

THE SPOKESWOMAN



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APRIL 2021 CALENDAR

- April 1st, Thursday at 1 pm PDT - AAUW National Town Hall on Membership Education Requirement
- April 7th to May 17, 2021 - AAUW National Voting on Bylaws Amendment and Public Policy Priorities
- April 10th, Saturday 9am: Book Group Meeting discussing *Girl, Woman, Other* by Bernardine Evaristo
- April 12th, Monday 7:00-8:30pm: Business Meeting and Board Election
- April 17th, Saturday 9:30am: AAUW CA Annual Meeting
- April 19th, Monday: Celebrate the 19th

Upcoming Board Election and Annual Branch Meeting on April 12th

**A Message from the AAUW Davis Branch President
Inviting you to our April 12th Annual Business Meeting**

It is so exciting that with the arrival of Spring 2021, the daily joys and pleasures of pre-pandemic life are slowly returning. The sound of the birds flying around in my backyard and the white and pink blossoms around town remind me how precious our friendships and connections are and how much we all have missed them over the last year. For me, the pandemic year was also a good reminder of the importance and value of being a member of an organization like AAUW. Our Davis branch board members hope that you and your families are well and have come out of this period with a stronger commitment to enjoy life and to make a difference in the lives of others.

Despite the challenges of the pandemic over the last year, our AAUW Davis branch has managed to maintain its connections with members virtually and has held monthly board meetings and Celebrate the 19th gatherings over Zoom. While it has been disappointing that we could not hold some of the critical activities such as TechTrek and the annual Women in STEM Professions panel, we are still grateful that our members have been so supportive over the past year and have actively maintained their branch memberships. As much as we missed our face-to-face meetings, some of our members found our monthly virtual gatherings easier to attend and also thought of the meetings as a nice break from isolation and the worries of pandemic life. We had many laughs, shared stories, learned from each other, and discussed new topics. Our Book Group has been a big success, as we continue to meet over Zoom for a virtual morning coffee/tea book chat on the second Saturday of every month.

I am writing to invite and to urge you to attend our 2021 Virtual Annual Business Meeting. As you may know, April is the month when our members gather to hear about the previous year's accomplishments and to cast their vote for the new slate of board members. Your support and vote mean a lot to our board members. I strongly encourage you to take advantage of this opportunity to join us to express your appreciation to our board members, share stories of your past year and your new plans for this year, meet other members, and hear about what we have been up to over the last year. I'd also like to challenge our members to break our past in-person attendance record at the annual business meetings by joining us virtually this year.

We truly miss you and would love to see your happy and smiley faces on Zoom on Monday, April 12th at 7:00 PM. Zoom information was sent to members by email on April 2nd; email reminders will be sent prior to the meeting.

We wish you the best with eager anticipation of in-person meetings when it is safe to do so for all of our members.

Shahla

Proposed Slate of AAUW Davis Branch Officers and Board

Below is the proposed slate of nominees for our local branch Officers and Directors. Other nominations are welcomed and will be accepted from the floor at the April 12th Annual Business Meeting. We encourage and appreciate everyone's engagement and involvement with our local branch. Our Bylaws allow up to 10 At-large Board Directors, so we have up to 5 additional Board positions that may be filled. Many hands make light work!

Please, contact Stephanie DeGraff-Hunt at sdegraffhunt@gmail.com or Juliana Wells at carwells@thegrid.net if you would like to add nominees to any specific board position or member-at-large. We heartily welcome your involvement.

Executive Officer : Shahla Farahnak

Secretary: Leslie Rubin

Finance Officer: Gail Johnson

Board Members-at- Large:

Estelle Shiroma

Rhonda Reed

Verena Borton

Stephanie DeGraff-Hunt

Laleh Rastegarzadeh

AAUW National Voting

Getting Out the Vote!

This spring, AAUW members will have the opportunity to vote to amend the bylaws to change the long-standing educational degree requirement for membership in AAUW. AAUW National has issued the following statement and rationale for the proposal to eliminate the educational degree requirement, which the AAUW California Board of Directors voted to support.

