

**President's Corner****By Sonia Wright**

Recently, I attended part 2 of Title IX training required of all San Jose State University managers and administrators. This is part of SJSU improving visibility, training and response to discrimination and harassment after a recent Department of Justice finding. It's no secret that our campus is one of many in the California State University system that has been in the news for Title IX violations. The CSU system is in the middle of conducting an audit to address the issue.

The training was scenario-based and reinforced that we're all mandatory reporters. One of the scenario's was a drunk donor at an event who looked at the gift officer and suggested introducing her to his son who would be interested in her, as he winked at her spilling his drink before walking off. We're required to report this because it might be a pattern.

The really interesting conversations happened back in our office. One person said, "I'm never talking to anyone again." Another said, "I wish they would have covered the more common issue of the donor always addressing my white colleague and ignoring me, even though I'm their contact. That's a more frequent occurrence for me." As a Caucasian on our campus, I'm a minority. She's Indian and new to our campus, but has experienced race-based discrimination in her previous jobs. We've been friends for several years and I was horrified, but not surprised, that in one of her recent job interviews she was asked, "How are you going to respond when people see you?" She had the perfect comeback "Well, I go by the pronouns she, her, hers and I put that on my signature line," as she smiled broadly, knowing exactly what the interviewer meant about her darker skin and Indian name. For her, this is a much more common occurrence than sexual harassment. She and I have both experienced the men's locker room talk, now considered sexual harassment, and we both just ignored it. But now we're told we have to report it. My younger colleagues feel compelled to call out the older donor who calls them "darling" and "sweetheart". Frankly, I don't really care as long as they're not groping me. Like my friend and colleague, I'm much more offended by the subtle racism my colleague experiences.

Voter Engagement Continues into 2023!**Susan Karlins, Public Policy Committee**

It's amazing how so many elections revolve around reproductive freedom and voting rights! AAUW San Jose members have already sent 345 postcards alerting Virginia voters to a special election in their Congressional District. Thanks to all who wrote! Our next postcard writing venture concerns the Wisconsin State Supreme Court where reproductive freedom, union rights, and gerrymandering are on the ballot. If you'd like to write postcards to Black voters in Wisconsin, please contact [Susan Karlins](#), Public Policy Co-Chair.



Mary Jane Vitkovich and Erin Barrite

Neighbors Helping Neighbors News

Mary Jane Vitkovich

Our members once again contributed generously to our donation drive held on February 11. Many, many donations of diapers and sanitary items were brought to Headquarters and then delivered to Sacred Heart Community Service. The need was great and you answered the call.

Gifts for Teens Celebrates 25 Years

Cheryl Markman, Gifts for Teens



L to R, Sharon and Tom Bouska, Elaine and Bob Benoit

As a volunteer at Sacred Heart Community Service in downtown San Jose, Elaine Benoit noticed that the bulk of the holiday-season gift-giving was focused on the little ones, with the teen population being largely overlooked. So, with the help of some friends and neighbors, she put together a few cosmetic baskets to be distributed to some of those teen clients at that most festive time of year. From that small but significant beginning in 1998, Gifts for Teens (GFT) grew to providing over 1,250 bags for both girls and boys between 2010 and 2020. Sadly, because of COVID-19 considerations for volunteers' health and safety, the project was forced to scale back to 500 bags in 2021 and 600 bags in 2022. Nonetheless, the project kept going in spite of the many challenges.

As founder and chair of GFT, Elaine always hosts a thank you party for the GFT committee, other major helpers and major donors after the work of the holiday season is done. But this year there was even more to celebrate, that being 25 years of community giving and still going strong! To commemorate that very special milestone anniversary, steering committee members Beverly Bassett and Sharon Bouska collected comments and reminiscences from members of the committee and compiled them, along with lots of fun photos, into a Memory Book which was presented at the party to Elaine and her husband, and "uber volunteer," Bob. Needless to say, they were both surprised and delighted! Congratulations to Gifts for Teens!

Local Scholarship Applications Now Available

Cheryl Markman, Local Scholarship Committee

Applications for 2023 scholarships are now available for qualified women as of March 1, 2023, 12:01 am PT. Completed applications must be received online by April 15, 2023, 11:59 pm PST or postmarked by April 15, 2023.

