



**ALAMEDA BRANCH
2023-24 BOARD**

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Alameda Branch News

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

November 2024

A publication of AAUW-Alameda Branch, chartered 1962

Vol. 62, Issue 3

November Meeting

Afternoon Tea



When: Thursday, November 14, 3-5 pm

Where: Barbara's home, 3258 Liberty Ave.

What: Learn about NCCWSL and meet scholarship recipient

Cost: None, but donations for NCCWSL gratefully accepted

RSVP by November 11, barbarakrummel@comcast.net

Come and learn how your donations make an impact on college-age women. Please plan to join us for tea and treats at my home. We're planning to learn about NCCWSL ("Nick whistle" which stands for the National Conference for College Women Student Leaders) from our very own Penny Washbourn, and one of our scholarship recipients.

NCCWSL is an annual AAUW conference that brings together more than 800 young women from across the country for two and a half days of leadership training, networking, and inspiration in Washington D.C.

If you just can't wait to learn more,
Click <https://www.aauw.org/resources/events/nccwsl/>

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

I am looking forward to seeing you and your guests at our Tech Trek Luncheon on Saturday, October 26 at 11:30 in the Trinity Lutheran Church Social Hall, 1323 Central Ave. Thanks to Barbara Krummel for planning this event that features our Tech Trek campers with their families in attendance. Last summer our Tech Trek committee sent the largest group of eighth-grade girls **ever** to a one-week STEM camp in Sonoma. We can all take pride in this accomplishment, and you have all been a part of it.

It is my pleasure to welcome four new members to our branch: **Mandisa Leachman, Mary Ann Kirschenheuter, Jennifer Pigza, and Bronwyn Harris**. Please read the introductory bios for Mandisa, Jennifer, and Bronwyn, along with Susanne La Faver, further down in this newsletter.

November 5 is Election Day. Naturally many of our members are advocates, informed voters and election volunteers. The 2024 election will have a major impact on gender equity in education, women's economic security, and reproductive and civil rights.

The good news? When women vote, we change the conversation.

Our National AAUW website provides non-partisan election resources: aauw.org/resource/policy/get-involved-in-elections/

A free and non-partisan local resource is the League of Women Voters: lwvalameda.org

You are all invited to our Afternoon Tea on Thursday, November 14 at 3:00 at Barbara Kurmmel's home, 3258 Liberty Ave. Penny Washbourn will speak about our two college charities: NCCWSL and College of Alameda Transfer Scholarships. We hope to have some of last year's recipients there as well!

Kay Weinstein, President
kayweinstein@gmail.com

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL – PAST DUE

*****Deadline June 30, 2024*****

The dues for the 2024-2025 year are \$115.

You may renew online or by check. To renew online you need to know our branch number: CA0128 Alameda. Many find it easier to renew by check. Make out your check to AAUW, and mail to Marilyn Sharron, 1437 Morton St. Apt. D, Alameda, CA 94501-2462.

Did you know that \$72 (the National portion of our dues) is now tax-deductible?

Thank you,
Membership Committee

Membership Renewal



Please Support AAUW Alameda Tech Trek



If you attended our luncheon and made a donation, Thank You!!

If you weren't able to join us but would still like to help,

Click here to donate online now <https://square.link/u/SbiYftmt>

or send your check made out to AAUW--CA SPF (Tech Trek on the memo line) to Barbara Krummel, 3258 Liberty Ave., Alameda, CA 94501

Tech Trek is a STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math) sleep-away camp designed to develop interest, excitement, and self-confidence in young women who will enter eighth grade in the fall. It features a full week of hands-on activities in STEM-related fields. For our Alameda girls, all sleeping, eating, instructional and recreational activities happen on the beautiful Sonoma State campus. The girls attend at no cost to them or their families, our branch raises the funds—\$10,800--to send 9 campers this past summer (our largest cohort to date!) so we need your help!

Click here <https://square.link/u/SbiYftmt> to make a donation online.

-Barbara Krummel, Tech Trek Committee Chair

ANNOUNCEMENTS/Future Events

Saturday, October 26, 11:30 am – 1:30 pm – **October Meeting** – Celebrate Tech Trek!

Monday, October 28, 1:30 pm – **Mah Jongg Group**

Saturday, November 2, 6:00 pm – **Global Restaurant Dining Group** – La Penca Azul – Bay Farm

Sunday, November 3 – **Cinema Club**

Monday, November 4, 6:00 pm -- **Board Meeting** – via Zoom – All Welcome!

Monday, November 11, 1:30 pm – **Mah Jongg Group**

Thursday, November 14, 3 – 5 pm – **November Meeting** – Afternoon Tea

Saturday, November 16, 6:00 pm – **Global Cooking Group** (Rescheduled!)

