question and statement is to participate in a 2.5 mile Juneteenth walk to remind us to constantly review the progress we've made for freedom for all. I can't wait for books about her to be published for elementary school children.

Locally there was a day of celebration and presentations at UCD on June 4, 2023. The full agenda can be found in the [Daily Democrat](#).

Also, Lara Downes, a professional pianist who lives in Davis, produced an impressive song list two years ago to commemorate the June 17, 2021 signing of the Juneteenth National Independence Day Act. It is well worth the time to explore this, along with the excellent photography [here](#).

# UNA Update

*By Verena Borton*

Immediately after the recent intensive program of the UNA-USA Leadership Summit, UNA's pace has temporarily slowed. Congressional developments described in the first two segments below are encouraging news.

## UNESCO

As predicted in the UNA Update in the June Spokeswoman, the U.S. is about to rejoin UNESCO, pending approval.

On June 15 the Director-General of UNESCO, Audrey Azoulay, gathered representatives of the UN's 193 Member States to inform them that the U.S. had officially notified her of its decision to rejoin UNESCO in July 2023. She stated that "this is a strong act of confidence in UNESCO and multilateralism. Not only in the centrality of the Organization's mandate - culture, education, science, information - but also in the way this mandate is being implemented today."

The return of the U.S. was made possible by the agreement reached by Congress in December 2022 authorizing financial contributions to UNESCO (to cover arrears and current dues). The U.S. had suspended its contributions in 2011 due to domestic legislation, before notifying UNESCO of its decision to legally withdraw on October 12, 2017. At this very moment Congress is working on appropriations for FY 2024 and UNA members are advocating strongly for authorizing the promised funds - full funding is critical to make the rejoining official (pending the funds, UNESCO approved the U.S. rejoining on July 11, 2023.)

On July 25 there was an official U.S. flag raising ceremony at UNESCO headquarters in Paris (against the backdrop of the Eiffel Tower), with a rousing speech by First Lady Jill Biden including the statement "We can't go it alone, but we must lead the way."

### ***U.S. Commitment to Peacekeeping Act***

Also on June 15, U.S. Representative Sara Jacobs (CA-51) and others reintroduced the U.S. Commitment to Peacekeeping Act (previously introduced in 2022) with the goal to scrap the UN peacekeeping dues cap instituted by Congress in 1994.

In 1994 Congress voted to cap U.S. contributions to UN peacekeeping operations at 25 percent. Since then, the U.S.'s negotiated rate has been higher than the congressionally mandated cap, resulting in the U.S. failing to fully pay its UN peacekeeping dues by more than \$1.2 billion. This has resulted in the U.S. being accused of being unreliable and other nations pushing back against U.S. interests in areas like human rights.

## UNA Update Continued

“The United States derives its comparative advantage over other strategic competitors by our ability to build international coalitions that further our shared values and goals,” said Congresswoman Sara Jacobs. “By failing to pay more than \$1.2 billion in dues to the UN, we haven’t been living up to our commitments, which has left our partners to pick up the slack in UN missions, ceded ground in crucial human rights protections, and allowed the PRC to make inroads with our Global South partners. That’s why I’m proud to reintroduce the U.S. Commitment to Peacekeeping Act to scrap the UN peacekeeping dues cap and allow U.S. dollars to match our values and follow through on our international commitments.”

### **World Food Program**

With food insecurity or outright malnutrition and starvation increasing daily in many parts of the world, the UN World Food Program (WFP), with a 60-year history of delivering lifesaving food, plays a critical role in ameliorating dire conditions for millions around the world. Here are some useful facts about WFP:

- Awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2020 for its efforts to combat hunger, improve conditions for peace in conflict zones and to prevent the use of hunger as a weapon of war.
- WFP responds within 72 hours of an emergency, delivers lifesaving emergency relief, coordinates on-the-ground logistics operations, and goes to the planet’s most dangerous and difficult-to-reach places by air, land and sea.
- WFP has a four star Charity Navigator rating, indicating that WFP USA “exceeds industry standards and outperforms most charities in its cause.”
- WFP can turn \$15 into 60 school meals, treat a child for malnutrition with \$32 and send an emergency box of food to a family of five for \$75.
- Cindy McCain became UN WFP Executive Director on April 5, 2023.