AAUW's mission is to advance gender equity, yet the requirement for membership explicitly denies access to membership to those without college degrees. AAUW does not promote equity for all women and girls if the organization maintains exclusionary membership requirements. The membership requirement is not fair, is not right, and is not equity. This is simply the right thing to do. For this proposed amendment, the Saving Clause in the bylaws is eliminated as it refers to degrees from institutions which have lost their accreditation and will no longer be necessary if the proposed amendment is approved by the membership. The Student Associates clause is removed as students become eligible for full membership with the elimination of the degree requirement. Language has been added to the Dues section to give the AAUW Board of Directors explicit authority to set a dues rate of \$0 for students or any other category of membership the Board deems appropriate.

Earlier this year, members had an opportunity to comment on public policy priorities recommended by the AAUW Public Policy Committee. These priorities establish federal action issues on which AAUW members throughout the country focus their advocacy efforts and guide the work of the national Staff for the next two years. State and branches also use the Public Policy Priorities to inform their advocacy efforts on state and local issues. The 2021-23 AAUW Public Policy Priorities underscore AAUW's mission to advance gender equity for women and girls through research, education, and advocacy. Biennial priorities for national action are selected according to the criteria of viability, critical need, strong membership support, and potential for distinctive AAUW contribution or leadership. Public policy priorities advocate for a strong system of public education that promotes gender fairness, equity, diversity and inclusivity, and addresses the barriers and implicit biases that hinder the advancement of women and girls. Other public policy priorities focus on: economic security for women and equality, individual rights, and justice for a diverse and inclusive society.

For more information on the proposed membership changes to the bylaws and the 2021-23 Public Policy Priorities, go to: <https://www.aauw.org/membership/> A national Town Hall was conducted via Zoom on April 1, 2021. A link to the recorded Town Hall meeting will also be available at the same link in a few days.

The AAUW bylaws require a quorum of at least five percent of the members eligible to vote. In order for the bylaws to be amended, two-thirds of the votes cast must be affirmative. Changes to the bylaws will become effective immediately whereas changes to the Public Policy Priorities will be effective for the 2022-23 fiscal years (June 1, 2021 through June 30, 2023).

Voting Period: April 7 to May 17, 2021

How to Vote: All eligible members are encouraged to vote online. A link to voting, as well as many reminders, will be sent via email to all eligible voters beginning on April 7, 2021. Voters without a valid email address on file with the national office will receive notification of the vote by mail. Paper ballots can be requested from connect@aauw.org on or before April 16, 2021. Paper ballots must be postmarked by April 30, 2021.

Your vote is your voice -- please vote!

California Annual Meeting on April 17th, 9:30am

Our AAUW California Annual Meeting will be held via Zoom for the second year. No travel, no hotel reservations, and no lunch, once again. But, that means you can attend at no cost from your office, living room, or kitchen!

You will learn what has been happening in California this past year and it is a lot! You will meet the three Speech Trek Finalists, learn who our 2020 State Named Gift Honoree is, and celebrate the first Equity Award given to former State Senator Hannah-Beth Jackson. AAUW Board Chair, Julia Brown will join us and we have a special event brought to us by past Co-President Cathy Foxhoven. The meeting agenda is presented below.

Agenda

- Business Meeting
 - Welcome
 - Board accomplishments
 - Financial report
 - State project grant recipients
 - Named Gift award
 - 1st Speech Trek video
- Equity Award Honoring Hannah-Beth Jackson
- Public Policy Update
 - Public Policy priorities
 - MVM introduction
- 2nd Speech Trek Video
- Activity of the Year Announcement
- Update with Julia Brown, AAUW California Board Chair
 - National update
 - Membership requirement update

- 3rd Speech Trek Video and Speech Trek Winner Announcement
- Introduction of AAUW California Board of Director Candidates
- Zoom performance of We Did It For You

The meeting is open to the public. Registration is required. Click **HERE** to register.

