



BAY LEAVES

AAUW/San Mateo

<http://sanmateo-ca.aauw.net>

May 2021, Vol 91, Issue 9

President's Message

Judy Steele

AAUW CA says its first ever virtual **Lobby Day** was a huge success! 111 AAUW members from 68 branches (including at least 2 from our branch) visited 36 Assembly and 23 Senate offices, and the Public Policy co-chairs visited with the Governor's staff. Many offices were familiar with AAUW, and we had a great opportunity to educate those who weren't, as well as to advocate for our top-priority bills. Just so you know, the CA Public Policy Committee has completed its review of the bills for this legislative season, and the 2020-21 **Bill Tracker** can now be found on the State website under Public Policy/Legislative Advocacy/Bill Tracking.

AAUW California COVID 19 Update:

"As we move into the transitional stage of COVID-19 and we are seeing the light get brighter at the end of the tunnel, questions are coming up about having in-person AAUW meetings. Since there are 58 counties in California with 58 different County Health Departments, here are AAUW CA's best recommendations for the next few months:

Follow CDC guidelines for masking, social distancing, and traveling:

- Follow your county guidelines for how large a group can meet in one space-- inside or outside. **(SMC is currently allowing no more than 3 households inside)**
- Remember that our AAUW insurance will probably not cover COVID-related illness.
- Be smart, be cautious, and stay safe as we move toward our "new normal." We have made it this far and we are getting closer to the end! Won't it be nice to see each other again?"

EVERY Voice Matters—make sure yours is heard, too:

- **National AAUW:** Between **April 7 and May 17**, all AAUW members are voting on the long-standing membership requirement, which creates a barrier to women who do not hold a college degree. By eliminating this requirement,

AAUW can become a more diverse and inclusive organization, better aligned with the needs of women today. This is a very important election that requires a 2/3 vote to approve the change. See page 3 in this newsletter for more information.

- **AAUW California:** This is also the voting period for the State elections, from **April 16-May 7**. You will be voting on three State Board positions, the 2021-2023 Public Policy Priorities, and the changes to the AAUW-CA bylaws.

In both elections, on-line invitations or mail-in ballots will be sent prior to voting, depending on the e-mail status of members. Please **make your voices heard!**

Have a safe and healthy summer, see you in the fall!

San Mateo Spring 2021 Calendar

- May 17 Channy Chhi Laux discusses her book, *Short Hair Detention*, about her flight from Cambodia and refugee status.
Zoom meeting at 1:00 pm

Public Policy/Current Events

Betty Bernstein

The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) has defended democracy for decades. We have asked Alice Smith of Palo Alto to present its position on efforts to counter nationwide attempts to suppress voting rights throughout the U.S.

Ms. Smith is also the head of an organization called the National Voters Corps that helps to mobilize men and women to fight against restrictions on voting rights. The meeting is on May 11 at 10:30 by Zoom.

It's Unanimous

We are proud to announce that our slate of officers was unanimously elected at our Annual Meeting in April 2021. Congratulations to our new officers.

President: Judy Steele

Co-Vice Presidents, Membership: Maureen Buchner and Mary Ann McKay

Financial Officer: Stephen Buchner

Recording Secretary: Jane Bradley

Vice President, Programs: Gerhild Klein

Dues Notice

AAUW 2021-2022 membership renewal invoices were mailed to all branch members. The National AAUW \$3 membership dues increase for next year will be paid from the branch operating budget. Renewing branch member's dues remains the same as last year.

Please add \$15 to your dues for a printed copy of the *Bay Leaves*. Please return your dues by May 15 so we may include your membership in our Branch Directory.

Channy Laux-Flight From Cambodia

Channy Chhi Laux is a survivor of the Cambodian genocide. When the Khmer Rouge took over the country in 1975, she was thirteen years old. In June of 1979, Channy arrived in Lincoln, Nebraska as a refugee. After four years of labor camps, no school and not knowing a word of English, she attended Lincoln High School; earned an undergraduate degree from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln; and a Master of Science in Applied Mathematics from Santa Clara University.

Channy worked in Silicon Valley as an engineer in the aerospace and biotech industries for 30 years before bravely challenging herself to follow her mother's footsteps of cooking and sharing Cambodian food that brings joy to everyone. She will be discussing her book *Short Hair Detention*, about her flight and experience in the U.S. as a fugitive at our May 17 Zoom meeting at 1:00 pm.