### ***Common Security and Nuclear Deterrence***

At the end of July our chapter was approached with a request to consider endorsing a [Joint Statement](#) to the 2023 Preparatory Committee for the 11th Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference meeting in Vienna in early August. Key issues for the NPT meeting are the continuing nuclear arms race (costing over \$100 billion per year) and the threats of nuclear war by crisis escalation, miscalculation, accident or intent that pushed the Bulletin of Atomic Scientists to set the Doomsday Clock this year to 90 seconds to midnight. A detailed statement describes the strong conviction that common security must replace the current reliance on nuclear weapons with sustainable security for all, placing greater emphasis on conflict resolution and international law - “reserving military approaches to the last resort in response to aggression if all other methods fail and in strict adherence to the UN Charter.”

UNA Davis, along with several other California chapters and countless international organizations, endorsed the statement.

## UNA Update Continued

On August 4 at 4:15 a.m. Verena joined a virtual presentation by fast-talking, very well informed British, Scottish, Canadian and New Zealand experts expounding on the urgent need for nations to create common interests through collaboration rather than confrontation - “turn to force of law rather than law of force.” Impressively, they cited many case studies where it worked or could have worked if implemented in time. Their knowledge of UN, European Union, and other rules was remarkable.

Davis UNA, along with other California chapters and the NorCal UNA Division are listed among the 165 signatories.

## AAUW National News

In late June, the U.S. Supreme Court issued rulings against affirmative action and student debt relief. The decision on *Biden v. Nebraska* regarding student debt relief by the court’s conservative majority leveled a devastating blow against student borrowers. This decision deals an even heavier hit to the nation’s millions of women borrowers — particularly Black and brown women, who face a disproportionate financial impact from student loan debt. You can find AAUW’s full statements condemning these decisions [here](#).

*The following is an excerpt from a statement from Gloria L. Blackwell, AAUW’s Chief Executive Officer:*

“While we encourage Congress to actively pursue measures to lower the student debt burden on women and their families, we recognize that in today’s highly charged political environment, Pres. Biden has a vital role to play. To make a meaningful difference for American women—who hold nearly two-thirds of the nation’s student-loan debt—his administration must provide permanent solutions to canceling student debt and expanding loan-repayment programs.

Between yesterday’s affirmative action rulings and today’s decision on student debt, AAUW is committed to fighting for women and communities of color to have equal access to the affordable, quality higher education necessary for an equitable, diverse, and inclusive society.”

On June 28, [TIME Magazine wrote](#) about the significant burden of student loan debt on women in an article featuring our CEO Gloria L. Blackwell. Undoubtedly, this misguided decision will have a snowball effect on women’s economic security and that of their families.

We are equally concerned about the decisions in *Students for Fair Admissions, Inc. (SFAI) v. President and Fellows of Harvard* and *SFAI v. University of North Carolina*. Institutions of higher education are pathways to economic security and positions of power in our country. Affirmative action policies have been a critical part of ensuring racial and gender equity and providing redress for past gender, racial, and ethnic discrimination in higher education.

## **Upcoming Webinar**

### **Fighting for Working Mothers: A Moms' Equal Pay Day Conversation**

Tuesday, August 15, 12 noon PDT

August 15 is Moms' Equal Pay Day. The day recognizes how moms working full-time, year-round are paid 74 cents and all earners (including part-time and seasonal) are paid 62 cents for every dollar paid to dads.

Working mothers face a variety of challenges to their economic security. Between the “motherhood penalty,” a lack of paid leave, and a persistent gender wage gap, mothers face additional challenges to economic empowerment.

Join AAUW CEO Gloria L. Blackwell and other expert panelists on Moms' Equal Pay Day for a conversation about these issues and policy solutions that can help provide support for the working mothers of America.

**[REGISTER NOW](#)**

**BE AS ACTIVE AS YOU CAN, BUT STAY A MEMBER.**

**Formatted By: Cristele Moztarzadeh**