International Women's Day with Barbe Chambliss - March 7th - Davis Chapter, UNA, Sacramento Chapter, UNA, AAUW Davis Branch



On March 7th, UNA Davis, UNA Sacramento, and AAUW Davis cosponsored a virtual program in celebration of International Women's Day featuring author Dr. Barbe Chambliss: "Peacemakers Around the World."

Verena Borton, president of UNA Davis, welcomed all with a brief reminder of the history of UN recognition of International Women's Day since 1975, observed on or near March 8, although the observance dates back more than a hundred years. The day is observed around the world with different traditions, in some countries resembling Mother's Day. This year's theme globally was Women in Leadership. Verena pointed out that Sustainable Development Goal #5, gender equality, is a goal that unites the three sponsoring organizations and by partnering, we also fulfilled goal #17, partnership for the goals. (The SDGs or Global Goals were adopted by all 193 UN member states in 2015 and are targeted to be fulfilled by 2030.)

Special thanks were expressed to Edgar Trujillo, president of UNA Sacramento, for all the technical arrangements and to AAUW for once again co-sponsoring this annual event.

In looking over programs of past UNA Davis events for International Women's Day Verena noted that common themes expressed by women speakers from a wide-ranging number of countries and cultures focused on peace, action, cooperation, and a belief that no matter the obstacles to gender equality, with passion and effort it is possible to achieve one's dreams. Similarly, Dr. Chambliss's presentation of stories about women's remarkable accomplishments from throughout the world would again demonstrate these same values of peace, action, cooperation, and a belief that with concerted effort goals can be achieved.

Note: While peacekeeping is one of the most important functions of the UN, Dr. Chambliss has spent decades researching women's role in peace MAKING. She illustrated peace with two open palms up side by side. With mutual respect (peace) the hands are balanced at the same level. When one hand is lower, there is a subordinate, not an equal situation.

Besides being an author, Barbe Chambliss is a psychotherapist, a mediator, a facilitator for restorative justice, an organic farmer, and a musician (marimba). Her Ph.D. dissertation, entitled "Contemporary Women Peacemakers: The Hidden Side of Peacemaking," led to several decades of interviews with women from many countries to explore how peace is actually made. She defines the practice of peacemaking simply as treating each other with respect.

She asked the women she interviewed to define peace. Then she posed, "What do you do to make it work?" From dozens of interviews, fifteen were selected for the book *Women Peacemakers: What We Can Learn From Them* published in 2020 and discussed in our January book group with the author. The first chapters of her book describe each of the 15 women she selected and their work. Chapter 16 is about the commonalities of their responses given. Chapter 17 recounts their advice to other women: be ready; don't give up your goal; do not use violence ever; think systemically and act historically.

Dr. Chambliss then presented stories of four women: Peacemakers Buth Saman from Cambodia; Chido Govera from Zimbabwe; Ruchama Marton from Israel/Palestine; and Clan Mother Rachelle Figueroa, Native American.

Buth Saman helped children traumatized by the Khmer Rouge regime, as she herself had been, by organizing community mother-to-mother groups and later father-to-father groups. She taught composting, permaculture, and health habits. Most importantly, she taught the youth that they had rights. The road to war starts with humiliation and disrespect. She helped them overcome that.

Chido Govera was orphaned at an early age and continually abused by male relatives. She had a recurring dream about helping orphans. With a special one-week school scholarship, she learned about mushroom cultivation. Chido survived by growing and selling mushrooms, and then taught others, and eventually created the Future of Hope Foundation where orphans teach orphans. She mentors them to believe in hope and encourages orphans by giving them tools and ways to believe in the future.

Ruchama Marton had a peaceful childhood in Palestine before the creation of Israel. While doing her obligatory military service in the Sinai she became disillusioned with the unjust

treatment of prisoners of war by leaders who had been hailed as heroes. Ruchama went to medical school and became a psychiatrist. In Gaza, she saw how Palestinian civilians were hurt and tortured. In 1987 she formed Physicians for Human Rights Israel, which states that all people have a right to health and that borders can be crossed to obtain help. Her definition of peace is that peace is a synonym for respect. Live and let live.