Monday, November 18, 1:30 pm – **Afternoon Books**

Tuesday, November 19, 7:00 pm – **Evening Books**

Thursday, November 21, 9:15 am – **Museum Group** – Asian Art Museum – Korean Wave

Monday, November 25, 1:30 pm – **Mah Jongg Group**



California Public Policy News

Please click [HERE](#) for the October issue of Public Policy News. Included is an article about Public Policy Priorities and the Election - Highlight: **Student Debt**. Also included are **Get Out the Vote** (GOTV) resources and strategies, and more.

Thank you for everything you do on behalf of women and girls

Amy Hom and Missy Maceyko - Co-chairs, AAUW California Public Policy Committee
publicpolicy@aauw-ca.org



Tax deductible Year End Donations to Scholarship Funds.

Our Branch has supported College of Alameda Transfer Scholarships of \$1,000 each since Patti Heimburger initiated the program in 2015 . The Scholarship is named after her “The Patti Heimburger AAUW College of Alameda Scholarship Fund” . Last year we gave four \$1,000 scholarships and would like to do the same this upcoming Spring.

For first generation students or older returning students these funds are a critical bridge to allowing them to continue their education after graduation from the College of Alameda.

See the thank you letters on pages 8-9 of the Newsletter . We will be inviting the recipients to attend the November 14 Scholarship Tea to meet our members.

Our 2024-2025 Fundraising Goal is \$3,000 . Currently we have sufficient funds for only one scholarship.

The checks should be made out to The Peralta Colleges Foundation and the memo note “The Patti Heimburger AAUW College of Alameda Scholarship Fund”

The Tax ID ISBN# is 23-7091547. This is important information for your IRA administrators if you are transferring funds from your IRA to a non-profit organization. Funds need to be received by December 31, 2024

You can mail your checks to me 501 Lagunaria Lane, Alameda CA 94502 and I will forward them to the foundation to be sure they are applied to our Branch Account.

Thanks so much for your support. Questions? Call me at [510 748 7455](tel:5107487455) or email pwashbou@gmail.com

-Penny Washbourn, College/University Relations



Museum Group at Mary Cassatt Exhibit at the Legion of Honor Museum

Branch Interest Groups

Afternoon Books

The Afternoon Book Club meets on the 3rd Monday of the Month at various members' homes. New members are welcome, and there is no "homework". We share what we have read and trade books. Members read all genres, although mysteries seem to be a group favorite. Our November meeting is on Monday the 18th at 1:30 pm at the home of Karen Scanlon. Contact Karen Scanlon at yakitt@aol.com or [510-523-6456](tel:510-523-6456) for more information. New members are welcome

Cinema Club

Cinema Club meets on Sunday, November 3, for a matinee at the Alameda Theatre followed by a gathering at Tucker's Ice Cream for discussion. To join us or for more information about the group, please contact Kevis at kevis.brownson@gmail.com.

Evening Books

The Evening Book group meets on the third Tuesday of the month in members' homes. Our books for 2024-25 are *The Potter's Field* by Andrea Camilleri (9/17), *The First Ladies* by Marie Benedict (10/15), *Mozart's Starling* by Lyanda Lynne Haupt (11/19), *Klara and the Sun* by Kazuo Ishiguro (1/21), and *Finding the Mother Tree* by Suzanne Simard (2/18). For more information about the group or to join us, please contact Penny Washbourn at penelopewashbourn@gmail.com.

Global Cooking Group

The Global Cooking Group meets every two months at a member's home to share a potluck meal of an interesting cuisine from around the world and US. We will meet this month on **Saturday, November 16 at 6:00 pm at Paula Biwer's house**. Other gatherings this year will be on **Saturdays, February 15, April 26, June 21, and August 16**, generally at 6:00 pm. To join us or for more information, please contact Jennifer McGaffey at jjmcgaffey@guenean.com.

Global Restaurant Dining Group

We had a lovely dinner on a very warm evening in October at Troy Greek Restaurant in Alameda. The food was delicious and the company excellent. In November we will be meeting on 11/2, 6PM at La Penca Azul Mexican Restaurant and Tequila Bar 891-B Island Drive, Harbor Bay Island, Alameda, CA 94502. Jennifer Ayres will be our hostess for this event. Please email, text or call Jennifer with your reservation. Email - jhaayres@gmail.com. Phone-[510-332-4313](tel:510-332-4313). All AAUW Alameda members and guests are welcome to attend.

Mah Jongg (American Style)

We meet on the 2nd and 4th Monday afternoon of each month to play American-style Mah Jongg using the National Mah Jongg League card and rules. Beginners and experienced players are welcome. Contact Laura Porter at Lrajean@aol.com or [510-912-0385](tel:510-912-0385) for more information about the Mah Jongg interest group.



