



## THE SPOKESWOMAN

July 2020 Volume 56

### REPORTS

#### BOOK CLUB JUNE 6<sup>TH</sup>

The June book group met via Zoom and included meeting participants: Estelle, Rose Mary, Barbara, Juliana, Nan, Karen L., Dolores, Rhonda, and Marti. Stephanie led the discussion covering many aspects of *The Burgess Boys* by Elizabeth Strout.

The main characters were three siblings: Jim, and the girl/boy twins, Susan and Bob. The focus was on the family interactions and the siblings' personal thoughts in life. The children felt guilt and passed along blame for their father's accidental death. The mother treated each child differently and deferentially. The book expands the result of this treatment and their interactions with each other and the world.

The story contains many descriptions and characters (a bit confusing). Strout has focused on the town itself with its Somali immigrants. Two general reflections are that no one is alone and that one incident can impact your entire life.

Strout also wrote several books about Olive Kitteridge. The group talked about several other possible reads: *The Girl with Seven Names* by Alice Kaufman, *Chewing Gum in Holy Water*, *The Secret Life of Trees*, *Overstory*, *Galileo's Noble Daughter*, and *The Hidden Life of Trees*.

The book selection for July is *The Giver of Stars* by Jojo Moyes and will be discussed via Zoom on Saturday, July 11<sup>th</sup> at 9 am. In August, we will be discussing *Invisible Man* by Ralph Ellison. Please watch your e-mail for the Zoom invitation and join us!

## CELEBRATE AND GRADUATE



AAUW at UC Davis students joined branch members on June 19<sup>th</sup> via Zoom to celebrate our graduates: **Sahiba Kaur, Mia Santos, and Denise Garcia**. They were congratulated by Marlene, Eva, Jamila, Vivian and new transfer students, Adriana and Tatiana, and Sahiba's sister, Baban (and in spirit, Annie, Funke, and Monica).

AAUW at UCD President Sahiba introduced all the students and presented the incoming President, Eva.

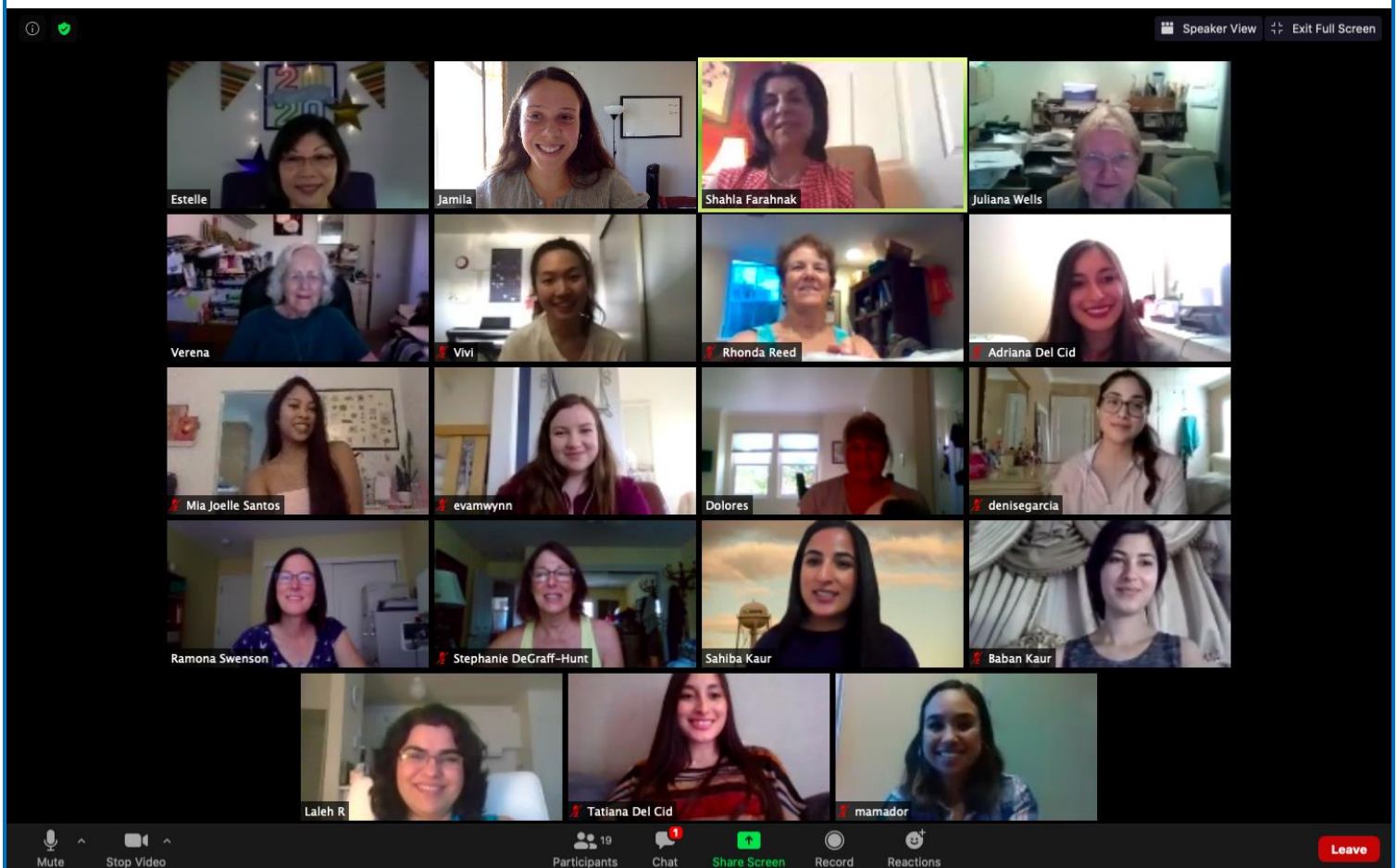
Shahla and Estelle then presented a short video from Megan Rapinoe (women's soccer star) to the graduates. Comments from Megan included calling this time "a defining moment," with us all being separated and facing a different world where we have yet to come together. We should demand to be together. Who is leading matters. Register to vote at [VOTER 26797](https://www.vote26797.com) and visit [graduatetogether2020.com](https://www.graduatetogether2020.com)

