

THE SPOKESWOMAN

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

Tech Trek Update

By Stephanie DeGraff-Hunt, Davis Branch President

Spring is in the air and Tech Trek activity is kicking into high gear. Many procedural steps must be followed to allow us to access the school principals and the 7th-grade Math and Science Teachers. Then we can share information and our excitement about the Tech Trek Stem Camp that will be held on the UCD Campus from July 14th - July 20th. The 7th-grade Math and Science Teachers are asked to work as a team at their school to nominate four to five girls who meet the AAUW Tech Trek criteria and who would benefit from such a unique opportunity. Additional emails are sent to encourage the teachers to nominate students as we are asking them to take on extra tasks as they meet, discuss, and nominate their students.

Once the nominations are received we notify the parents and the students and provide them with the instructions on how to proceed using the online CampDoc program, which is a secure and encrypted program. Now in the second year of using CampDoc we feel much more comfortable in using the program, which has many benefits. The CampDoc program allows us to see exactly how the application procedures are going. Parents first have to allow their daughter to apply. The students have questions to answer and an essay to write. Immunization and health history are required. We send both emails and texts to let the parents and students know that we are here to help them navigate steps and answer any questions or concerns about the application process and we let them know how happy we are when the application process in CampDoc is complete.

Once the online applications are complete in mid-March, our AAUW Davis Branch Interview Team gets to work and each candidate is interviewed individually. After the student is interviewed, parents are invited to join their daughter to meet the Interview Team and learn more about Tech Trek Camp.

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March-Early April 2024 Calendar

Saturday, March 2, 10:30 am to 1 pm - Women's History Month Celebration, Gibson House in Woodland

Saturday, March 9, 9 am - Book Group meeting by Zoom: "North Woods, A Novel" by Daniel Mason

Sunday, March 10, 3 pm to 5 pm - International Women's Day at I-House, Literacy Outreach to Women and Girls in Afghanistan

Thursday, March 14, 7pm - Monthly Board meeting

Saturday, March 16, 10 am to 12:30 pm - Gov Trek Finale

Tuesday, March 19, 6 pm to 7 pm - Celebrate the 19th

Monday, March 25, 7 pm to 9 pm - Lobby Days Training webinar

Tuesday, April 2 and Wednesday, April 3 - Lobby Days

Saturday, April 13, 9 am - Book Group meeting by Zoom: "Pelosi" by Molly Ball

Tech Trek Update Continued

The hardest part of the Interview Team's job is to make the final selections for our four openings at the UCD Camp. The nominated girls are so inspiring and we always walk away saying, "If only there were openings for all of them, because they are all so amazingly qualified." We have to remind ourselves that the UCD Tech Trek Camp has room for only 90 girls from all over the state, primarily from Northern California, and being nominated by a teacher is an honor in itself. Every student who is nominated receives a personalized follow-up letter.

Upon the final selection of four girls and two alternates, the parents, students, teachers, and principals are notified. By April 15th everything is set for the girls to learn even more about Tech Trek Camp as they will hear from our two new UCD Camp Directors about the morning core classes and will be asked to rank their top areas of interest.

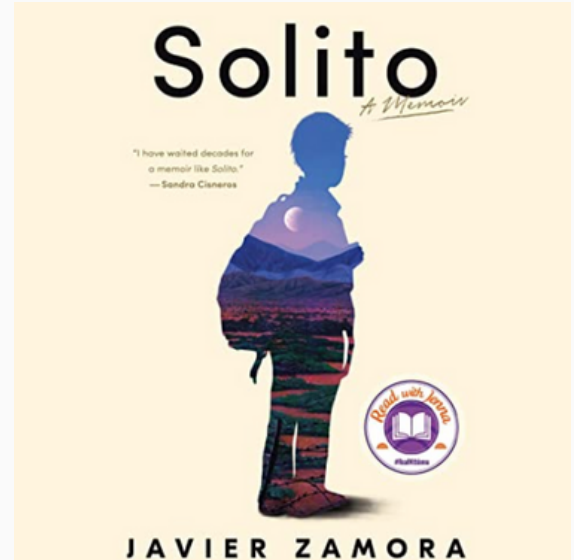
In June, AAUW Davis will host the girls and their parents at a luncheon. In July, as Camp volunteers we will have wonderful opportunities to see them in action. In the Fall, we will host another gathering where the Tech Trekkers, parents, principals, teachers, former Tech Trekkers, volunteers, and AAUW members are invited to hear about the girls' experiences.

