

**BONFIRE**

San Jose Branch

Empowering women since 1881

**President's Corner**

AAUW is non-partisan, but we are not values-neutral. We stand for equity and inclusion. I encourage you to read the joint statement (link in AAUW CEO Kim Churches' message below), which was developed in collaboration with organizations whose mission aligns with our own.



**Peg Carlson-Bowen**  
President

**Message from Kim Churches, AAUW Chief Executive Officer**

On Wednesday, January 6, our nation watched in horror as our democracy came under attack in an unlawful and violent invasion of the U.S. Capitol. As AAUW's National office is based in Washington, DC, the personal safety of our staff and their families was at risk as armed insurgents took to the streets calling for violence toward our elected officials and the overthrow of a free and fair election.

The mob used hateful language and displayed symbols of white supremacy as they forced their way into the hallowed halls of Congress. We mourn the loss of the five individuals killed in the attack, including Capitol Police Officer Brian Sicknick, and the many others hurt.

As scary and shocking as this was, it was sadly not surprising given the incendiary speech the President gave to the rioters prior to the attack and the divisive tone he has set for years. From calling the racist protestors in Charlottesville "very fine people" to telling the Proud Boys to "stand by" in a presidential debate, President Trump has given us many warning signs.

AAUW is proud to join in solidarity with leading gender justice and equity organizations in a [statement](#) demanding that President Trump and his enablers be held accountable for their actions. We hope this unified message will inspire those in power to action. If you feel comfortable contacting your elected officials, we encourage you to do so.

And, as we collectively work to understand the roots of our nation's divisions, we ask you to actively engage in efforts to defeat white supremacy: Please review our new [Diversity, Equity and Inclusion](#) toolkit and plan to attend our town hall webinar on Tuesday, January 19 at 4 pm ET with AAUW Board Chair Julia Brown and the Racial and Social Justice Working Group.

As AAUW members, we all embrace our vision of equity for all, and we hold our values close to our hearts and minds. Thank you to everyone who has reached out to ensure your AAUW staff are safe in this uncertain time.

In solidarity,  
Kimberly Churches, Chief Executive Officer



## Local Scholarship Committee Holiday Online Fundraising Results

### Online Fundraising Project Team

We remember the fun of our annual Holiday Boutique: the shine and crinkle of cellophane-covered baskets in the living room; the artistry and skill of our members' hand-made gifts in the dining room; the scent of vanilla and cinnamon wafting from the kitchen; the shoppers' "ooh's" and "ah's" throughout the house; the fun of (literally) bumping into friends and neighbors at the checkout table. But in 2020, the Covid-19 year, we had to find a different way to help local women complete a college education. We considered several options but our goal is to remind Branch and community members of our mission and to give donors an easy and fun donation experience. New Branch website content was created with a donation button capability using PayPal, and launched a community-wide campaign. With the incentive of a \$5,000 matching fund and gifts in a prize drawing, we raised over \$17,000 in just five days. Donations were made by 59% of our Branch members and 41% by non-members, while 76% of the funds were donated by AAUW members. We thank all of you who donated to keep our Local Scholarship program alive and well through 2021! Thank you for giving our students the gift of education!

The Local Scholarship Committee wishes to acknowledge and thank the Online Fundraising Project Team, which was divided into two subcommittees led by Peg Carlson-Bowen (Technical) and Diane Trombetta (Campaign) :

The Online Fundraising Subcommittee for the many hours spent researching and implementing the technical components of the campaign (Peg Carlson-Bowen, Chair; Virginia Turner of LG-Saratoga Branch; Elizabeth Mandel from the Morgan Hill Branch; Ruth Dusan for the initial research on the direct donation link on sister Branch websites; Marilyn Jackson, Risë Berry, Tynka Dees, and Barb Purdy for webpage testing; Elin Bolt for an innovative workaround and webpage implementation; and Nell Aiello for post-campaign data analysis).

