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Alameda Branch News

*Celebrating our strengths and promoting education and equity
for women and girls in our community*

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December Luncheon Update

Please attend our special AAUW holiday luncheon in a ZOOM format on Saturday, December 12 beginning at 12:00 pm. We will be supporting a local restaurant by asking you to purchase your own lunch from Dragon Rouge (Vietnamese food) at 2337 Blanding Ave. (510) 521-1800, website dragonrougebythebay.com. We will be treating you to your dessert; so when you place your order be sure to mention a free AAUW Dessert. Your choices are mango panna cotta, Banana samosas with ice cream (vanilla, coffee or green tea) or brownie sundae with same choices of ice cream.

We need to start our celebration at noon because the restaurant opens at 11 AM on Saturday; so this will give you time to pick up your order. The restaurant is absolutely so grateful for our organization's support at this very difficult time for their survival. Also, if you don't see your favorite dish on the website, when you call you can ask them if what you want is available. In addition, you can order the drinks that they offer and I can say the mango margarita was really yummy!

In lieu of a lecture I will be offering a small demonstration of how you can make your own holiday gift wrap and cards using basic block printing techniques. For those of you who would like to work along with me, you will need the following supplies: newspapers or a brown shopping bag to protect your work area, any colors of acrylic paints, or watercolor paints, two potatoes of any size and shape, paper towel, any white paper, tissue paper, colored construction paper, etc., a large paper clip, or X-Acto knife, or pocket knife, a medium sized brush, Q-tips, a sharp pencil and a piece of scratch paper. I took this workshop from the Guggenheim Museum last Friday and had so much fun and was absolutely overjoyed with the results. I also think this activity would be a great grandparent grandchild experience. – Paula Biwer



Our Mission is to advance equity for women and girls through advocacy, education, philanthropy, and research. AAUW is the nation's leading voice promoting equity and education for women and girls. Since our founding in 1881, AAUW members have examined and taken positions on the fundamental issues of the day — educational, social, economic, and political.



President's Corner

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

ENGAGEMENT IS KEY TO SUCCESS FOR BRANCH DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

As a reminder:

Diversity addresses a range of human differences including race, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, social class, disabilities, religious practices, national origin, political beliefs, and more.

Inclusion provides a welcoming environment that includes involvement and empowerment for all. Recognizing inherent worth and dignity fosters a sense of belonging and demonstrates value for the variety of talents that individuals have to offer.

An easy activity for your Branch to engage meeting participants can be asking each person to think about a personal characteristic that adds to Diversity. Examples include having lived in another country, being either younger or more experienced than most of the Members, facility with American Sign Language and/or other “foreign” languages, disability, and many more. Let awareness of Diversity and Inclusion guide your Branch’s recruiting efforts and the ways it is represented in your Community.

Intersectionality: People have multiple identities. Realizing this helps our Branches recognize and consider both Diversity and Inclusivity as factors in all of their programs and services.

Your AAUW California Board of Directors continues to weave Diversity and Inclusion references into webinars and on the website. Soon we will provide a link to the new interactive National Diversity and Inclusion Toolkit.

Adapted/Submitted by Mark Hamilton, 2020-2021 AAUW-Alameda Branch President



The Voters Have Spoken

The nation's voters have spoken, and a historic election is over. Despite the challenges of a global pandemic, Americans cast their ballots in record numbers and elected Joe Biden and Kamala Harris to lead our nation forward. All of us at AAUW are honored to have witnessed — and participated in — the power of our democracy, with impressive numbers of women, people of color and young Americans joining in with their voices and their votes.

AAUW is particularly heartened and inspired by the election of so many women to positions of power. Most notably, we celebrate the fact that Vice President-elect Kamala Harris has shattered barriers, becoming the first Black American, Indian and South Asian American to assume the second highest office in the land. The daughter of immigrants and a graduate of Howard University, she gives us hope for a future where women can reach the highest heights.

We are also encouraged by President-elect Biden's promise to unite our sorely divided country and to find common ground and common good. Yet we are mindful of the challenges and the work that lie ahead. In 2021, AAUW will turn 140 years old, and as we have in every year prior, we will work tirelessly on behalf of women and girls to advance laws, policies and practices that ensure equity in education, employment and economic security — and equal justice for all.