The next step in this process is for our branch to have a team of two to follow up regularly with all of our former Tech Trekkers and their families. We want to know how they are doing, what they are doing, and to learn how their camp experience influences their career choices. We also want to encourage former Trekkers to apply to become Junior Camp Counselors, Senior Camp Counselors, and in the future present at the Professional Women's Night, become Dorm Moms, and yes, even future Camp Directors, and AAUW members. I believe that by making a continual and consistent outreach effort, we will have a greater impact. This could be exactly what we need to do to expand our membership. Imagine how the branch could grow if not only the Trekkers join AAUW in the future, but we can reach out to Tech Trekkers' moms and their friends. Please, step up and be part of the AAUW Tech Trek Follow-Up Team and let's stay in touch with our past Trekkers.

Recap of February 10 Book Group Discussion

By Juliana Wells and Verena Borton

Joining the discussion of “Solito,” Javier Zamora’s memoir about his harrowing journey as an unaccompanied minor from El Salvador to the border crossing in Arizona and ultimately California, were Verena Borton, Karen Lemcke, Estelle Shiroma, Juliana Wells, Rhonda Reed, RoseMary Forehand, Barbara Durst, and Stephanie DeGraff-Hunt. The book was an appropriate choice while immigration and border security were hot topics in the daily news, including the drowning of a ten-year-old boy while crossing the Rio Grande.



Javier’s father fled North escaping the civil war in El Salvador when his son was a toddler, followed in 1995 by his wife when Javier (“Chepito”) was just five years old. For the next four years, the boy lived with his grandparents, all the while dreaming about the day when he would join his parents in the United States and imagining their surroundings based on TV shows. In 1999, his turn to make the “trip” (as his parents referred to it in phone calls) was arranged through money exchanges and dealings with coyotes. As he left the village of La Herradura Javier was told to expect he would reach the United States in about two weeks. His grandfather accompanied him on the first leg and gave him pointers on how to interpret nature, read maps and distinguish regional language differences.

In reality, it took seven weeks, with many unexplained changes in the itinerary, travel by bus, boat and on foot, traversing Guatemala and Mexico with varying groups of other migrants. The coyote and fellow traveler who were supposed to look out for Chepito essentially ignored him. Eventually, he formed a “family unit” with one young man and a mother and daughter, traveling with them and sharing all difficulties until completing the final, third, attempt to cross the border into Arizona.

As readers, we experience this journey through the eyes of a nine-year-old, who is a keen observer, frequently confused about the behavior of adults while also attaching himself to a select few of them, wise for his years but unable to tie his shoes, and above all ever confident that he will be reunited with his parents whom he barely remembers. His meticulous description of the trek through the desert at night, the careful notations about the variety of desert plants, rock features and occasional animals, the sparse food items and the never-ending thirst for water, and the ubiquitous backpack holding essentials – all are vividly presented as the adult poet relives his childhood trek over thousands of miles, sharing some of the coping mechanisms essential in migration, the fear and disappointments, the horrors of detention centers, and the resilience needed to pursue one’s dreams.

Recap of February 10 Book Group Discussion Continued

Javier Zamora was reunited with his parents and lived in San Rafael (in a much more modest apartment than the home he had imagined in his dreams) until he left for college in 2008. He has been the recipient of various fellowships (including from Harvard and Stanford) and now lives in Tucson, Arizona.

The book group discussed “North Woods: A Novel” by Daniel Mason on March 9. The selection for April 13 is “Pelosi” by Molly Ball.

February Celebrate the 19th: Penguins and Whales and Seals, Oh My!

By Juliana Wells

On February 19, Rhonda Reed shared by Zoom, some of her experiences from her 18-day trip to Antarctica: the stresses before the trip (health, cancellations, weather), the stresses during the trip (health, cancellations, weather), and the wonder and joy of seeing glaciers, frigid waters, science stations, Zodiacs, penguins (seven of eight known species), albatrosses, skuas, seals, whales, and friendly, knowledgeable guides and crew.