The Online Fundraising Holiday Campaign Subcommittee for designing the campaign strategy and producing the articles, ads, emails, letters, and phone calls that publicized the campaign (Diane Trombetta, Chair; Apala Egan for external publicity; Erin Barrite for webpage content; Sonia Wright for fundraising expertise; Barb Purdy for testing; Nell Aiello for campaign data collection and analysis; Nanci Eksterowicz for managing prize drawings; and Mary Jane Vitkovich and Shirley Karabian for their creation and donation of the matching fund).

The members and member-artists who donated prizes for our drawing (Nancy Hooton, Sonia Wright, Janice Robbins, Cheryl Markman for Joseph George Wines, and Diane Trombetta for the beach house vacation).

### Prize winners

Loren Reynolds - quilt



Barbara Zahner - beach house vacation



Sonia Wright - wine basket



Susan Karlins - green scarf and necklace



Richard Daniels - blue scarf and necklace



Elizabeth Guimarin - case of wine



## Online Donations Arrive at AAUW San Jose!

Peg Carlson-Bowen



Many kudos to the Local Scholarship Committee for implementing a successful replacement for the Holiday Boutique which was sidelined due to the pandemic! They also opened the door for online donations for ALL the Community Action Projects (CAPs) at AAUW San Jose. The DONATE 'buttons' are live now on our website home page -- one for each CAP (see samples on left). Donors can use a debit card, a credit card, or PayPal to support our tax-deductible CAPs. Now, when a friend or colleague says: "Gee, how can I donate?" you can simply refer them to our website.

This is the result of MANY people's efforts: researching to find a user-friendly technology; choosing among many options for simplicity and security; analyzing the transaction flow to make sure the dollars ended up in the right place; and facing a little bit of technology trepidation to do testing (always a little scary...). We especially want to acknowledge the help of Virginia Turner of the Los Gatos/Saratoga Branch and our Interbranch Special Projects Fund (ISPF) Treasurer for her valuable input and patience, Elizabeth Mandel of the Morgan Hill Branch for her website consulting; Ruth Dusan for the initial research on the direct donation link on sister Branch websites; Marilyn Jackson and Risë Berry for follow up on tests of the accounting transactions; Barb Purdy, Shirley Karabian, Nell Aiello and Erin Barrite (and other members of the Local Scholarship Committee) for testing; Elin Bolt for AAUW San Jose website implementation; and all the other CAP chairs for welcoming this change.

## 2069? 2369? 2451?

### WHEN WILL THE GENDER PAY GAP BE CLOSED?

By Ginny Hatfield, AAUW California Public Policy Committee

How long will it take? What can we do to make it happen sooner rather than later? These are questions that AAUW has been grappling with for decades. As we mark All Women's Equal Pay Day on March 31, perhaps there is hope that we can make progress in decreasing the gender pay gap in 2021, given a new administration that is committed to social justice and leveling the growing disparity between the haves and have not. We also now have women in the highest echelons of national leadership; and as we all know, when women are in charge, things get done!

According to the 2020 update to AAUW's *The Simple Truth*, it will take white women until the year 2069 to achieve parity with men based on the projected earnings ratio compiled between 1988-2019. For women of color the numbers are even worse. Black women will have to wait until the year 2369 – 350 years — as their earnings ratio has only advanced a mere 7% from 1988-2019. And Latinas find themselves in the worse scenario as their earnings ratio has only increased 4% from 51% to 55% during this period of time, projecting their year of parity to 2451! (AAUW, *The Simple Truth* 2020 update.)

The reasons for these disparities in the gender wage gap are known — and understanding what's causing the problem is the first step to meeting it head on. Members are urged to read the summary of *The Simple Truth* update on our National website which lays out the problem, its causes and solutions. [https://www.aauw.org/app/uploads/2020/10/SimpleTruth\\_1.8.pdf](https://www.aauw.org/app/uploads/2020/10/SimpleTruth_1.8.pdf).

AAUW is leading the charge to effectuate change and you are part of the solution with the work your branches undertake on behalf of women and girls. The more we educate ourselves and others about the scope of this gender wage gap with programs like Start Smart, Work Smart, NCCWSL, etc., the more we chip away at the disparity. What is your branch doing to make a difference in the Gender Pay Gap? Let us know what creative ideas you have come up with to spread the word in these days of social distancing and we'll share them on the web (send to [publicpolicy@aauw-ca.org](mailto:publicpolicy@aauw-ca.org)).

