



# BONFIRE

San Jose Branch

Empowering women since 1881

## 50 Year Anniversary of Title IX: What You Don't Know Can Hurt You

Saturday, March 19, 12 - 1 pm

Sponsored by the Santa Clara County AAUW Interbranch Council

Many women are unaware of Title IX, or only aware of its effect on school sports, but there is much more to learn to protect women and girls' access to equal education. There is also progress to celebrate in its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary year! Please invite the young women in your circle to join this webinar. Registration for the virtual event will be available on Eventbrite soon.

About our speakers:



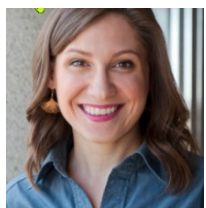
Danielle Slaton was an American professional soccer player and is currently a television soccer analyst for the San Jose Earthquakes, on staff at Santa Clara University and on the Boards for the U.S. Soccer Foundation and BAWSI (Bay Area Women's Sports Initiative). Danielle is our moderator.



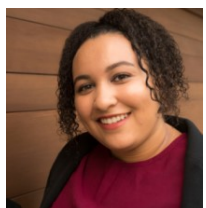
Marlene Bjornsrud is an advocate for equal opportunity for women in sports, and a former AAUW SJ member! She has testified before Congress about Title IX, served as Executive Director of the Alliance of Women Coaches, co-founded BAWSI and was the general manager of the San Jose Cyberrays.



Lucy Jane Bledsoe is an award-winning novelist who puts compelling, determined women at the heart of her stories to encourage this generation to find its voice and speak up for social justice. A high school and college basketball player herself, Lucy's latest novel, "No Stopping Us Now," draws on her own true experience of bringing the Portland Public Schools into compliance with Title IX.



Jess Eagle is a passionate social justice advocate working to make the world a better place for women, girls, and nonbinary individuals. She is currently at Equal Rights Advocates (ERA) in media relations, grassroots organizing, and digital advocacy. Previously, she was the Development Director at Family Violence Appellate Project, a California nonprofit that helps domestic violence survivors.



Rebecca Sheff is a Program Coordinator at Equal Rights Advocate and works on restorative justice, community organizing, and trauma-informed advocacy, including time at Restorative Justice for Oakland Youth and at the United Way of Santa Cruz with their Youth Violence Prevention Taskforce.

*Continued from page 1*



Dr. Akilah Francique-Carter is an Associate Professor in the SJSU Department of African American Studies and is the Executive Director for the Institute for the Study of Sport, Society, and Social Change. Dr. Francique-Carter has researched and written extensively on education and sports, primarily its impact on African American women.



Maha Ibrahim also joins us from ERA where she is a staff attorney representing women who are pursuing Title IX complaints, with settlements that include multi-year programmatic monitoring, policy reforms, and yes, cold hard cash. A graduate of UCLA School of Law, she has been a board member on Bay Area women's political groups, and a parent who very much wants to make the world a better and fairer place.

I hope that last month's Wheel of Power/Privilege provoked you to think, ask questions and explore diversity, equity and inclusion with your friends and family. I know at least a couple of people had questions, like what is neuro-diversity – the range of differences in individual brain function and behavioral traits, regarded as part of normal variation in the human population (used especially in the context of autistic spectrum disorders) – no, I didn't know what it was either.

Take three and a half minutes to learn why AAUW's interest in Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) is not just about gender and race! This compelling [video](#) will make you think.

Become a member of AAUW's Action Network. You can make your voice heard on issues of importance for impacting women and girls – parental leave, reproductive justice, Pre-K education, and much more. When you sign up, you will receive E-mail notices asking you to use the online Two-Minute Activist Tool to contact your politicians. It is quick and easy – they provide a message aligned with AAUW's goals – you can send it as is or modify it. [Sign up here](#).