Museum Group

We will visit the Asian Art Museum on Thursday November 21 and see Korean Wave:


K-pop, K-drama, K-cinema, K-fashion, and K-beauty. Step into the spectacular world of Korean dramas, music, film, TV, fashion, and beauty — from Netflix hits like “Squid Game” and the Academy Award-winning “Parasite” to chart-topping K-pop idols and influential designers — and discover how South Korea reinvented itself as a 21st-century pop culture phenomenon. Created by the V&A and touring the world, Hallyu! The Korean Wave includes nearly 200 objects and artworks that illustrate the limitless flow of creativity powering the world’s biggest, fastest-growing contemporary cultural wave from Asia.

The carpool will leave from the Ross parking lot at South shore. Be there at **9:15 a.m.** for a 9:30 a.m. sharp departure. We will have lunch at the museum cafeteria at 11:00 a.m. please RSVP if you would like to go contact Judy Sparks, JudySparks@comcast.net for more information.

Calendar

Branch Activities

November 2024

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|--|--|------------------------|-----------|--|--------|---|
| | | | | | 1 | 2- Global Restaurant Dining Group 6:00 PM |
| 3-Cinema Club Daylight Savings Ends | 4-Board Meeting 6:00 PM | 5 VOTE !! | 6 | 7 | 98 | 9 |
| 1- | 11- Mah Jongg 1:30 PM  | 12 | 13 | 14- November Meeting 3-5 PM | 15 | 16-Global Cooking Group 6:00 PM |
| 17 | 18- Afternoon Books 1:30 PM | 19- Evening Books 7 PM | 20 | 21- Museum Group 9:15 AM | 22 | 23- |
| 24 | 25- Mah Jongg 1:30 PM | 25 | 27 | 28  | 29 | 30 |

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.

Letters from the recipients of the Patti Heimburger AAUW College of Alameda Scholarships



Rana Wiar

Dear AAUW Scholarship Committee,

I am writing to express my deepest gratitude for being selected as a recipient of the Patti Heimburger AAUW College of Alameda Scholarship. Receiving this scholarship is an immense honor, and I am incredibly grateful for your generosity and support towards my education.

Allow me to share a little about myself and why this scholarship holds immense significance for me. I am a dedicated student passionate about acquiring knowledge and personal growth. This scholarship not only alleviates the financial burden of pursuing my education but also serves as a recognition of my relentless hard work and unwavering dedication.

With the award, I plan to invest in essential resources such as books and school supplies, which are crucial for my academic success.

Additionally, I aim to utilize this opportunity to further enhance my skills in the field of business law.

Once again, I want to extend my sincerest gratitude to the scholarship committee for believing in my potential and supporting my educational journey.

Thank you for your generosity and for making a positive impact on my life and the lives of many others through your contributions to education.

Sincerely,

Rana Wiar



Laura Nielsen

Dear AAUW Alameda Branch,

My name is Laura Nielsen, and I am profoundly grateful to the AAUW Scholarship Committee for selecting me to receive the 2024 Patti Heimburger AAUW College of Alameda Scholarship. As a first-generation college student, higher education always seemed like an unattainable dream. Yet, here I am, a college student, even if it is later in life, and successful in my endeavors. This scholarship has not only made my dream a reality but has also transformed my life. As a stay-at-home mother who has dedicated many years to advocating for my children's exceptional needs, the financial aspect of pursuing further education has been a significant challenge. This award has provided a much-needed sense of security as I continue to pursue my dreams.

My biggest goal in returning to school and seeking a degree was to provide a path for a rewarding career that could make me financially independent. As a traveling Coast Guard spouse, there have been countless hurdles I've had to face that make it hard to have stability in my work experience and resume. When I enrolled at the College of Alameda, it was my first step to achieving that goal. I admit I initially did not have much faith in myself, so my sights were set low. College of Alameda helped me find myself and showed me the potential in me all along. After my first year of classes, I aimed higher, and I have recently been accepted into a Nuclear Medicine program at Gurnick Medical Academy.

I intend to utilize this award to further my education and invest in my future. Specifically, I plan to use the scholarship towards my venipuncture certification, the purchase of uniforms required for clinical, and a desktop computer that will be instrumental in the didactic portion of the program. This strategic use of the scholarship will not only enhance my learning experience but also alleviate the financial burden on my family, allowing us to navigate this challenging period with one less stressor.

Thank you again for choosing me to receive this scholarship. I will always remember the support and guidance I received from the College of Alameda, and I hope that from my experience, I can show other students that you can do everything you desire with hard work and determination.

With deepest gratitude,

Laura Nielsen

Laura.nielsen@yahoo.com

New Member Biographies

Mandisa Leachman

It is my honor to be a member and advance the mission of AAUW in my community at the local, state and national level to advance policies that improve the lives of Women their children and families.