League of Women Voters Gala

In celebration of the 101st anniversary of the League of Women Voters, the San Mateo County Leagues of Women Voters present:

EXPANDING THE VOTE AND ITS IMPACT

Where We've Been

Where We're Going

How We Are Going To Get There

Sunday, August 29, 2021 from 1:00 - 3:30 pm TBD

Par 3 at Poplar Creek Golf Course

1700 Coyote Point Dr., San Mateo

Attendance via Zoom will also be available

On Sunday, August 29, 2021, at 1:00 pm, the LWV of North/Central San Mateo County and South San Mateo County present a panel of speakers who will present insights into the history of the impact of women's voting rights on issues and politics; how the expanding enfranchisement has created challenges to politics in the U.S.; the voter turnout in the future; and how turnout affects our futures.

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

Judy Steele

Inclusion (according to AAUW's Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Toolkit) means involving and accommodating people who have historically been excluded (because of race, gender, religion, etc.).

2020 was a hard year for everyone, not only because of the pandemic, but in many other ways, including the growing awareness of all forms of discrimination.

In 2021, AAUW is attempting to change and update its various practices and requirements that are now considered discriminatory. One of the more obvious issues is the degree requirement (see page 2). Other, not-so-obvious, issues have to do with discriminatory practices, specifically within our Interest group meetings.

Treating others differently, even unintentionally, because of some characteristic is a form of discrimination. For example, changing or cancelling meeting(s) due to one person's religious holiday(s), but not taking into account another one's, can be construed as discriminating against the second person. As a branch we need to work to become more inclusive concerning religious or other practices that are different from our own.

A suggestion has been made in this regard. Since most of our interest groups meet on pre-designated days of each month, the group leader could make up a calendar for the coming year, highlighting days of religious or secular importance, when it is expected that several members may not be able to attend.

A notice would then be sent to all group members listing all the meeting dates and simply asking "Can you attend a meeting on this date?" Only a Yes or No vote would be required and at no time should anyone have to disclose their vote or belief system. In the case of a leader not able to attend, they may either request someone to step in who is available, suggest alternative dates for that month, or simply cancel the meeting. But the majority of those voting would rule in each case, so no single person would feel left out or ignored. For obvious secular holidays, no vote would be needed.

It is very important that we realize people of various belief systems deserve acceptance and equal treatment. Inclusivity must be shown in all our various activities. As with all types of diversity, religious diversity brings different perspectives that strengthen our team as a whole.

AAUW Makes its Case for a Bylaws Change

Open Membership and Inclusion

Diversity

- AAUW needs to include members with diverse backgrounds and perspectives to meet our mission and address society's needs today.

AAUW Vision-Equity for All

- Our membership practices should align with our vision and goals.

Alternate Pathways to Education

- On-the-job training
- Career Technical Education
- Life experience

Our mission has never been just about getting a college degree

- Membership in AAUW enables women to continue their intellectual growth, to further the advancement of women and discharge their special responsibilities to society. (1981)
- AAUW promotes equity for women, education and self-development over the life span and positive societal change. (1986)
- AAUW promotes equity for all women and girls, lifelong education, and positive societal change. In principle and practice. AAUW values and seeks a diverse membership. There shall be no barriers to full participation in this organization on the basis of gender, race creed, age, sexual orientation, national origin, or disability (1998)
- AAUW advances gender equality for women and girls through research, education and advocacy (2018)

The Degree Requirement also has unintended consequences

Eliminating the degree requirement means:

- We will have more access to funding.
- We will be less vulnerable to charges of elitism.
- We will be open to a more diverse group.
- We will eliminate a barrier to participation by women we want to help, as well as those *just as smart* but with no degree.

Open Membership: Why Now? Why Again?

- Expanding our reach by being more inclusive.
- Expanding our focus on education of all types.
- Expanding our ability to work together so we can increase impact potential.
- Expanding our Ability to Receive External Funding to increase our options.

Eliminating the requirement is consistent with our Mission, Vision, and Values

Mission: to advance gender equity for women and girls through research, education, and advocacy.

Vision: Equity for all

Values: Nonpartisan, Fact-based, integrity, inclusion and interconnectivity.

A college degree is not needed for any of these.