Rhonda’s explanations of the lives of birds, whales, and penguins in the Antarctic region were lively, scientific, and easy to understand. Did you know the importance of whales as a carbon sink? With descriptions of different breeds of penguins and both slides and videos, we could almost feel the cold, roll with the waves, and smell the poop. Rhonda’s presentation is available on [Zoom](#); passcode 4769@tjX.

Nicely done, Rhonda, and thank you from all of us: Estelle, Shahla, Nan, Gail, UCD intern Emmi, Char and Juliana, and Stephanie.



UNA Update

By Verena Borton

International Women’s Day is one of UNA Davis’ signature annual events every March. We are delighted to once again be able to present the program in person at International House Davis on Sunday, March 10th from 3 – 5 p.m. AAUW Davis is a co-sponsor, and we hope many of you were able to join us to hear founder and director of the Institute for English Literacy, Elke Damesyn, speak on “Literacy Outreach to Women and Girls in Afghanistan.” Her local nonprofit provides English and computer instruction via the internet to the women and girls whose education has been halted by the Taliban and who find hope and encouragement through this transformative opportunity. While the instructors are located in Afghanistan, Elke, who does not speak Dari, is assisted locally by Wadia Karamkhil who gave additional insights during the presentation.

The work of the Institute for English Literacy is a wonderful illustration of applying Sustainable Development Goals #4 (Quality Education) and #5 (Gender Equality) – while the parallel to AAUW’s mission is equally clear.

Additionally, this is a perfect example of thinking globally while acting locally. There was plenty of time for detailed Q & A to help the audience understand the full range of challenges faced in this undertaking. Artwork by the students was available to view and purchase after the formal presentation, while attendees enjoyed refreshments and informal conversation.

UNA-USA’s **Global Engagement Summit** on February 16th at UN Headquarters was an inspiring success with an amazing array of presenters and very effective youth moderators. The virtual part of the program ran from 7 a.m. to 3 p.m. for us on the west coast.



17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS

4 QUALITY EDUCATION

5 GENDER EQUALITY

10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES

UNA Davis Presents:
LITERACY OUTREACH TO WOMEN AND GIRLS IN AFGHANISTAN with Elke Damesyn

A Celebration of International Women's Day 2024

March 10th | 3:00 - 5:00 PM

@International House Davis (10 College Park)

REGISTER @ [UNADAVIS.ORG/EVENTS](https://unadavis.org/events)

Join us for an inspiring event in celebration of International Women's Day, hosted by the United Nations Association of the USA - Davis Chapter. We are honored to feature Elke Damesyn, founder and director of the [Institute for English Literacy](#), a non-profit organization dedicated to providing free online English and computer classes to girls and women in Afghanistan.

Come and be a part of this empowering presentation that sheds light on the transformative efforts to unleash the full potential of women in Afghanistan.

Stay for refreshments at the conclusion of the presentation to mingle with fellow attendees and engage in meaningful conversations. This is a FREE event, but donations for UNA programs and the Institute for English Literacy are welcomed.

International house DAVIS UNITED NATIONS ASSOCIATION OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA Davis Chapter INSTITUTE FOR ENGLISH LITERACY IEL AAUW empowering women since 1881

UNA Update Continued

The next major gathering is the annual 3-day UNA-USA Leadership Summit in Washington, DC, June 2-4, culminating in the “Day on the Hill” when UNA members advocate with their Congressional delegations for full funding for the United Nations while maintaining a constructive U.S. – UN relationship. The Summit is titled “The World Needs the UN, the UN Needs U.S.!” There will be no opportunity to join virtually. However, an event of a similar nature scheduled for later in the year will be entirely virtual.

On February 22nd a dozen UNA members from Northern and Southern California chapters, including Davis, participated in a 45-minute virtual advocacy exchange with the Legislative Assistant of Senator Laphonza Butler, covering concise statements about UNA’s mission, full funding, peace and security, women’s issues (including CEDAW, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women), justice and rule of law, human rights, the SDGs and climate. The staffer, Rob Levinson, is knowledgeable about the UN, worked previously for Sen. Feinstein, was receptive to our statements and shared impressions of his trip to Jordan and Jerusalem just days prior to our meeting.