Dr. Chambliss became involved with the Standing Rock protests. She had protested against fracking in her own community. Since people had gathered by the hundreds to protect the ceremonial burial grounds and to object to a pipe under the Missouri River and needed to be fed, Barbe drove there with boxes of apples from her farm and joined the protesters. She hoped to connect with a Native American midwife who she had seen interviewed on TV about the forced sterilization of Native American women, but instead, she found Rachelle Figueroa, clan mother, of Tarascan and Arapaho origin, who was outspoken and spent jail time for her views. Inspired by her strong dreams, she tried to unite youth with their elders. She dreamt it was time for women to meet and stand together to “do what you know is right”. Rachelle ended the interview with this powerful message: *“We should all acknowledge that each one of us was put on this planet, at this important time in history, for a reason. It is our duty to speak up for the voiceless. To pray for strength and courage to speak up against injustice, greed, and the destruction of our Sacred Water, Air, and Earth Mother. Let us join together in the Sacred Hoop of Life, the Sacred Circle of Peace, and live in goodness for the benefit of our present and future Relations.”*



Barbe welcomes peacemaker stories and recommendations we may have.

Please send them to: <http://www.barbechamblissauthor.com> or barbe.chambliss44@gmail.com

During the Q & A segment of the program moderator Laleh Rastegarzadeh directed several questions to Barbe:

Was language a barrier? No, most spoke English or provided a translator.

What was the most surprising experience interviewing? The “why not?” lady.

Do we recognize peacemaker potential? Chapter 17 describes this.

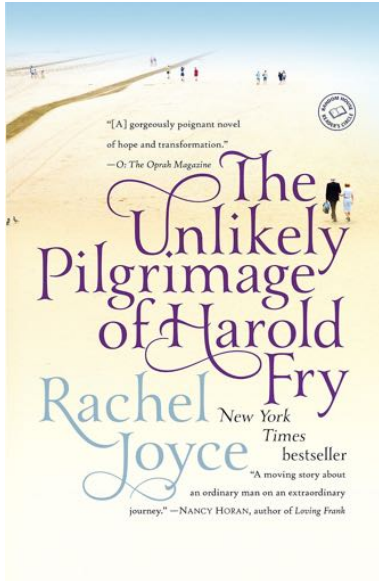
Have you had stories from Europe? Yes, Sister Sarah whom I found in Great Britain through Irish disc jockey Fenula Cassidy.

Is there anyone currently in this area? Tara Abraham, Annie Young, Yolo Sacramento Women’s Conflict Resolution group, Yolo Conflict Resolution Center.

Sacramento UNA member Dr. Trish Blaine closed by thanking Barbe and asking all to celebrate the efforts of women who drive progress by their decision-making for all the as yet under-represented people.

For the full experience of the presentation, please go to the Sacramento UNA’s YouTube channel or contact Edgar Trujillo at president@unasacramento.org

**Book Group Report on *The Unlikely Pilgrimage of Harold Fry* on March 13th-
Next Book Group Meeting April 10th**



On March 13, the book group met to discuss “The Unlikely Pilgrimage of Harold Fry” by Rachel Joyce. Participants were: Stephanie, Rhonda, Nan, Helen, Verena, Rose Mary, Heidi, Barbara, Estelle, and Juliana.

The author’s first novel is very British and for those in the group who listened to the audio version, it was nice to hear the story read with a British accent. Not everyone had finished reading, so the rest were careful not to mention the big reveal at the end. Some readers were reminded of the “Sweet Potato Pie Society” story where some people wandered around London trying to find themselves.

Estelle asked about a map that followed Harold’s pilgrimage. Nan was able to show the hand-drawn map, included in the printed version of the book, that dramatically illustrates the extent of the 600-mile route that Harold walked to deliver his response to a letter from a former friend, Queenie Hennessy. She had written a letter to tell him that she had terminal cancer. Verena found that it was helpful to visualize the landscape traversed, made easier by the fact that “All Creatures Great and Small” was being shown on PBS during that period.