Application requirements include:

Principal address in Campbell, Milpitas, Santa Clara or San Jose, California

Completion of two full years of study at an accredited college or university

Acceptance from a four-year institution as a junior or senior for the fall 2023 quarter or semester

Minimum GPA of 3.0

Qualified finalists will be interviewed by members of the AAUW San Jose Local Scholarship Committee.

Applications are available at [AAUW Local Scholarship Application Information | San Jose \(CA\) Branch](#).

Third Wednesday Program

Community Awareness Presentation on Financial Fraud

March 15, 2 pm - 3:30 pm

If you have access to a computer, smart phone, or landline, you can learn how to protect your personal information if you become a victim. The presentation will be 45 minutes, with 15 minutes for questions and answers and will include the following:

- a review of red flags
- common scams
- fraud/elder fraud
- if a victim, what you can do
- financial crimes (internet/pandemic)
- complaints

This presentation as an in-person/Zoom hybrid event. If you plan to attend in person, we ask that you RSVP to [Bobbie Baker](#), Program VP. Zoom information:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/81599278813?pwd=b0xjYWdHU05iYmxFak9vQS9qbnBLQT09>

Meeting ID: 815 9927 8813; Passcode: 961319. Find your local dial-in number:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/u/kdhop7UVxB>

AAUW San Jose Lists Title IX Coordinators Throughout Our County: What Do They Do?

Monica Hojda, Public Policy Committee

Who is and what are the responsibilities of a Title IX Coordinator? Santa Clara County has a Title IX Coordinator at K-12 and Higher Education campuses. The Title IX Coordinator focus is on the overall gender equity climate, be it on systemic policy, process and prevention topics including campus climate and current program effectiveness; collaboration with campus and community partners; and ensuring other members of the Title IX team have the appropriate, knowledge, skills and training necessary to successfully fulfill their responsibilities.

The Title IX coordinator's primary responsibility is to coordinate the school district's compliance with Title IX, including the school district's grievance procedures for resolving associated complaints. The Title IX Coordinator cannot have other job responsibilities that may create a conflict of interest. The following responsibilities apply:

- Understand the Title IX Federal Law and ensure that procedural requirements of the legislation are being met.
- Coordinate the grievance procedure for Title IX complaints which includes assisting students and parents in filing and investigating the concerns or issues.
- Coordinate the grievance procedure for Title IX complaints which includes assisting students and parents in filing and investigating the concerns or issues.
- Find and implement programs to prevent sexual harassment and discrimination.
- Be the expert of Title IX and its application to athletics.
- Title IX coordinators must know how to conduct a civil rights investigation that will meet the community's and (OCR) Optical Character Recognition's expectations.
- Balance the responsibilities – in working with district personnel and even board members who may have differing views.
- Seek opportunities for Training - create and maintain a welcoming, supportive, equitable and safe environment for all students and school district personnel.
- With the new Title IX regulations comes increased responsibilities for the district Title IX coordinator, which includes training of all school district employees and staff including cafeteria workers and bus drivers. The school's athletic administrator or Asst. Superintendent may fill the role of Deputy Title IX.

Resource: [National Federation of State High School Associations](#)

Both of these articles on page 6 and 7 were submitted by Public Policy Chair Susan Karlan

For Women's History Month, Let's Observe the Transgender Day of Visibility

Melissa Maceyko, AAUW California Public Policy Committee

Each year on March 31, the world observes Transgender Day of Visibility (TDOV) to raise awareness about transgender people. It is a day to celebrate the lives and contributions of trans people, while also drawing attention to the poverty, discrimination, and violence the community faces.

Women's history tells the story of misogyny, which is the systemic mistreatment of women, girls, and feminine peoples through forms of physical and structural violence. We rarely consider how it is linked to transmisogyny, which focuses on the complex intersections between transphobia and misogyny that are faced by trans women and girls, as well as transfeminine and gender non-conforming peoples. It is a term that attempts to capture multiple layers of gender-based marginalization and systemic mistreatment. If misogyny and transmisogyny are not combatted together, then the root of the problem will never truly be eradicated.

Despite the push for diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives around gender, the current sociopolitical climate in the US is often openly hostile to, transgender and gender non-conforming individuals. Under this sphere of increased hostility is the explicit targeting of trans women and girls and transfeminine peoples with words, actions, and legislation. It is particularly important for women's organizations who seek to combat gender-based forms of oppression to build coalitions and take a stand against **misogyny and transmisogyny** in all its forms, because misogyny and transmisogyny come from the same place. They both describe gender-based oppression that results from the prioritization of masculinity alongside the degradation of femininity.