## President's Corner



**Sonia Wright**  
President

## In Memoriam

Nancy Marie Covington passed away surrounded by her family last October 15 after a stroke. She was born and went to college in New Jersey and moved to Southern California after marrying her husband, Alan. Nancy was a teacher, active in AAUW San Jose, a docent at History San Jose, was a Catholic Charities nursing home ombudsman, and a volunteer with Our City Forest and San Jose City Friends of the Library. Nancy enjoyed travels with her family to the East Coast and later, with her husband, to England, Europe and Russia. She loved music and theater performances and was a long-time attendee of San Jose Musical Theater, Lyric Theater, and TheatreWorks. Nancy loved all creatures great and small and felt even the smallest should be saved. Nancy is survived by her husband Alan, children Mark, Robert and Laura and their families. A service was held last November. The family requests that in lieu of flowers, please make donations in Nancy's name to Wildlife Center of Silicon Valley or Humane Society Silicon Valley.

## March Public Policy Committee Meeting/Advocacy Update

Susan Karlins, Public Policy Committee

On April 7 at 7 pm, the time of our usual Public Policy meeting, we invite you to join us for AAUW CA Lobby Day training. Like last year, our Branch will participate in virtual lobby meetings with our local Assemblymembers and State Senators. AAUW provides great information that makes our presentations easy and fun. Please join us even if you never have. Click on [sign up](#) now for the statewide Lobby Day training session and join us at the online training. Let me know you've signed up at [publicpolicy@aauwsanjose.org](mailto:publicpolicy@aauwsanjose.org) so our group can arrange a practice session before our legislative meetings. Participants last year really appreciated the chance to share our priority bills with local legislators.



### NHN Parking Lot Drives

Mary Jane Vitkovich, Neighbors Helping Neighbors



Many thanks to our generous members who contributed to our recent parking lot drives. Santa Maria Urban Ministry, Sacred Heart Community Service and Front Door Communities benefited greatly from the many goods you donated.

Here is a summary of the many contributions you made to Sacred Heart:

- 175 pop top cans of food
- 161 toothbrushes
- 134 toothpastes
- 32 bottles of shampoo
- 125 miscellaneous items (hygiene, food)



Look for upcoming drives in the spring BONFIRE newsletters.

### Welcome to our Newest Member

Claire Campodonico

KARLIE ARKIN learned of AAUW through the 100 Women Charitable Foundation. She is a member of their Board. They awarded our Gifts for Teens a generous grant last year. Karlie obtained her BS in Computer Science from the University of Iowa. She is now retired from her thirty-year career in program and software management at Hewlett Packard. We're so glad she has joined!



## **An Update on Veronica Mendoza Past Local Scholarship Recipient**

Cheryl Markman, Local Scholarship Committee

Veronica Mendoza received an AAUW scholarship in spring 2021. At that time, she completed an Associate in Science degree in Mathematics with Cum Laude status at Evergreen Valley College and transferred to San Jose State University. She is pursuing a Bachelor of Science in Computer Engineering and expects to graduate in fall 2023. She is currently interested in a career as a Central Processing Unit (CPU) design engineer, "driving the exciting work of innovation and development of the next-generation of microprocessors." She is also considering getting a business license and becoming a private contractor.

Veronica participates in the SJSU MESA (Mathematics, Engineering, Science Achievement) Engineering program. Through this program she has access to mentoring, advising, academic services, industry networking, and community-building. Established in 1983 at SJSU, the MESA Engineering Program, formerly known as the Minority Engineering Program (MEP), has contributed to the retention and graduation of diverse engineering and computer science talent for over 35 years. MEP is the last segment in the MESA STEM talent pipeline, a statewide network of programs supporting students at K-12, community college and university institutions across the state of California.

Time permitting, Veronica does volunteer work because she wants to give back to her community. Since 2016 she has been volunteering at Loaves & Fishes, an organization that feeds hungry and homeless children, seniors, veterans, students, and disabled individuals throughout the Bay Area community. She has also volunteered at Silicon Valley Education Foundation creating Computer Science program kits for young students. Their mission is to deliver and advocate for STEM education that inspires underserved students to succeed in college and career.

For fun, Veronica enjoys painting, using different art materials such as acrylics, oil paint, and watercolor. She also likes gardening and hiking when the weather is nice. Recently, she has been interested in archery, so she plans to join the SJSU Archery Club this spring semester, both for stress relief and to connect with other people.

In Veronica's own words, "I can't thank you enough for your confidence in me and for allowing me to be closer to my goal of getting my degree. Without the support of the AAUW scholarship, attending college would not have been possible."