Questions about repairing shoes or accepting gifts were discussed, and the symbolism of the dog attaching itself to Harold and later going off with another person. Rhonda noted that when she lived in England years ago it was easy to find B&B’s and because the climate is fairly constant it is usually not a problem (relating to Harold sleeping outdoors). Helen added that Pubs were public houses and often had sleeping areas, as well as gathering places. Nowadays places are much more regulated.

The author set up complex issues and emotions around relationships. There were many negatives and ways of interpreting events. Rose Mary said she was questioning “why?” much of the time, wondering whether the situations described were real. In reading the book, Helen felt the aloneness she experienced after getting divorced in Australia. As a single person, she felt her life was held together by threads, like a drifting spider, and she needed

relationships (kids, pets, friends) to bring her back to the world. Davis is friendly. Australia was not.

For Harold, his pilgrimage was a way to be alone and reflect on his life non-judgmentally. The many interactions with strangers gradually revealed to him what he had missed in life, what he had not valued enough, as well as what his unrealized potential was. On balance it turned out to be a very positive and enlightening experience for him, despite the hardships.

Maureen, his wife, went from lying to herself and feeling anger at Harold's disappearance to missing him and reflecting on the love and fun that had characterized their early marriage. She reached out to others and with the help of Rex, their widowed neighbor, began to see the problems that had developed over the years. Heidi was drawn to the wife. "I understood her more and self-evaluated. Did I do that too? How do we remember things? Siblings may remember differently."

All the main characters were searching for truths in themselves. Everyone appeared "normal," but had different issues. Verena felt that in a sense the whole book was about mental illness – people within some cases serious issues going back to their childhoods, but nobody getting professional help to address those issues. Many aspects of the story were a reflection on the challenge of parenting.

The segment of the pilgrimage where a growing group of "Pilgrims" overwhelms the direction of events to enhance media coverage and attract attention to themselves brought on a discussion by Barbara, Estelle, and Rhonda of parallel situations at work where women will have the initial ideas, but men later claim credit for them.

The worst lies are the ones we tell ourselves...like people who are in denial about racism. In the book, the author shows how they try to get past the lies/truths that people were telling themselves. There were many sad things. People need to be kinder to each other.

Rhonda added remarks about how in British education, kids at 14 years old are tested and judged as being able to advance with more education or be sent to trade school. Kids reach maturity at ages 14-16. The U.S. keeps them "young" until 18.

Helen likened Harold's pilgrimage to the process of making a metaphysical journey outside of yourself which likely will take you out of your comfort zone. Stephanie reflected on the fun times of a beginning marriage and the hopefulness which can lead to self-discovery. But Maureen and Harold didn't talk to each other, mostly, and in this way lost their attachment for a long time. Rhonda felt the ending was hopeful.

At the end of the printed version, there was an excerpt from “The Love Song of Miss Queenie Hennessy,” a sequel to Harold’s story giving us the story from Queenie’s point of view. It is most intriguing because we really learned very little about her beyond the fact that she had been a colleague of Harold’s decades ago and was now dying of cancer. What made him undertake this pilgrimage in the belief he could save her life until he got to her hospice? Barbara commented that Queenie makes a journey, too...in her mind, showing the resilience of the human spirit and the significance of pivotal moments. We might consider picking it for a future book group selection.

On April 10th we will discuss “Girl, Woman, Other” by Bernardine Evaristo. An opportunity to submit choices for the next read has been emailed. Please vote for the books to be chosen for the next few months.

Celebrate the 19th on March 19th: Nowruz Presentation by Laleh



On March 19, Laleh Rastegarzadeh enlightened and entertained us with a description of the Persian New Year, Nowruz!

The Persian New Year is officially acknowledged by the U.N., Canada, and certain European countries. It is widely celebrated in many countries, including Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Iran, Turkey, Pakistan, India, and Afghanistan on March 20th or 21st. Three hundred million people observe this special time where both day and night are together at 2:37 and 28 seconds pm, mathematically and astronomically, where the earth is at this natural time.