The **68th annual UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW)** is taking place from March 11th - 22nd. Representatives of Member States, UN entities, and ECOSOC-accredited NGOs (including AAUW - see Gloria Blackwell’s email of 3/8/24) from all regions of the world are invited to contribute to the session. The priority theme is ***“Accelerating the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls by addressing poverty and strengthening institutions and financing with a gender perspective.”***



UNITED NATIONS ASSOCIATION
OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Davis Chapter

AAUW California News

Gov Trek Finale on March 16th

It's Women's History Month! What a great time to highlight our future leaders, especially in fields typically dominated by men.

Get ready to be INSPIRED by your future government leaders!! Gov Trek's goal is to address the shortage of women in the halls of power. This seven-week online program for California junior and senior high school girls introduced them to the world of public service and elected office through inspiring speakers and interactive activities. Learn more [HERE](#).

Gov Trek 2024 is wrapping up Saturday, March 16th from 10 am - 12:30 pm with teams presenting their simulated electoral campaign packages in a contest. We'd like you to experience them in action. You'll be amazed at the talent and enthusiasm of these remarkable young women when you hear their stump speeches, see their campaign ads, and voter outreach plans. Join us and meet your future leaders! You'll even have a chance to vote for your choice in the People's Choice Award. See if it matches the judges' decision!

Register [HERE](#) to join us on Zoom.

AAUW Fund Chairs and Branches Exceeding Donation Expectations

Karen Vanderwerken, AAUW Fund Committee chair, aaufund@aauw-ca.org

Thanks to your continued efforts, California had donations to the Greatest Needs Fund of approximately \$534,200! This is \$84,000 more than projected. Your ongoing help with your branch made this possible. Continued donations keep AAUW strong for our mission.

National has a new Senior Manager of Planned Giving, Nadia Daghistani. Contact her with questions about Required Minimum Distributions (RMD) and trust donations. (daghistanin@aauw.org)

If you would like to see the fellows who have been sponsored by your grants, see: "AAUW 2023 Fund Fellows and Grant Recipients" on the AAUW California website. Sponsorship IDs and Sponsorship Names are now available on this page. Thanks to our leader, Sandi Gabe, for providing this update.

Remember to submit your branch Named Gift Honoree nominations by March 31st. We have received 20 Branch Named Gift Honoree requests so far.

Mark your calendar to attend the 2024 Annual AAUW California Event on Saturday, April 27th from 9 am to noon.

Help us support the upcoming Open Membership vote. The impact of donations from corporations, businesses, and support from college/university staff and students has great potential.

Nominations and Elections

Deanna Arthur, Nominations and Election chair, nominating@aauw-ca.org

A CHANCE TO EMBRACE ALL

As many members know, there will be a bylaws amendment on the National ballot this April/May that would eliminate the degree requirement. In 2021, 63% of members voted in favor of the amendment, however, it required a 2/3 (67.7%) vote to pass. We know there are strong feelings held by some members around this. I would ask you to consider a few facts about AAUW and the evolution of our membership requirement since our beginning.

Initially, only a very select few degrees from a small number of elite colleges were accepted for membership in AAUW. Before 1949, branches could pick and choose who they wanted (generally meaning women of color or Jewish women were excluded), and it wasn't until 1975 that any woman with a bachelor's degree from any regionally accredited institution could join. In 1987, we voted to extend membership to men, and in 2005, we relaxed the degree requirement yet again to allow those with AA (or equivalent) degrees. During each of these changes, our purpose and work to improve opportunities for women and girls never wavered. Our support of higher education never stopped. Our understanding that having a degree is not a requirement for being passionate about working for gender equity has changed. Our march towards being an inclusive organization will be made stronger by this change.

Please join the [AAUW California Board of Directors](#) in supporting the bylaws amendment and help educate your branch on how AAUW has changed over the years and is still the wonderful organization that we know and love.

Public Policy News

How One Branch Has Put the School Board Project into Action

By Laurinda Ochoa, Member AAUW California Public Policy School Board Project Committee

Last year the AAUW Danville-Alamo-Walnut Creek branch said “Yes” to the AAUW California School Board Project (SBP) call to action. In August our branch members started to attend monthly local school board meetings and witnessed attacks by local religious and political extremists on books, curriculum, teachers, librarians, and district staff.

Based on social media statements by people who want to “return schools to local control of concerned parents,” we believe our school district and adjacent districts are being targeted by groups intent on changing public education in California. As AAUW members we support our state and national public policy priorities of providing honest, equitable, and inclusive, quality public education for all students.