## Things You May Need To Know...

### BRANCH ACTIVITY OF THE YEAR

*Sandi Gabe, AAUW California Webmaster, Assistant to AAUW California President, Dianne Owens, 2021 AAUW California President-Elect Candidate, [sandi.gabe@hotmail.com](mailto:sandi.gabe@hotmail.com)*

### WANT TO BRAG ABOUT A TERRIFIC BRANCH ACTIVITY?

Now's your chance to apply for the Branch Activity of the Year Award and put forward a signature activity that your branch presented between February 28, 2020, and March 1, 2021. This is your branch's chance to showcase and share an activity that is novel, inspirational, reproducible, and promotes AAUW's mission and image. The activity may be a one-off program or event or a sustained recurring project for which your branch is known.

### What are the awards?

There will be two awards. Winning branches will be honored with a small prize and recognition at the 2021 AAUW California Annual Meeting, on the state website, in social media, the California Connection, and other AAUW communications.

### Winners will be contacted by March 31.

Note: winners will be expected to provide a 5-10 minute presentation at the Annual Meeting on April 17. Assistance with your presentation will be available.

Click [HERE](#) to apply. Deadline: March 20, 2021

### LEGACY CIRCLE

*Charmen Goehring and Judy Horan, Legacy Circle Liaisons, [legacy@aauw-ca.org](mailto:legacy@aauw-ca.org)*

### CALIFORNIA IS IN IT TO WIN IT! - EXTENDED!

We are pleased to announce that our statewide branch competition, which started July 1, has been extended to June 30 in hopes that it will help branches work towards 5-Star status. We are encouraging members to become Legacy Circle members and the branch with the highest number of new members during the contest period will be deemed the winner. In addition to announcements across social media and on the state AND National websites, the winning branch will have a special Zoom video strategic update with AAUW California President Dianne Owen, AAUW Director of Development Heather Miller, and other special guests.

Becoming a Legacy Circle member is quick and easy and comes with perks, the most important of which is knowing AAUW will be here in the future. We look forward to welcoming you to our Circle!

## Correction to January 2021 Local Scholarship Recipient Profile

An incorrect photo was provided with the profile about Kinsey Robertson in our January issue. The photo was actually of scholarship recipient Julia Harold. Here is Kinsey's photo to the right:

The editors sincerely regret the error.





## **An Update on Menely Flores , Past Local Scholarship Recipient**

Cheryl Markman, Local Scholarship Committee

Menely Flores was awarded an AAUW Local Scholarship in 2020. She is the first in her family to attend college, majoring in Psychology with a double minor in Forensic Studies and Applied Computing for Behavioral and Social Scientists at San Jose State University. She will graduate from SJSU in Fall 2021 with a BA degree. Ultimately she hopes to get a JD/Ph.D. and use that knowledge to give back to her community. Menely believes that the current legal system gambles with the lives and freedoms of people without acknowledging the serious psychological repercussions that ensue. That belief, coupled with her belief that there are many people in society who live in a constant state of fear and don't have proper representation, further fuels her motivation to serve the powerless. She hopes to aid those persons formerly incarcerated to reintegrate into society and to help provide them with the necessary resources they need to thrive.

Menely is very thankful for the generous assistance of the AAUW Local Scholarship, which allowed her to dedicate 100% of her time to her studies (19 units) this past semester. In December, Menely learned that she had secured a new board member position with the SJSU Student Alumni Connection, an on-campus club that focuses on connecting current students with SJSU alumni. She is very excited to embark on this journey and to aid in the development of this new position.

Unfortunately, due to the COVID pandemic, Menely is not able to do as much volunteer work as she would like to do. Prior to the pandemic she was a volunteer at the Santa Clara Valley Medical Center, and hopes to return to the hospital soon. In the meantime, Menely has been avidly applying for several internships and is waiting to hear back.