Preparation for this rebirth of the earth starts a couple of weeks before, with deep house cleaning. “Khooneh takani” literally translates as “shaking the house,” washing walls, and putting all clutter away. The Thursday before the New Year at sunset, a “chakra shanbeh soory” is held, which is the ritual of lighting fires and jumping over them. As they jump, they say, “My yellowness (weakness, negativity) to you (fire) and may your redness (goodness, health, positivity) be mine.”

Fire is the significant symbol of the Zoroastrian religion, which is based on Good Thoughts, Good Words, and Good deeds. They used fire and symbols for good talk and deeds. About 1400 years ago, the Islam religion came to Iran, but the ancient Zoroastrian rituals signifying fire and celebrating spring equinox as New Year are still practiced and connect us to nature and living in harmony.

The table is set with seven elements with names that start with the letter “s”. “Seer” or garlic symbolizes health and medicine; “Seeb” or apple for beauty and health; “Serkeh” or vinegar for wisdom and patience; “Sumaq” or sumac for the color of sunrise; “Senjid”, the dried fruit of coriander symbolizes love; “Sekkeh, coins for prosperity; “Sabzeh”, the sprouts of wheat or lentils symbolize the greenery of spring. We have sweets to be shared, wishing for a sweet and pleasant year. Candles are also the symbol of enlightening. A mirror is a common item used in many of the rituals and signifies the reflection of our deeds of the past year and to seek purity for the coming new year.

Two books are also present on the table: the Qur'an and the poetry book of Hafiz. Around the time of New Year, the family sits around the table and prays in silence, praying not only for themselves and family members but for all around the world. Laleh finds this time very precious and powerful, as millions of people around the world at the same time, collectively pray for goodness.

As the old year turns to new, people celebrating Nowruz hug and kiss and often become emotional and cry, cry of joy and hope of betterness. The presents are exchanged, often crisp new bills placed in the holy book, and are given as a blessing in finance for the new year. During the 13 day festival, families visit the matriarchs and patriarchs, starting with the eldest. Wrongdoings are forgiven and resentments are forgotten. This is a time of reconciliation, reconnecting, and loving each other through rituals. It is a time of awareness about the cycle of life in nature: rebirth, decay, rebirth.

Nan asked about a special New Year meal. In some regions, for the night of fire jumping, mixed rice and wheat noodles with raisins and dates are served. The noodles symbolize an untangled and smooth new year. Also served is a mixed herb rice (finely chopped cilantro, dill, parsley, green onion, fresh garlic) with fish.

On the 13th day of the new year, everyone goes outside the house to have “a getaway from 13”. All the parks, riversides, and hills in the suburbs become crowded with people picnicking. You throw out the “Sabzeh” wheat sprout to the flowing water in the river that day. If unmarried, you make a knot of the wheat sprouts and wish for a suitable spouse, throwing the knot into the river.

The poetry of Rumi and Hafiz are based on nature metaphors (weeping willow like the messy hair of someone madly in love, the crescent moon like an eyebrow, a flower's bud/rosebud like lips of the beloved). Laleh shared that her name means 'Tulip'. She ended the meeting by saying, “May you all have a better year filled with health and peace. Happy New Year! Nowruz Mobarak!”

Leslie, Zoe, Nan, Rhonda, Stephanie, Barbara, Marti, Alexandra, and Rose Mary expressed their thanks to Laleh.

The meeting was recorded and can be viewed [HERE](#)
Access Passcode: KHn4D&qf

March 24th Lobby Day Report

Special report by Stephanie DeGraff-Hunt

AAUW California Public Policy co-chairs, Kathi Harper and Sue Miller, are the backbone of the first ever and definitely first virtual California Lobby Day held on March 24, 2021, the same day as Equal Pay Day this year. Tremendous planning and strategizing went into making the idea of a Lobby Day into reality for 161 AAUW members who registered for this event to meet with 120 state legislators. The co-chairs were supported in this new endeavor with the help of Kathleen Van Osten of MVM Strategy Group, AAUW California's new advocacy firm.