Times and perceptions have changed too.

- AAUW is perceived as elitist, non diverse, not in tune with cultural change and need for inclusion.
- In order to continue to provide support for those who are excluded or marginalized, we need to stop excluding and marginalizing.
- We need to LIVE our mission.

AAUW Today: Areas of Focus

Education & training: Addressing the barriers and implicit biases that hinder the advancement of women.

Economic Security: Ensuring livelihoods for women

Leadership: Closing the gender gap in leadership opportunities.

Governance & Sustainability: Ensure the strength, relevance, and viability of AAUW well into the future.

What Makes AAUW Unique

HOW we advance equity:

- research
- policy and advocacy
- fellowships and grants
- programs that directly support women like NCCWSL, Star Smart, and Work Smart
- grassroots membership efforts

Voting Opens April 7 - Be Heard

A Gracious Letter from a Tech Trek Alum

Dear Ms. Buchner and the San Mateo Branch,

Thank you so much for thinking of me for this event (NCCWSL). I'm unable to attend this conference as I will be starting a virtual research fellowship at Chalmers University in Sweden at the same time, exploring the late-stages of stellar evolution using radio data from the Atacama Large Millimeter Array.

I wanted to let you know how much participating in the Tech Trek program has meant to me. I am currently in my third year of studying physics and astrophysics at Berkeley. Next year I will be applying to graduate school.

I still remember the Stargazing night during Tech Trek. It was the first time I had ever met an astrophysicist (a grad student at Stanford) and we talked for hours. I have known ever since that night that I wanted to become an astrophysicist as well. Whenever I felt discouraged or frustrated I think back on the wonder I felt that night, and it reminds me of why I want to do this so badly. Tech Trek made me realize that it was really possible for me to pursue my dreams of studying the universe while everyone else in my life regarded it as a ridiculous and impossible goal.

While I am unable to attend the conference, if you ever have need of volunteers for a future Tech Trek event about physics or astrophysics, I would love to participate!

Best,
Sam Rose

Interest Sections' Summer Schedules

All meet by Zoom until further notice

Book IV

June 25, *Water Dancer*, Ta-Nehisi Coates

July 23, *the Great Alone*, Kristin Hannah

August 27, *the Perfect Girl*, Gilly MacMillan

Foreign Affairs

June 10, *China and Africa*

July 8, *The Two Koreas*

Aug 12, *The World Health Org. Response to COVID-19*

Hiking

June 14, Sawyer Camp Trail

June 28, Junipero Serra County Park

July 12, Laurelwood Park

July 26, Millbrae's Spur Trail

Mystery Book

June 11, *Mourn Not Your Dead*, Deborah Crombie

July 9, *The Long Call*, Ann Cleeves

August 13, *The American Agent*, Jacqueline Winspear

Tech Trek Goes to NCCWSL

Maureen Buchner

What happens when Tech Trek grows up and meets NCCWSL? This year's National Conference for College Women Student Leaders (NCCWSL) has gone virtual. Because of that, the San Mateo Branch Board of Directors voted to sponsor more students to NCCWSL this year.

While finding former eighth-graders is a considerable task, we succeeded in securing applications and are awarding 7 scholarships to some of our Tech Trek alumnae.

Let's catch up on their progress in higher education. Teagan Browne (Abbott) is a sophomore at University of Colorado, Boulder, majoring in Aerospace Engineering; Tiana Periera (Bayside) is a senior at UC, Santa Cruz majoring in Bioinformatics; Lupe Franco Castillo (Borel) is a sophomore in Sociology at Cal State, Stanislaus and works in Congressman Josh Harder's office; Srimaye Samudrala (Bowditch) is a freshman at UC, San Diego in Human Biology; Elyssa Samayoa (Borel) is a freshman at UC, Santa Barbara with a Psychology and Brain Science major; Glynnis MacNamara (Bayside) is a senior at UCLA majoring in Music Performance and Audio Production; and Sara Finer (Bowditch) is a freshman at Washington University in St. Louis in Biomedical Engineering and Computer Science.

We are excited about sponsoring these bright and talented young women. We look forward to hearing from them via Zoom in the fall when they will recount some of their favorite takes on the conference.