During her free time, Menely likes to read, spend time with her family, and listen to podcasts on a range of different topics including true crime, comedy, and Ted Talks, which, as she notes, encompasses everything from social justice issues to psychology research.

## **AAUW San Jose Presents Work Smart Overview**

Elaine Peterson

On Wednesday, January 6, four AAUW San Jose members delivered a 60-minute Work Smart ([aauw.salary.org](http://aauw.salary.org)) Overview to 250 YearUp Interns. YearUp is a national program, with Bay Area offices, that sponsors underserved local young adults in 6-month hands-on corporate training programs. AAUW San Jose's collaboration with YearUp began in June 2020 when Elissa Stankiewicz (AAUW San Jose member and YearUp employee) invited AAUW to present Work Smart's Key Elements to YearUp Interns. Using Zoom, Peg Carlson-Bowen, Sari Fitzwater, Kathleen Romano and Elaine Peterson introduced this class of YearUp Interns to writing Value Statements, benchmarking their desired salary and preparing a strategy to negotiate fair and equitable compensation.

If you would like to join us in preparing and/or presenting future Work Smart workshops or building relationships with partner organizations, contact [Elaine Peterson](#).



## New Member Profiles

Claire Campodonico



**JAMIE SMITH** received a BA in Human Development from Pacific Oaks College and a MA in Teaching and Early Childhood Education, as well as her MS from National University. She looks forward to earning her EdD in 2022 from Fielding Graduate University in Santa Barbara. She is currently teaching Child Development at Mission College and West Valley College. In 2013, she founded a consulting firm, Internal Potential. Welcome, Jamie!

**SANTHA SHANMUGAM** is a contracts manager for FireEye, Inc. a cyber security firm in Milpitas. She earned her BA from Ohio State University and her JD from Capital University Law School in Columbus, Ohio. She learned about AAUW from her friend, member Wendy Foote. Santha wants to support furthering the advancement of women in all areas. Welcome, Santha!

**MARILYN FULLER** attended UC Berkeley where she earned a BA in Spanish and a BS in Psychology. She is a retired bilingual teacher. She is a dual member with the Los Gatos-Saratoga Branch. Marilyn has already attended our Spanish conversation group and helped out with Gifts for Teens. Welcome, Marilyn!

**KATHLEEN ROMANO** is a returning member who received a BA in Business Management from SJSU. She is employed as a Program Manager and learned of our Branch from her friend, member Sari Fitzwater. Kathleen lives in Santa Clara. Welcome back, Kathleen!

## Public Policy 2021

Susan Karlins, Public Policy Committee

Public Policy is moving into the new year with plans for a virtual lobby day with our California legislators, contact with our congressional representatives and the new administration, support for Title IX enforcement at our local schools, One Person/One Bill, and in person social events in the last quarter of the year. To learn more about our activities, join us the first Thursday of the month on Zoom at <https://yearup.zoom.us/j/98670478168>. We welcome your participation at whatever level you choose. Members at our last meeting had the opportunity to hear from grad student Ashley Dargent about Students Active For Ending Rape (SAFER) and the Cal Poly climate survey on sexual violence. After the great success of our letter and postcard writing campaigns for the November elections, we will be offering more postcard writing activities to support AAUW public policy priorities. To be updated on our activities, join our committee email list by contacting [Susan Karlins](#).

## *In Memoriam*

Submitted by Marilyn Jackson



We are sad to announce that Judy Ohland passed away in late December after a prolonged illness. She was a long-time member of AAUW San Jose and a dedicated member of Local Scholarship. Judy was involved in every aspect of Local Scholarship, from the screening of scholarship applicants to fundraising, particularly activities around the Annual Holiday Boutique. She was also a member of the small Archive Committee which for months catalogued our San Jose Branch history, before it was sent to the History San Jose Archives. Judy was a friend to many and a vital member of our Branch. She will be missed.

**February 2021 Calendar**

In compliance with the County mandated "Shelter in Place" and National AAUW guidelines the AAUW San Jose Headquarters is closed for meetings. No AAUW physical meetings will occur on site/off site for the month of February. Use of the parking lot is only authorized under specific Gathering Protocol and must be cleared with Pam Dougherty, B&P Chair. (Other Interest Group Chairs and Committee Heads may elect to conduct meetings remotely via Zoom, Skype, etc. They will contact members of the interest group with details/instructions.)