Estelle then asked Sahiba to speak. Sahiba majored in Managerial Economics and is a former Tech Trekker. She found AAUW at UCD after attending the National Conference for College Women Student Leaders (NCCWSL) in May 2018. Wanting to continue her leadership learning after transferring to UCD in the Fall Quarter 2018, she contacted AAUW through Facebook, to which Estelle responded. Sahiba worked with the student board members to build the student organization, "*struggling our way to success, but still going*".

Mia's major studies were in Agriculture and Environmental Education, with the goal of science communication to bring people closer. She found AAUW through Marlene and was inspired by the fellowship recipients who spoke at the annual AAUW Fund luncheons at Plates. "*AAUW connects women!*"

Denise studied Cognitive Neuroscience and Human Rights. She learned of AAUW through JobLinks, having worked previously for a non-profit organization. She applied for an AAUW internship and interviewed for it successfully. Now she will check into grad school but has offered to help the branch while she is in transition.

Eva sent her congratulations to the graduates and thanked Mia for bringing her into AAUW at UCD. During Winter Quarter in 2019, Eva attended the meeting with UCD Professor of Law Emerita and branch member Marty West, who spoke about women's history over the past 40 years. She was inspired by Marty's talk and became actively involved with the student organization. Eva said that Mia's posters and flyers were outstanding and showed her giving 110% and positive energy. Eva thanked Sahiba for being an outstanding role model, being involved, and passionate. She made time for the student organization. Sahiba replied: *"Thank all of you for your help and reassurance."*



Juliana said: *"Contact with all of you has been enriching and gives us hope. Thank you for sharing yourselves with us. We are grateful for the opportunity to feel the hope and vitality of your youth, plus the gift of allowing us into your lives. You have given us the feeling that we have made a difference and that we have been a blessing to each of you."* She continued: *"I, especially, felt the quiet competence of Denise as she took over more and more of the newsletter which had tested my technology skills."*

*Denise was so non-judgmental and talented, responsible, and responsive that I could let it go. Mia's enthusiasm and optimism shined through her activities. She had artistic talent and an "I can do it", "Yes, I can help with that!" attitude. Her excited willingness to design posters and flyers and help at the International Festival were refreshing".*

Members present added several other comments and words of praise to the graduates:

Rhonda: *"Thank you, Denise, for sharing your skills. You made us comfortable in the learning and work."* Estelle shared quotes from President Barack Obama, Nora Efron, and Gabby Giffords: *"Fight for a seat at the table – better yet, fight for a seat at the head of the table. Find a way to break the rules and make a little trouble out there and I hope you choose to make some of that trouble on behalf of women, Be bold and courageous."* Ramona: *"Move your tassel. Build on each other and ask for help."* Stephanie: *"Good luck and have a great future."* Verena: *"We like hearing from you."* Laleh: *"Congratulations and good luck. You're so inspiring! Your group brought us together, connecting us, and helping us to use our strengths. Best wishes. We're looking forward to more."* Dolores: *"We enjoyed hearing you. Good luck. Make the world better."* Solmaz: *"Wish you all best of luck in your future endeavors. If you need help, just ask us."*

Estelle then told the graduating students and Jamila, who graduated in Winter Quarter 2019, that the Davis Branch had gifted each of them with an AAUW membership next year. We asked the graduates to find a local branch wherever they may be and join. We also asked them to please keep in touch.