I am a fierce advocate for Women's Empowerment – emotional, spiritual and financial. I am Executive Director of Women RISE Academy, Inc., a certified REBT Life Coach, and a trauma-informed group healing circle facilitator.

Among my many accomplishments:

- Leadership and community involvement experience as President and Chairman of the Executive PTA Board at Berkeley Arts Magnet School;
- BUSD PTA Council Peralta District Treasurer on Executive Board member;
- Community Engagement Leadership at Family Justice Center of Alameda County advocate for Women, who have experienced domestic violence;
- Member of the YMCA Early HeadStart Family Council.

Successfully,

Mandisa Leachman
Executive Director
Women RISE Academy, Inc
"Women's Empowerment is Family Empowerment "

Member of LWVBAE
Berkeley Albany Emeryville
Member AAUW
Alameda

Executive Board
Family Paths Inc

Executive Board
PTA BAM
Historian
President 2022-2024

Berkeley PTA Council
Peralta District
Executive Board
Treasurer

Susanne La Faver

Thank you for welcoming me to AAUW Alameda. I'm Susanne Norton La Faver, originally from Salinas. I quit college during Vietnam to elope with my boyfriend, who was drafted. I worked for the US Army in Germany for three years before returning to Monterey Peninsula College to continue my studies. I graduated from San Diego State with my 15-month-old son hanging onto my leg and a degree in journalism with an emphasis in public relations. I immediately got an editor/photographer position with Alta Bates Hospital PR department.

I earned my master of public administration from Golden Gate University. My career continued in corporate communications with PG&E, IBEW Local 1245, Tri Valley Growers, Kaiser Permanente, and Roche Molecular Systems. I consulted with Bechtel, Pacific Telesis, Pillsbury Madison & Sutro, and Levi Strauss & Company. I worked throughout North and Latin America, Europe, and Asia. I served as an adjunct instructor for Golden Gate University's graduate business department for 20 years in San Francisco and online.

I've volunteered with Red Cross disaster services and as a court appointed special advocate for foster children. Now I volunteer at Christ Church shower program for Alameda's unhoused. A recent widow, I live on Bay Farm near my son and his family, including two grandchildren.

Jennifer Pigza

I became the CEO of Girls Inc. of the Island City in February 2024 and love the opportunity to continue to build Girls Inc.'s strength and capacity to serve children and families in the Girls Programs and Alameda Island Kids.

Before joining Girls Inc., I had a 30-year career in higher education; nearly 20 of those at Saint Mary's College of California (Moraga). Most of that time was focused in the areas of student leadership development, community partnerships, and connecting students and faculty with non-profit partners and public entities. I was also the founding director of a graduate degree in Leadership for Social Justice and a faculty member in the Schools of Liberal Arts and Education.

I hold a doctorate in education policy and leadership (University of Maryland), a master's degree in higher education and student affairs administration (University of Vermont), and a bachelor's degree in English literature (Loyola University Maryland). With my formal education complete (for now!), I am honing my ukulele skills, getting better at quilting, and striving to be a better parent every day.

I and my family live in Oakland and walk our dog daily in the East Bay Regional Parks.

Thank you,

Jennifer M. Pigza, Ph.D. ([she/her/hers](#))
CEO, Girls Inc. of the Island City
510-521-1743, x204
jpigza@girlsincislandcity.org

Bronwyn Harris

I was born in San Francisco (6th generation!) and raised in Sonoma County with a younger brother and sister and many, many pets. I majored in psychology at UC Davis (Go Aggies!) and got my teaching credential at CSU Sacramento. I started teaching in East Oakland in January 2000, teaching first-graders who had already gone through one teacher and six substitutes during that school year. I stayed at that school, teaching third grade for seven more years and outlasting five superintendents, eight principals, and many other teachers, until the school was “reconstituted” under No Child Left Behind.

After I left Oakland Unified School District, I started working as a self-employed private tutor and now I get to work with students ranging from kindergarteners to high school seniors in a variety of subjects. I might teach reading to a 2nd grader one hour, then work with an 8th grader in algebra, then help a 5th grader in creative writing, one after another, which keeps me on my toes! I also do freelance copy editing on the side.

In 2016, I published my first book, *Literally Unbelievable: Stories from an East Oakland Classroom*, which Anne Lamott raved about: one of my proudest accomplishments ever! In 2020, I published another book: *Letters from the Inside*, co-written with a former student who is incarcerated. I love talking about my books and the students I wrote about, many of whom I’m still in touch with. I have done many author talks in a variety of settings.

I live in Alameda with my dog, Zora, and try to spend as much time as possible with my nieces and nephew. I love reading, writing, knitting, hiking, and traveling, especially to different parts of Mexico.

Bronwyn Harris (she/her)

Author:

Literally Unbelievable: Stories from an East Oakland Classroom

Letters from the Inside: Hope in the Journey Beyond Classroom and Cell

bronwynharris.com