## What Are You Doing this Year to Mark Equal Pay Day?

Ginny Hatfield and Shelley Mitchell  
AAUW CA Public Policy Committee

AAUW believes that pay equity and equal employment opportunity are matters of simple fairness. We know that on the average, women earn about 80 cents for every dollar men earn. Started by the National Committee on Pay Equity in 1996, the goal of Equal Pay Day was to raise awareness about the gender wage gap.

Each year this date symbolizes how far into the year women must work to earn what men earned in the previous year. The date normally moves earlier each year as the wage gap closes, as women's average wages rise faster than men's. Equal Pay Day was traditionally a Tuesday in April, but happily, in 2021, the date was March 24, meaning that things had improved. And this year the news is even better --March 15, 2022. Better, but we're still not there.

On June 10, 2021, the Paycheck Fairness Act was filibustered in the Senate on a 49-50 vote. Now is the time to let your elected officials know how you feel about this failure to codify pay equity.

AAUW Branches throughout the country have marked this day with activities that highlight the wage gap. Here are some suggestions for things your branch can do.

- Write your representatives in Congress to encourage them to support the Paycheck Fairness Act.
- Encourage your local city council or county board of supervisors to issue a proclamation in support of pay equity.
- Write a letter to the editor of your local paper or offer to submit an op-ed.
- Share a timely post on social media to spread awareness.
- Hold an event on your local campus and invite participants to become student affiliate members of AAUW.

We can't wait for equal pay!

You can get more information and samples of proclamations and letters from the [National Committee on Pay Equity](#). Find out more on AAUW National's [website on Pay Equity](#)

### World Literature Group Invitation

Sonia Wright

If you like reading great women writers, I would recommend exploring the World Literature group (see the calendar for meeting times). Here is this year's reading list, January through June:

January - Pavilion of Women by Pearl Buck  
February - The Conservationist by Nadine Gordimer  
March 21 - The Golden Notebook (600+ pages) by Doris Lessing  
April 18 - to be announced  
May 16 - Bluest Eye by Toni Morrison  
June 20 - Dear Life by Alice Munroe





## January 2022 COFFEE and CONVERSATION Event

Long seasoned members, new members and prospective members enjoyed seeing others face-to-face in the parking lot the last Saturday of the month, 10 am. Join us for a few minutes or the hour. We'd love to see you.



### Prestigious Recognition for Gifts for Teens

Cheryl Markman, Gifts for Teens

Gifts for Teens is excited to announce that our project has been selected as one of the six finalists for consideration for an Impact Grant from The 100 Women Charitable Foundation for 2021. GFT is honored to have this recognition and help. All six finalists will receive grants, with three finalists receiving quite large monetary awards, to be voted on by their members in early March. The grant application involves a six month long, four-step process. The prestigious award will help GFT fill bags for needy local teens. As the competition was fierce, this award underscores the fact that our service project is valued in the community and that others care about needy local teens, be they impoverished, homeless, in foster care or suffering from addiction. In general, it brings attention to AAUW's activism and outreach efforts in our community.

But the work never ends. Gifts for Teens is already collecting bag contents and donated funds to support our 2022 efforts. Early spring cash donations are much appreciated and help GFT take advantage of bargains and sales throughout the entire year. Checks should be written to ISPF-AAUW, GFT. Or donations can be made by using the PayPal button found on [www.gifts4teens.org](http://www.gifts4teens.org) and on the AAUW San Jose website homepage: <https://sanjose-ca.aauw.net/>.

**March 2022**

Submitted by Tynka Dees, Calendar Editor

Organizer of the meeting must request a certification of vaccine status form from each attendee. Details August Bonfire. Everyone needs to wear a mask indoors regardless of vaccination status, unless alone in a private office with the door closed. Open windows to increase air flow when meeting indoors. If you or a member of your group have symptoms or tested positive for COVID, please do not enter the building. Please report such instances if you have been associating with AAUW members so we can file the necessary reporting. Some meetings this month may change whether they are meeting in person or not so please check with organizer.