Mon Feb 1	6:30 — 8 pm	Neighbors Helping Neighbors ZOOM ( <a href="#">Bobbie Baker</a> )
Tue Feb 2	10:30 — 11:30 am	German Conversation ZOOM (RSVP <a href="#">Barbara Snyder</a> )
Wed Feb 3	6:30 — 7 pm	AAUW Board Social Hour ZOOM ( <a href="#">Peg Carlson-Bowen</a> )
	7 — 8:30 pm	AAUW BOARD Meeting ZOOM ( <a href="#">Peg Carlson-Bowen</a> )
Thu Feb 4	7 — 8:30 pm	Public Policy Committee ZOOM ( <a href="#">Susan Karlins</a> )
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Mon Feb 8	6:30 — 8:30 pm	Light Gourmet ZOOM (RSVP <a href="#">Cheryl Markman</a> )
Tue Feb 9	10:30 — 11:30 am	Conversacion Espanol ZOOM (RSVP <a href="#">Barbara Snyder</a> )
Thu Feb 11	2 — 4:00 pm	Great Decisions AM ZOOM ( <a href="#">Jill Osofsky</a> )
Sat Feb 13	10 am — 2 pm	Neighbors Helping Neighbors Parking lot drop off ( <a href="#">MaryJane Vitkovich</a> )
	6:30 — 9:30 pm	Couples Gourmet ZOOM (RSVP <a href="#">Cheryl Markman</a> )
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Sun Feb 14	11:30 am — 1:30 pm	Film Fans ZOOM (RSVP <a href="#">Linda Snashall</a> )
Mon Feb 15	9:30 — 11:30 am	Exploring World Literature ZOOM ( <a href="#">Diana Taylor</a> )
	6:30 — 8:30 pm	International Gourmet ZOOM (RSVP <a href="#">Jan Bartolotta</a> )
Tue Feb 16	10:30 — 11:30 am	French Conversation ZOOM (RSVP <a href="#">Barbara Snyder</a> )
Wed Feb 17	7 — 8:30 pm	Third Wednesday No program at this time ( <a href="#">Sari Fitzwater</a> )
Thu Feb 18	10 am — 12:00 pm	Family History ZOOM ( <a href="#">Susan Brundage</a> )
	7 — 8:30 pm	Mystery Lovers ZOOM ( <a href="#">Sharon Shephard</a> )
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Mon Feb 22	9:30 — 11 am	Building and Properties Committee ZOOM ( <a href="#">Pamela Dougherty</a> )
Tues Feb 23	11:30 am - 1:00 pm	Lunch Bunch ZOOM ( <a href="#">Diana Taylor</a> )
	7 — 8:30 pm	Great Decisions PM ZOOM ( <a href="#">Sharon Shephard</a> )
Thu Feb 25	2 — 4:00 pm	Great Decisions AM ( <a href="#">Jill Osofsky</a> )
Fri Feb 26	1:30 — 3:30 pm	Local Scholarship ZOOM ( <a href="#">Ruth Dusan</a> )

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**BONFIRE ARTICLE SUBMITTAL  
RULES:**

The sole purpose of this publication is to  
convey the association's business to its  
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**PERIODICALS  
POSTAGE PAID**

*AAUW San Jose Branch Established 1909*

**Diaper and Baby Wipes Drive**  
**Saturday, February 13, 10 am - 2 pm**  
**AAUW San Jose Headquarters Parking Lot**



Give from the "bottom" of your heart! We will be collecting diapers (size 4, 5, 6), pull ups (size 4, 5, 6) and baby wipes to support mothers in our area who need baby supplies. The items will be donated to Sacred Heart Community Service and Next Door Solutions. Contact [Mary Jane Vitkovich](#) should you have any questions.



*Empowering Women Since 1881*  
See the San Jose Branch Website at [www.aauwsanjose.org](http://www.aauwsanjose.org) for more information