The goals of Lobby Day were three-fold: create the opportunity to meet legislators, inform them about AAUW California and local branches, and advocate on behalf of AAUW California's top three priority bills on AAUW's legislative agenda for 2020-2021. (AAUW's California entire legislative agenda includes 30 bills based on AAUW's mission to advance equity for women and girls through education, research and advocacy, ensuring equity for a diverse society.)

Kathi Harper and Sue Miller selected three of AAUW California's priority bills to discuss with the legislators. They prepared background, fact sheets, and talking points for the selected bills for each team of three to four AAUW members to use in their arranged Zoom meetings with State legislators. Within each AAUW team, one person was chosen to be the lead speaker for one of the priority bills. Teams had three 20-minute pre-arranged Zoom meetings with a State legislator throughout the day where each team member would advocate for their bill.

Where possible, team members were matched to legislators from their own districts. When there were more than eight members from a given AAUW branch, they were instead matched with a legislator where no AAUW members were represented in his or her district on Lobby Day. Given these parameters, it was expected that at least one of the Zoom meetings for AAUW members would be held with at least one out-of-district legislator. You can well imagine the complications of creating the AAUW teams and matching them with at least one of their district's legislators.

The three priority bills selected for Lobby Day are the following:

Assembly Bill 92 Child Care Family Fees authored by Assembly Member Eloise Gomez Reyes and co-sponsored by AAUW. This bill will create an equitable sliding scale for family child care fees, relieving the burden on working families struggling to pay for child care and early childhood education services. By increasing the affordability of child care to working families this bill will benefit the economic recovery of the state by helping parents remain in the workforce to achieve economic stability. The current fee structure penalizes families as child care fees increase as family income rises. The average two-parent family spends approximately 20% of its annual income on child care. Experts say that spending more than 7% places economic stress on working families.

Senate Bill 62 Garment Worker Protection Act authored by Assembly Member Maria Elena Durazo.

This bill will expand and strengthen protections for garment workers by eliminating the piece rate in the garment industry to ensure that workers are paid legal wages for their time spent working. It will also allow for incentive-based bonuses above their legal wage. The basis of this bill is that currently in Los Angeles, some 2,000 garment manufacturers employ more than 46,000 people (primarily immigrant women who spend 10 to 12 hours a day cutting, sewing, and dyeing clothing.) At this time garment workers are paid by the piece rather than being paid legal wages for all time spent working. Payment by the piece means that garment workers receive subminimum wages, which average out at \$5.15 per hour.

Senate Bill 373 Consumer Debt: Economic Abuse authored by Assembly Member Dave Min.

This bill will prohibit creditors and debt collectors from being able to collect from an individual when the individual can demonstrate the debt was incurred through economic abuse. It will also prevent the debt from being reported to credit agencies. Economic abuse is caused when a person causes another individual to suffer impaired financial stability by maintaining control over the individual's financial resources. Examples of this include unauthorized or coerced use of credit or property, withholding access to money or credit cards, forbidding attendance at school or employment, stealing or defrauding assets, exploiting the individual's resources for personal gain, or withholding physical resources such as food, clothing, necessary medication, or shelter. This is a complicated undertaking and primarily focuses on survivors of domestic violence, elder or dependent adult abuse, and foster youth. Debts taken out in their names without their knowledge or consent will damage their credit and force them into years of debt repayment, poverty, and housing instability.

These heart-rending issues impact people of all genders through domestic violence and its consequences disproportionately harm women. Financial abuse occurs in 99% of domestic violence cases and 52% of domestic violence survivors report experiencing coerced and fraudulent debt. Elder abuse cases occur when family members or others abuse a Power of Attorney to steal and threaten the individual in their care. Youth in foster care are vulnerable as well, as many adults have access to their personal information.

As you can see, there was a tremendous amount of time and thought put into making AAUW California's first Lobby Day a reality. To help prepare the teams Kathi Harper, Sue Miller, and Kathleen Van Osten presented a required webinar on Monday, March 22nd on how best to speak with legislators and clearly advocate for the bills. In the webinar, they laid out a pathway to clearly and succinctly share AAUW's goals to advocate for others. It was a huge undertaking to say the very least, and highly commendable. Let's hope that there will be future Lobby Days where we can continue to actively support the values and mission of AAUW.