Tue Mar 1	10:30-11:30 am	German Conversation ZOOM (RSVP <a href="#">Barbara Snyder</a> )
Wed Mar 2	6:30-7 pm	AAUW Board Social Hour ZOOM ( <a href="#">Sonia Wright</a> )
	7-8:30 pm	ZOOM AAUW BOARD Meeting ( <a href="#">Sonia Wright</a> )
Thu Mar 3	1-3 pm	Knitting Know How (RSVP <a href="#">Margaret McCartney</a> )
	7-8:30 pm	Public Policy Committee ZOOM ( <a href="#">Susan Karlins</a> )
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Mon Mar 7	6:30-8 pm	Neighbors Helping Neighbors ZOOM ( <a href="#">Bobbie Baker</a> )
Tue Mar 8	10-11:30 am	Book Discussion (RSVP <a href="#">Lida Kluzek</a> )
	10:30-11:30 am	Conversacion Espanol ZOOM (RSVP <a href="#">Barbara Snyder</a> )
Wed Mar 9	11 am-1 pm	Art Appreciation (RSVP <a href="#">Jan Bartolotta</a> )
	7-8:30 pm	Wednesday Night Book Group ZOOM (RSVP <a href="#">Margaret Bard</a> )
Thu Mar 10	1-4 pm	Bridge 2 <sup>nd</sup> Thursday (RSVP <a href="#">Bobbie Eckerman</a> )
	2-3:30 pm	Great Decisions AM Zoom ( <a href="#">Monique Lee</a> )
Sat Mar 12	6:30-9:30 pm	Couples Dining (RSVP <a href="#">Sharon Potter</a> )
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Sun Mar 13	11:30 am-2 pm	Film Fans ZOOM (Contact Linda Snashall)
Tue Mar 15	10:30-11:30 am	French Conversation ZOOM (RSVP <a href="#">Barbara Snyder</a> )
	1-3 pm	Knitting Know How (RSVP <a href="#">Margaret McCartney</a> )
Wed Mar 16	6:30-9 pm	Light Gourmet (RSVP <a href="#">Cheryl Markman</a> )
Thu Mar 17	10 am-12 pm	Family History ZOOM ( <a href="#">Susan Brundage</a> )
	7-8:30 pm	Mystery Lovers ZOOM ( <a href="#">Sharon Shephard</a> )
Fri Mar 18	10 am-1 pm	Bridge (RSVP <a href="#">Lida Kluzek</a> )
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Mon Mar 21	9:30-11 am	Exploring World Literature TBD (RSVP <a href="#">Diana Taylor</a> )
	1-4 pm	Interbranch Council ( <a href="#">Margaret Bard</a> )
	6:30-9 pm	International Gourmet (RSVP <a href="#">Jan Bartolotta</a> )
Tue Mar 22	12-1:30 pm	Lunch Bunch TBA (RSVP <a href="#">Diana Taylor</a> )
	1-4 pm	Bridge 4 <sup>th</sup> Tuesday (RSVP <a href="#">Bobbie Eckerman</a> )
	7-8 pm	Great Decisions PM ZOOM ( <a href="#">Sharon Shephard</a> )
Thu Mar 24	2-3:30 pm	Great Decisions AM ZOOM ( <a href="#">Monique Lee</a> )
Fri Mar 25	1:30- 3 pm	Local Scholarship ZOOM ( <a href="#">Ruth Dusan</a> )
Sat Mar 26	10 am-12 pm	Member & Prospective Members Coffee and Conversation Back Porch ( <a href="mailto:Membership@aauwsanjose.org">Membership@aauwsanjose.org</a> )
Mon Mar 28	9:30-11 am	Building & Properties Committee ZOOM <a href="mailto:buildings@aauwsanjose.org">buildings@aauwsanjose.org</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  
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AAUW San Jose Branch *Established 1909*



**AAUW Morgan Hill 39th Annual Wildflower Run  
March 27  
Live Oak High School  
1505 E Main Ave, Morgan Hill, CA**

AAUW Morgan Hill's 39th Annual Wildflower Run is March 27. 100 percent of proceeds provide local community grants, scholarships and leadership programs for women and girls. USATF certified 10K run, 5K run, 5K stroller/baby jogger race, 5K walk, kids' 2K fun run and senior 2K run/walk are featured. For more information, see <http://wildflowerrun.org/>.



*Empowering Women Since 1881*

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