Tech Trek Coordinator Update

Acknowledging the concern for the absolute health and safety of AAUW members, students, camp leaders, staff, teachers, and volunteers, the California Board of Directors voted during its October session that the 2021 Tech Trek season will be virtual. I'll share details as we learn more

about the virtual camp. We will maintain our rigorous selection process but hopefully will be able to include more girls in the online platform.

Our committee continues to work on creating an Alameda branch Tech Trek alumnae group to make sure we stay up to date with their many accomplishments, and invite them to future events. Speaking of future events, the AAUW-OML STEM Committee is developing a series of free webinars for high school girls, presented by women working in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) called Girls 4 STEM. We're excited to share this with our alumnae. If you'd like to learn more, click [HERE](#)

- Barbara Krummel

Interest Group Spotlight – **GARDENING CLUB**

We held our second monthly meeting in October. Our club members range from novices to experienced gardeners with an interest in growing a wide variety of plants, herbs, flowers and vegetables. We are currently meeting using Zoom on the third Friday of the month with some “socially distant” garden related field trips planned for the future. Our next meeting will be at 1 PM on November 20 when we will be sharing how to create some plant-based holiday gifts. All are welcome, so please join us for our November meeting. Zoom joining details will be sent via e-blast.

Please contact Paula Biwer for more information.

ANNOUNCEMENTS/Future Events

NOTE: All Events will be virtual (on the Zoom platform) until further notice.

Thursday, November 19 -- **Museum Group**

Friday, November 20, 1:00 pm – **Gardening Club**

Saturday, November 21, 6:00 pm -- **Ethnic Dining Group**

Tuesday, November 24, 7:00 pm -- **Evening Books Group**

Sunday, December 6, 4:00 pm -- **Cinema Club**

Monday, December 7, 6:00 pm -- **Board Meeting** -- ALL WELCOME

Saturday, December 12, **12:00 Noon** – **December Luncheon** – NOTE LATER TIME!

Friday, December 18, 1:00 pm – **Gardening club**

Reorganization of AAUW National's Funds

Introduction

Every year, the Alameda Branch has two luncheons at which we have raised funds to send to AAUW National, the Education (Ed) Fund and the Legal Advocacy Fund (LAF). AAUW has reorganized the funds. You can still make your annual donations to support educational goals for women and girls and to fund legal advocacy projects. There have been, however, a few changes to the funds and the various projects for which the ED Fund and LAF donations will be used.

National Priorities and Strategic Plan

The National organization reorganized the Funds because many of the prior funds have been oversubscribed. For example, AAUW has \$100,000,000 (One hundred million dollars) restricted to use for fellowships and grants, only a specific amount of which can be used each year.

In creating the new funds, the national organization has sought to broaden the focus of the funds as it has broadened its strategic plan, specifically to go beyond its wildly successful efforts to provide access to education through grants, scholarships and fellowships. This new plan seeks to support women after college to achieve wage equity and retirement security. The constitution of the funds is also designed to allow the national organization to have greater flexibility in responding to issues as they arise.

Funds

The Greatest Needs Fund, formerly called the AAUW Fund. This is the “most important fund.” The money in this fund is not earmarked or restricted. This fund provides the national organization with the ability to respond quickly to needs as they arise, e.g. the “Me Too Movement,” a court challenge to Title IX, support for legislative initiatives etc.

Special Focus Funds:

Education and Training Fund, which funds can be used for projects designed to address access to education and discrimination free education, including STEM, Title IX and pathways to jobs through fellowships and grants, public policy and research.

Economic Security Fund, which funds are used for projects designed to address pay equity, Title VII, retirement security.

Leadership Fund, which funds projects designed to close the gender gap in leadership opportunities by increasing the number of women in leadership roles in education and nonprofit organizations through workplace training and programs like NCCWSL.

Legal Advocacy Fund, which funds are use to battle sex discrimination in education and the work place including unfair pay, pregnancy discrimination, sexual harassment, sexual assault and violations of Title IX by informing people of their rights and using the legal system to seek justice and change.

In short, Ed Fund contributions are no longer restricted to scholarships, grants and fellowships because of the abundance of restricted money for that use. Your contributions nonetheless can be used to achieve a broader set of educational goals that benefit women and girls by ensuring access to education and ensuring education is free of discrimination. The Legal Advocacy Fund continues to underwrite educational efforts to apprise women of their legal rights and underwriting lawsuits to affect change through the courts.