Targeted hostility against trans women and girls and transfeminine peoples is not only seen in the alarming uptick in physical violence against this community, but also in the increasing persistence and intensity of public debates over whether or not trans women and girls and transfeminine peoples are "women" that belong in "women's spaces," including gender-specific bathrooms, women's sports teams, and locker rooms. These debates prioritize misplaced and misunderstood claims of biological authenticity. They are dehumanizing and cannot be disconnected from other forms of violence as they normalize widespread and explicit marginalization and exclusion.

As a women's organization, the increasingly hostile environment for trans women and girls and transfeminine people should be at the forefront of our collective education and activism - let's help ensure that history doesn't continue to repeat itself. Visit the [Public Policy website](#) to learn more.

"Women should be celebrated every day, but a month dedicated to female empowerment is extremely special. It doesn't just honor the iconic women who have changed history, but encourages new generations to dream big and know that anything is possible."

— Molly McCook, in [Forbes](#)



Spotlight on Rose Crimi

Ruth Dusan and Grace O'Leary

How did you discover AAUW San Jose?

Rose Crimi: In the early 1950s, AAUW had an open house at the San Jose Women's Club on North 11th Street, which I attended. I had graduated from San Jose State College and I was eligible to join. At that time, AAUW held monthly luncheons at the DeAnza Hotel. I became Program Chair and arranged the monthly programs. An article appeared in the San Jose Mercury News newspaper, which shows a photo of me with two other AAUW members and a list of the AAUW SJ programs. (see above) We did not have a clubhouse so sections met in members' homes. One of my favorite sections was play readings. Members took turns reading a play followed by a discussion of the play.

How long have you been a member of AAUW?

I originally joined in the early 1950s, right after I graduated from college in 1951. Around 1960, my mother had a stroke and required round the clock care. Since I could no longer go to meetings, I resigned in good standing. After my mother died, I rejoined in 2002.

What do you like most about being a member of AAUW?

I have enjoyed participating in the morning book club, art appreciation, movies group, lunch bunch, and all club events. It's wonderful to socialize with all the talented, knowledgeable, and dedicated people in our club. I am 94 years old now and no longer volunteer anymore. I'm only too happy to be on the fringes and still enjoy the perks of membership.

Is there anything else we can do to improve membership experience?

The monthly bulletin sections list: it would be helpful if more information about the content of the programs is included. For example, the name and phone number of the section chair so members have someone to call if they want to participate.

What would you like members to know about you?

I enjoy living alone but I have a good support group of friends and neighbors. I get calls several times a day to see how I am doing. I still drive and go to several club meetings. Thank God above all that my brain still works.

How would you like to be remembered?

I would like to be remembered as a good person who is kind to everyone.

March 2023

Submitted by Tynka Dees Calendar Editor:

Santa Clara County has removed our mask requirement for indoor meetings. If any member is uncomfortable with unmasked members or simply wishes to remain safe, **masks are always welcome**. If you are un-vaccinated, we would appreciate it if you wore a mask. If you are a leader of the group meeting please keep a sign in sheet, just in case we need it for checking contacts in future. Please check with the organizer whether the meeting has changed and will be ZOOM or in person.