To implement the SBP and work toward these public policy goals, our branch has taken a three-step approach:

1. Educate our members and the public about the issues facing public education by hosting Issue Programs and, later, Candidate Forums;
2. Advocate for our public education priorities by speaking up at local Board of Education (BOE) meetings to support board decisions that are consistent with AAUW policies and values;
3. Collaborate by forming coalitions with local groups to educate the public about the importance of supporting public education and those candidates who believe in honest and equitable quality education for all.

EDUCATION:

We encourage all branches to host an SBP program by inviting local experts to speak about what is happening in your districts. Often, accurate information is not available from local media and we need to hear from people actually engaged in public education to understand the local issues. PTA, BOE members, district superintendents, librarians, teachers, and informed parents can provide valuable insights.

ADVOCACY:

We hope all branches attend BOE meetings and have one speaker advocating AAUW values. Board members and school staff have voiced appreciation to AAUW members for speaking up in support of public education. Often AAUW is one of the few voices of reason and civility at these meetings. Our voices can change the tone of the public discussion.

COLLABORATION:

We've learned our Education and Advocacy efforts naturally lead to other people and groups being interested in working together with AAUW to protect public education. We're now working with others in a two-county area to "Lift Up Public Education" by educating the public, advocating for public education, and demonstrating community support for our local school districts. For more information on how we organized our coalition and distributed the workload, visit our website [here](#).

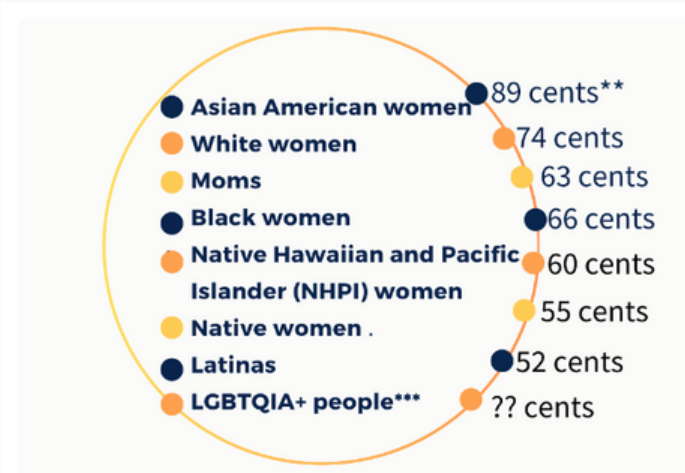
We encourage other branches to support quality public education and promote critical AAUW values by taking these simple steps to build member and community support for Quality Public Education.

Remember to let your SBP liaison know when you have attended a school board meeting, and be sure to complete and submit the SB Checklist. You can find your liaison [here](#); you can find the Checklist [here](#).

MARCH 12 IS EQUAL PAY DAY

Amy Hom and Melissa Maceyko, Co-chairs, AAUW California Public Policy Committee

Each year, this symbolic day is used to raise awareness around and combat the impact of pay inequities. Equal Pay Day 2024 is on March 12 and marks the current state of the gender pay gap for women, who make 84% of what men do, for full-time, year-round workers, and 78% for all workers (including part-time and seasonal). However, differently positioned women are more starkly impacted by this gap, as represented in the list below.*



*List represents figures for average of all earners. For full list see this [link](#).

**Cents paid for every dollar paid to non-Hispanic white men, or in the case of moms, dads.

***The U.S. Census Bureau does not currently collect the necessary information to provide specific data about LGBTQIA+ communities. AAUW supports improving data collection on LGBTQIA+ communities through the American Community Survey.

Take Action!

Draw attention to Equal Pay Day and these persistent issues of gender marginalization in the workforce. Need ideas? Check out this [helpful article](#) from 2020 that includes additional information, tools, and suggestions.

AAUW National News

AAUW's History and Evolution: A Journey Through Time

If you missed this webinar on February 28, you can watch the [recording](#). The webinar highlights pivotal points in AAUW's history that made us the organization we are today. The featured speaker is Jessica Miller, AAUW Archivist, who discusses larger organizational changes and individual trailblazers who shaped our current structure.

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

Formatted By: Cristele Moztarzadeh