If you are interested in exploring the strategic plan or funds reorganization, please visit the National website.

-Mary Oppedahl

COA Scholarship Award winner NEWS

On Saturday November 7 eight Branch members were privileged to meet and hear from four out of the six AAUW Scholarship 2020 award winners in a Zoom meeting:

Maya Johnson, Study Abroad Scholarship; **Sarah McCarthy** NCCWSL Scholarship, **Jaylan Campbell**, NCCWSL Scholarship, **Daniela Dula-Mejia**, NCCWSL Scholarship. (**Kristina Mendes** and **Pauline Roxas**, Transfer Scholarships winners were not able to join us). Branch members were inspired to hear of the success and resilience of these students in coping with this extraordinary challenging time for all of them. They have risen to the occasion and more so! Sarah was accepted at Stanford in pre-med, and is making the most of her courses in computer science and focussing on her goal of pursuing a combined advanced degree in medicine and research Phd.. Jaylan is at UC Berkeley doing Legal Studies and also developing her creative skills in animation, Daniela is at UC Davis majoring in Philosophy and Political Science and did an internship with CALFRESH. Maya, though she could not travel this summer due to the cancellation of Study Abroad courses, has already benefited from several courses in Egypt and Jamaica! She continues to work with the International Studies program at Peralta Colleges to promote the value of Study Abroad Programs for when the world opens up again. She is now enrolled in the Nursing program at the Oregon University Health Sciences Program and plans to join the “ Student Nurses without Borders program” .

News from **Pauline Roxas** is that she is at UC Berkeley studying Psychology and is living in Berkeley and adjusting to the UC system requirements . **Kristina Mendes**' update from August has been attached.

Follow up from this meeting is that **Silver AlKhafaji** (former winner herself) offered to set up a regular mentoring and support system for all these students (and any other Tech Trek Alumnae in College that Barbara might refer) They all expressed appreciation for this idea and the several suggestions for contacts and resources that were offered by Branch members. The students also expressed an interest to join AAUW as a student affiliate and to be associated with this Branch while they complete their studies. Penny will bring a motion to our next Board meeting to establish such a model for a Branch and AAUW CA student membership. We will plan another group meeting in the Spring and invite our members to attend.

This was an inspiring hour to witness how our Branch's fundraising efforts (one succulent at a time!) translate into building hope for this generation of women students (All students of color) . A special thanks to all who participated. – Penny Washbourn

Branch Interest Groups

Afternoon Books

We meet at 1:30 pm on the third Monday to discuss books we are currently reading.
Call Kate Quick, 523-3612, for more information.

Bridge Group No meeting this month.

Cinema Group

Cinema Club meets on December 6 at 4:00 pm to discuss *West Side Story*.
During the pandemic, we are meeting virtually on the 1st Sunday to discuss a movie broadcast on KQED channel 9 during the previous month. Family members are welcome to our virtual event if they also watch the movie. To find out how to join us, contact kevis.brownson@gmail.com . Current members will receive an email with the Zoom link.

Ethnic Dining Group

Meets monthly, usually on the third Saturday evening, at 6:00 pm. *All Gatherings will be virtual, on the Zoom platform, until further notice.* If you like good food and good company, join us.
For more information, contact Mark Hamilton -- (510) 749-0738 or mdham21@yahoo.com

Evening Books

4th Tuesday Book Club has no meeting in December and resumes January 26 at 7:00 pm to discuss *The Library Book* by Susan Orlean.
For information on how to participate, please email kevis.brownson@gmail.com .
For a list of the remaining books this year, please visit this link: <https://alameda-ca.aauw.net/book-club/>

Garden Club

We are currently meeting using Zoom on the third Friday of the month, with some “socially distant” gardening-related field trips planned for the future. Our next meeting will be at 1pm on November 20 when we'll be sharing how to create some plant-based holiday gifts. All are welcome, so please join us for our November meeting. Zoom joining details will be sent separately. **Contact Paula Biber pbiwer@yahoo.com (510)918-8577 for more information.**

Great Decisions Group

Great Decisions is America's largest discussion program on world affairs. The program model involves reading the Great Decisions Briefing Book and meeting in a discussion group to have a conversation about the most critical global issues facing America today. Books are ordered in December, and eight meetings are held between February and June. **For more information, contact Dorothy Kerwin -- kerwindorothy@gmail.com**

Museum Group




We will not have a planned activity in December. We are going to the deYoung in person on Thursday, Nov. 19 to see the exhibition **Frida Kahlo "Appearances can be Deceiving"**. We want to see how we get along before planning any other in-person events. I encourage members to participate in the docent lectures sponsored by the Friends of the Alameda Free Library, which are always good.