Wed Mar 1	5:30 -6 pm 6- 7:30 pm	AAUW Board Social Hour ZOOM ((Sonia Wright)) AAUW BOARD Meeting ZOOM ((Sonia Wright))
Thu Mar 2	2-3 pm 7-8:30 pm	Great Decisions AM Master Class Video Presentation (Monique Lee) Public Policy Committee ZOOM (Susan Karlins)
Mon Mar 6	10 am-1 pm 6-8 pm	Bridge 1 st Monday (RSVP Bobbie Eckerman) Neighbors Helping Neighbors ZOOM (Bobbie Baker)
Tue Mar 7	10-11 am	German Conversation ZOOM (RSVP Barbara Snyder)
Wed Mar 8	11 am-1 pm 7-830 pm	Art Appreciation (RSVP Jan Bartolotta) Wednesday Night Book Group The Henna Artist by Joshi (RSVP Renee Sommerfeld)
Thu Mar 9	9:30-11 am 1-4 pm	Great Decisions AM Hybrid (Monique Lee) Bridge 2 nd Thursday (RSVP Bobbie Eckerman)
Fri Mar 10	10 am-2 pm	Duplicate Bridge (RSVP Lida Kluzek)
Sat Mar 11	6:30-9:30 pm	Couples Dining (RSVP Karen Hook)
Sun Mar 12	11:30 am-1:30 pm 4:30-9 pm	Film Fans (RSVP Linda Snashall) Oscars Film Fans (RSVP Linda Snashall)
Mon Mar 13	6:30- 9:30 pm	Light Gourmet (RSVP Cheryl Markman)
Tue Mar 14	10-1130 am 10-11 am	Book Discussion AM The Last Nomad by Shugri Salh (Lida Kluzek) Conversacion Espanol ZOOM (RSVP Barbara Snyder)
Wed Mar 15	2-3:30 pm	Community Awareness Program on Financial Fraud Hybrid (Bobbie Baker)
Thu Mar 16	10 am-12 pm 2-3 pm 7-8:30 pm	Family History Hybrid (Susan Brundage) Great Decisions AM Master Class Video Presentation (Monique Lee) Mystery Lovers ZOOM The Darkest Evening by Ann Cleeves (Sharon Shephard)
Fri Mar 17	10 am-1 pm	Bridge (RSVP Lida Kluzek)
Mon Mar 20	9:30-11am 12:30-4 pm 6:30-9 pm	Exploring World Literature Hybrid The Women of Chateau Lafayette by Stephanie Dray (RSVP Diana Taylor) Interbranch Council (Peg Carlson-Bowen) International Gourmet (RSVP Jan Bartolotta)
Tue Mar 21	10-11 am 1-3 pm	French Conversation ZOOM (RSVP Barbara Snyder) Knitting Know How (RSVP Margaret McCartney)
Thu Mar 23	9:30-11 am	Great Decisions AM Hybrid (Monique Lee)
Fri Mar 24	1:30- 3:30 pm	Local Scholarship Hybrid (Tynka Dees)
Sat Mar 25	10 am- 12 pm	Prospective Members and Member Meeting Coffee and Conversation Back porch (Membership@aauwsanjose.org)
Sun Mar 26	7:30-11 am	Morgan Hill AAUW Wildflower Run (RSVP Judy Burt)
Mon Mar 27	9:30-11 am	Building and Properties Committee (Paul Bowen)
Tue Mar 28	12-1:30 pm 1-4 pm 7-8:30 pm	Lunch Bunch (Diana Taylor) Bridge 4 th Tuesday (RSVP Bobbie Eckerman) Great Decisions PM ZOOM (Sharon Shephard)

San Jose Branch BONFIRE
Published monthly except for July by AAUW
San Jose Branch. 1165 Minnesota Avenue,
San Jose, CA 95125-3324

President: Sonia Wright
BONFIRE Editor: Sonia Wright
Editorial Staff: Elin Bolt, Copy Editor; Tynka
Dees, Calendar Editor; Jan Giroux, Proofreader;
Barb Purdy, Layout Editor
Distribution: Sonia Wright & Linda Guyer

Change of Address: Katherine Oven

BONFIRE ARTICLE SUBMITTAL RULES: The sole purpose of this publication is to convey the association's business to membership. Only articles and announcements related to Branch business will be considered.

March 2023

AAUW BONFIRE San Jose Branch *Established 1909*

Kindness Corner

Peg Carlson-Bowen and Sharon Bouska, Branch Past Presidents



This thoughtful picture was sent to us by one of our members who has appreciated the Kindness column. She felt that sometimes the person who needed the most kindness was herself to herself, so she decided to say these two things each night before she went to sleep. She hopes you will consider doing this for yourself, too.

We also received a wonderful phone call from longtime and much-loved member, Grace O'Leary, sharing how important kindness is to her. When asked to share more about this, she said, "Well, there are three things I do when I am faced with someone being unkind. I think they must have something going not so well in their life. I think if I can help them in any way, perhaps just a smile or a kind word. And lastly, I pray for them and me." Positive and kind, that is Grace.



Empowering Women Since 1881
See the San Jose Branch Website at www.aauwsanjose.org for more information.