AAUW National/State Updates

Membership Renewals

Membership renewal letters will be sent by snail mail in early May for 2021-22 membership effective July 1, 2021. National dues will be \$62 for 2021-2022, of which \$59 are tax-deductible. State dues remain the same at \$20 and branch dues at \$21 but are not tax-deductible. The entire dues package will be a total of \$103.

New members joining on March 16th or later will receive free membership for the remainder of the AAUW year ending on June 30, 2021.

New Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Toolkit

Elaine Johnson, Director, diversity@aauw-ca.org

A sense of belonging is critical for AAUW members to feel valued. The new interactive DEI (Diversity, Equity & Inclusion) Toolkit includes the following explanation in the key terms and concepts section. So if diversity means the characteristics that make us unique, and inclusion refers to behaviors and actions, then what is **belonging**? And why is it important? **Belonging** is feeling like you are a part of something, that you actually matter. It isn't necessarily about being liked — but rather being needed. AAUW needs all of these things together (diversity, inclusion, and belonging) for our branches to continue to grow and thrive.

The **DEI TOOLKIT** provides guidelines for participants about discussions of uncomfortable issues.

Upcoming Webinars

Factory Flaw: The Attrition and Retention of Women in Manufacturing

Monday, April 5, 2021 at 3pm ET

Join us for a discussion of AAUW's new research report, "Factory Flaw: The Attrition and Retention of Women in Manufacturing." We'll explore why women leave their jobs in manufacturing and what their experiences--with sexual harassment, unequal pay, unfair promotions, and juggling caregiving responsibilities--can tell us about how we can support women working in male-dominated industries. AAUW is grateful for the support of the Arconic Foundation which made this independent research possible.

Click **HERE** to register

Diversity Equity and Inclusion Webinar: How to Have Difficult Conversations

Thursday, April 22, 2021 | 4pm ET

Try to think of the last time you had a conversation that was not easy due to perceived or actual cultural/socioeconomic factors. How did you feel before you began talking? Did you harbor expectations as to how the conversation would proceed and conclude? How did you feel once the conversation ended? Did you accomplish your goals?

An important step in your Branch's journey toward true equity, diversity, and inclusion is having open and honest conversations. Join Jesse Ohrenberger and members of the AAUW Inclusion & Equity Committee to learn foundational skills for successfully navigating these kinds of conversations, including how to create safe and inclusive spaces by setting ground rules and managing community agreements.

Click **HERE** to register

UNA Updates

Join UNA-USA for a free presentation of the Global Engagement Online Series (GEOS):

"Global and Local Solutions to Reaching Zero Hunger."

April 15, 10 a.m. PT

The Global Engagement Online Series ("GEOS") is UNA-USA's series of bi-monthly virtual programs to keep you inspired, informed, and connected to the UN. From protecting human rights to building sustainable cities and communities—and everything in between—we're bringing together top UN officials and experts to share how their work is advancing us all toward a better world.

GEOS sessions are open to everyone (i.e. you do not have to be a UNA member to join).

Please click [HERE](#) to join

Former Tech Trekker in the News



Sofia Castiglioni (Tech Trek Class of 2012), a junior at the University of Portland, was recently recognized as the recipient of the NCAA elite 90 award for the 2021 NCAA Women’s Cross Country Championship.

This prestigious honor was the first time any athlete at the University of Portland received this award that honors an individual who has reached the pinnacle of competition at the national championship level in his or her sport, while also achieving the highest academic standard among his or her peers.



Sofia is majoring in biology while maintaining a perfect 4.0 cumulative grade point average. She also serves as the current president of the Student-Athlete Advisory Committee at the school.

On the Move: Gail Johnson

Gail Johnson recently moved from Davis to Winters.
Please update your directories to include her new contact information.

955 Wyatt Lane, Winters, California 95694.

No landline; cell # 530 383-0881

E-mail: Gejohnson08@comcast.net

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