Bay Leaves Summer Hiatus

As is our custom, the May issue of the *Bay Leaves* is the last issue until September. I want to thank those who help me with the *Bay Leaves* throughout the year: Annette Delaney, Judy Steele and Anne Horgan for their sharp eyes while proofreading the drafts, Cynthia Robbins-Roth for printing the address labels, and Anne Horgan for picking up the printed copies and mailing them to the members who request the *Bay Leaves* by mail. If you would like the *Bay Leaves* mailed to you this coming year, please include \$15.00 with your dues.

We welcome articles from all members about your activities with AAUW. Please include any pictures you have taken, if you would like them published as well. Have a great summer and stay safe. Keep in touch with your officers and interest section leaders to find out if we will be able to meet in person in the fall.

May 2021 Interest Sections

Mary Ann McKay

Boggle (All Members Welcome)

Judy Steele

During the Covid-19 pandemic, Boggle will not be meeting.

Book Discussion I

Elissa James

Thurs, May 20th, at 10:00 am, (Book Selection)

Book I will be meeting by Zoom.

The Nickel Boys, Colson Whitehead

Book Discussion II (wait list)

Karlyn Schneider

Thurs, May 27th, at 12:30 pm

Book II will be meeting by Zoom.

Book Selection for coming year

Book Discussion III (wait list)

Mary Ann McKay, 349-1330, maedchris@aol.com

Pat Fuetsch, 349-3402, patriciafuetsch@gmail.com

Thurs, May 20th 1:30 pm

Book III will be meeting by Zoom.

The Last Lecture, Randy Pausch

Book Discussion IV

Jan Lamphier

Fri, May 28th, at 10:00 am

Book IV will be meeting by Zoom.

American Dirt, Jeanine Cummins

Bridge

Elissa James

During the Covid-19 pandemic, Bridge will not be meeting.

California Fact & Legend

Bobbi Benson

Tue, May 4th at 10:10 am (Time change)

California Fact & Legend will be meeting by Zoom.

Dining Out

Jane Bradley

During the Covid-19 pandemic, Dining Out will not be meeting.

Drama Reading

Marjorie Kobe

Wed, May 12th, at 9:30 am

Drama Reading will be meeting by Zoom.

Ethnic Dining

During the Covid-19 pandemic, Ethnic Dining will not be meeting.

Ethnic Lunch

Annette Delaney

During the Covid-19 pandemic, Ethnic Lunch will not be meeting.

Foreign Affairs - Great Decisions

Margo King

Thurs, May 13th, 10:30 am

Foreign Affairs will be meeting by Zoom.

The Coldest War: Power competition in the Arctic

Hiking 2nd & 4th Mondays, 10:00 am

Bobbi Benson

Mon, May 10th, 10:00 am, Waterdog Leg Park

Mon, May 24th, 10:00 am Baywood Ave Neighborhood
Starting in April, Hiking will resume its usual 2nd and 4th Mondays of each month, car pooling is optional.

Mah Jongg

Helen Hatchett

During the Covid-19 pandemic, Mah Jongg will not be meeting.

Membership: New and Prospective

Maureen Buchner

Mary Ann McKay, 349-1330, maedchris@aol.com

Monday Movie

Mary Ann McKay

During the Covid-19 pandemic, Monday Movie will not be meeting.

Mystery Book Group

Mikki Coffino

Fri, May 14th, at 1:30 pm

Mystery Book will be meeting by Zoom.

The Temptation of Forgiveness, Donna Leon

Public Policy/Current Events

Betty Bernstein

Diane Silven

Tues, May 11th, 10:30 am

Public Policy will be meeting by Zoom.

Alice Smith, ACLU of Northern California,

How the ACLU Plans to Confront Voter Suppression

American Association of University Women
P.O. Box 1465
San Mateo, CA 94401-0816

AAUW advances equity for women and girls through advocacy, education, and research.

By joining AAUW you belong to a community that breaks through educational and economic barriers so all women have a fair chance.

May 2021

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1
2	3	4 CA Fact & Legend	5	6 AAUW Board Meeting	7 AAUW CA voting ends	8
9	10 Hiking	11 Public Policy	12 Drama Reading	13 Foreign Affairs	14 Mystery Book Group	15
16	17 National AAUW Voting Ends Meeting Channy Laux	18	19	20 Book I Book III	21	22
23	24 Hiking	25	26	27 Book II	28 Book IV	29
30	31					