One more is scheduled: Wednesday, Dec. 16, 7:00 pm -- Holiday Hoopla

To register for these events, go to the website for Friends of Alameda Free Library.

For more information, contact Judy Sparks – 510-526-6736 or [judysparks@comcast.net](mailto:judy Sparks@comcast.net)

Calendar

Branch Activities	December						2020
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	
		1	2	3	4	5	
6– Cinema Club 4PM	7 – Board Meeting 6PM via Zoom	8	9	10-Chanukah begins 	11	12--Luncheon Virtual Gathering 12:00 Noon	
13	14	15	16	17	18-Garden Club 1PM	19 -Ethnic Dining Group 6:00PM	
20	21-Afternoon Books 1:30PM	22	23	24	25-Christmas 	26- Kwanzaa 	
27	28	29	30	31			

AAUW is California's most active and diverse organization for women, offering action for equity, personal and professional growth, community leadership, and friendship. AAUW promotes equity for all women and girls, lifelong education, and positive societal change. Membership is open to all graduates who hold associate or equivalent, baccalaureate or higher degrees from an accredited college or university, and college/university students.

From Scholarship Winner Kristina to Penny August 2020

Thank you and The AAUW Alameda members for choosing me as one of the Spring 2020 Scholarship winners. When I applied, the scholarship funds were going to be applied to my study abroad Economics class. However, my life and plans took a drastic turn. March 11, 2020, College of Alameda along with many other schools and colleges closed due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The following week all study abroad classes were cancelled. I found myself devastated and fell

into a depression. My study abroad class was very important to me because economics is a requirement for UC Berkeley, which is my first choice. I was also informed that all of my classes would now be online for the rest of Spring semester. I had a lot of anxiety because I am the student that likes to go to class and participate, ask questions as well as do my homework in the school library. COA also informed me that I could withdraw from my classes and it would not affect my G.P.A. or financial aid. At that moment, my thoughts shifted. I immediately became optimistic and decided to confidently take the challenge of finishing my classes with the intentions of getting all A's. By this time, the Bay Area was now on lockdown, people began to lose their jobs and I found that having an optimistic mind frame, I was then able to share my good thoughts with others. I focused on the pros of the situation. Stay home, save gas, eat breakfast in class and have nothing else to do but my school work. Although I was not able to apply my scholarship to my study abroad class, I was able to use that money to pay rent and groceries. Again, THANK YOU! Tomorrow, I start Fall semester, online/zoom. My schedule is very full! I am taking Sociology 3, Anthropology 3, Economics, Geography and Geography lab. I am an active member in my Phi Theta Kappa chapter.

Oh that reminds me, over the summer, I took the summer off yet took some classes through PTK and became a 5 star PTK member. I am also in the processes of applying to universities. A little overwhelmed but I am so excited and happy with how far I have come and where I am going. I have decided for UC's my first choice is Berkeley majoring in Social Welfare however, I am also applying to UC Davis, UC Santa Cruz, and UC Santa Barbara. In the following weeks I will also begin to apply for Cal States and I have not decided which ones I will apply to. I think I may even apply to LSU and a couple other universities. I truly miss interacting with people comfortably. I already miss driving to school, talking with my past instructors in the halls, helping other students, and being present.

Covid did not affect anyone from my family however I do know someone who fought it and another who passed away from it. As a diabetic, I am afraid and don't want it, so I understand this is what's best not just for me but also for others. Penny, I remember you telling me how I inspired you and you also had planned to travel this summer to meet a friend along the way. I hope this does not discourage you in the future to continue with those plans. I am pretty sure it is safe to say that you understand the impact that cancelling of my study abroad trip had on me. So many transitions are happening this year in life. I hope all AAUW members are healthy and making the best of this new life we live. May we all find meaning, happiness and be comfortable with change. I wouldn't miss voting in this election for anything! Thank you for reaching out to me! Again, I can not thank you enough for seeing something special in me! I have no intentions on letting you down!

Kristina Mendes