Students talked more about classes online and the hardship of not being on campus. To lessen anxiety, their homes allowed them to be more comfortable, but isolated. Classes were more time-consuming and added more pressure. There were so many events occurring, so teachers let up so students could participate or *"deal with their emotions."*

Sahiba was appreciative that the professors were accommodating and aware of the stresses: *"In the Fall, there may be some real classes on campus, like labs. But most will be online. It's hard to focus, since so much has been happening."*

Estelle asked whether the students had participated in the virtual graduation ceremonies. *"It was underwhelming."* Sahiba replied, *"they called your name, showed a slide, click, announced your major and presented a video from the governor and the*

*chancellor. We appreciated them trying. It was a first for everyone.” Rhonda asked where they would be taking classes -- at home, saving money, or being out on their own? Eva emphasized she would stay in Davis to be more connected with a small community of roommates.*

Shahla congratulated them all and said that graduation was a special time with the pandemic, Black Lives Matter, and Juneteenth in the forefront; “*We find your generation competent and hopeful.*” She and Rhonda talked about Juneteenth not being in textbooks and detailed some history and asked if there was a message from those events in your lives.

Tatiana said there was a point in time where we will see how much we need to learn and need to advocate for others. Juneteenth hasn’t been previously mentioned enough; “*Being Latino, we’ll see how much I can remember and try to have hard conversations.*” Eva added: “*I echo Tatiana. I won’t fully understand being judged by skin color. But we need to have uncomfortable conversations and challenge each other.*” Adriana appreciated what was coming out of these hard conversations. She stated that “*being aware of so many new things- you might feel you are being inclusive and yet hurt others through non-knowledge. Now we can have more perspective and hopefully become more together.*” Karen said: “*With the California race riots when I was in school, I saw fights, riots, and destruction. Think of the positives – how we work things out and go forward, not to be stuck in our own experience. When we volunteer, we can make a difference and get new perspectives. It’s uncomfortable to talk about, but necessary.*”

Rhonda mentioned that in 2020, someone who participated in the Women’s March in 2017 said, “*I can’t believe we’re still having to do this!*”

Keep optimistic. Learn from each other. Be different but be together.

Shahla concluded the meeting with: “*We are multi-ethnic. We have to hope for understanding for this generation. It is YOUR destiny. VOTE! Speak up. Be leaders. Help each other.*”

Thank you, Estelle, for organizing this!

## BOARD INSTALLATION REPORT- June 30, 2020

The Davis branch installation meeting was held via Zoom on June 30<sup>th</sup>. Zoom member participants included: Verena, Estelle, Dolores, Shahla, Gail, Karen L, Marti, Rose Mary, Trish, Solmaz, Laleh, Marti, Rhonda, and Juliana. New board member, Solmaz Marzooghi, was introduced. Shahla Farahnak, Executive Officer for 2019-21, thanked all the board members for their help this past year, and was looking forward to the next.

The incoming board members and duties are:

Shahla Farahnak: Branch Executive Officer

Gail Johnson: Financial Officer, Membership, and UC Davis Tech Trek Treasurer

Leslie Rubin: Secretary

Estelle Shiroma: liaison with the AAUW at UC Davis student organization and former Executive Officer

Rhonda Reed: Public Policy, former Executive Officer

Verena Borton: International Affairs and UNA liaison

Stephanie DeGraff-Hunt: Communications and International Festival coordinator

Solmaz Marzooghi: Media and outreach support; she will be shadowing Shahla to learn more about executive officer duties.

To make the installation more personal, Shahla had asked each board member to find a quote that helped to illustrate their interest in AAUW and provide some life particulars. The bios of board members will be featured in future newsletters.

### LESLIE RUBIN IS NAMED GIFT HONOREE FOR 2019

At the Installation Meeting, Gail announced that Leslie Rubin was chosen by the board as the Named Gift Honoree for 2019 in recognition of her extraordinary hard work and dedication to AAUW and the Davis branch. Leslie has served as branch secretary for many years and has been the UCD Tech Trek camp nurse for 10 years. Donations made by branch members to the AAUW Fund (over \$750) during the year are designated in the name of the recipient of this honor.

Leslie was surprised, appreciative, and honored. She explained that her mother is a lifetime AAUW member. Leslie is the mother of two-year old daughter, Margo, and anticipates the legacy of AAUW will continue in her family. Leslie is a nurse anesthetist at the UC Davis Medical Center and loves being the Tech Trek camp nurse. She finds the change in the campers amazing. They come in shy and come out technical wizards!

## UPDATES



Our condolences go to Karen Lemcke and Estelle Shiroma on the recent loss of their mothers.



Congratulations to Annie Chen, former member of AAUW at UCD and 2019 graduate, who is featured in an article by the [UCD Global Affairs](#). "Global Aggies: Challenge Accepted! Thanks to her experiences growing up in Taiwan, immigrating to the U.S., interning with the US Environmental Protection Agency via the UC Davis Washington Program, and studying environmental science in three countries, ESM major Annie Chen is ready to take on the world."

Our congratulations go to Gail Johnson on the healthy birth of her grandson, Nathaniel Michael Johnson, on June 27!



## CALENDAR

**July 4** - Remember Independence Day, Stay Safe.

**July 9** - Zoom Board Meeting, 7 pm.

**July 11** - Zoom Book Club Meeting, 9 am: *The Giver of Stars*

**July 19** - Celebrate and Discuss Tech Trek, Time TBD.