

**AAUW San Jose Fall Gathering  
September 30, 10 am to noon  
Willow Glen United Methodist Church  
1420 Newport (Newport & Minnesota)**

Please join us for this year's Fall Gathering and invite those who may be interested in joining AAUW San Jose. It will be great to gather in person again this year. As always, we will have Interest Group, Community Action Project and Public Policy representatives available at tables to discuss what their group does and how you might want to participate. Local Scholarship Scholars will speak on how the scholarship supports them and their field of interest. We just held our AAUW San Jose Scholars Reunion on July 29, and believe us, these are incredible women! Our keynote topic is: "We Are AAUW: Past, Present and Future," exploring the gifts we all bring to AAUW San Jose, the challenges we continue face, the contributions we make to our community, and the legacy we are building.



**Gifts for Teens – Your Help Is Still Needed**

Cheryl Markman, Gifts for Teens

Gift cards are one of the most requested items from our Gifts for Teens recipients. In particular, gift cards from Target and Walmart allow them to choose the items they want or need. Unfortunately, we are far short of the number we need to fill the 660 bags for this year. Cards of any amount are welcome. Contact Beverly Bassett to donate at **408 979 9141**.

If you prefer to donate cash, which we will then use to purchase additional gift cards, go to [www.gifts4teens.org](http://www.gifts4teens.org) and click on the Donate button to use a credit or debit card or the PayPal option. Alternatively, you can send a check, made payable to ISPF – AAUW San Jose, Gifts for Teens, to AAUW – Gifts for Teens, at 1165 Minnesota Avenue, San Jose, CA 95125. As with the store gift cards, no amount is too small. Any help you can provide will be greatly appreciated.

## President's Corner

by Linda Goldberg



Here we are in September again. No matter how long it has been since you were in school, it still feels like the real beginning of the year. I hope all of you will be able to attend our Fall Gathering on September 30. It is always a good way to reconnect with friends and energize for the year to come as we celebrate our Scholarship recipients and Tech Trek campers, browse the Interest Group displays, introduce you to this year's board, and learn about the exciting year that is being planned for AAUW San Jose.

I have recently been watching the Women's World Cup soccer matches and I was struck by the fact that there were so many upset winners advancing to the second round of play. It reminded me that if girls are just given an opportunity, they are able to accomplish great things. We can never stop trying to open those doors of opportunity.

At least annually, the Branch president is tasked with reminding everyone of the Branch "Use of Name" Policies. It is important to remember these when planning a program or event.

1. The policies and programs of AAUW shall be binding on all members engaged in AAUW activities, and no member shall use the name of AAUW to oppose such policies or programs.
2. The name and logo of AAUW may be used only by members and affiliates (as defined in the membership section of the bylaws) only according to policies and procedures established by the AAUW Board of Directors: others may do so only according to written licenses.
3. These bylaws shall not abridge the freedom of speech of any AAUW member to speak an opinion in the member's own name.

See you at Fall Gathering!

## Past President Thank You

By Sonia Wright

I wanted to send out a "thank you" to the board members, as well as our membership, for your support over the last two years. You have been supportive and willing to work through the many changes like Zoom, hybrid, and out-of-doors meetings to keep our Branch a vital force to advance gender equity for women and girls through research, education, and advocacy. Thank you also for the lovely gift certificate to Braise. My husband and I have never been there and look forward to enjoying a meal there after we return from a much-needed vacation. I'm supporting Branch President Linda Goldberg as Parliamentarian, Chair of the Nominating Committee and BONFIRE Editor, so I'm still here! Again, thank you!

## AAUW San Jose Program Events for 2023-2024

### Program Schedule

- Wednesday, August 16— 5:30 pm - Opening Ceremony with guest Speaker AAUW CA President and musical performance from Ukooladies
- Saturday, September 30—10 am to noon - Fall Gathering
- Wednesday, October 18—1:30pm-3pm—Introduction to Mindfulness with Kelly Weisberg (Online only)
- Saturday, November 18—(TBD)-Ways to Give
- Saturday, December 16—10 am to noon—Holiday Party
- Saturday, January 20—1pm—League of Women Voters at Headquarters
- Saturday, February 24—(TBD)—Heart Health Month/Black History Month
- Saturday, March 16—1pm-Portraits of the Past
- Saturday, April 20—10am-12pm? (time TBD) - Annual Meeting
- Saturday, May 18—(TBD)-AAPI Heritage Culture Month
- Monday, June 3—6:30pm - NHN Soiree

## Annual Soiree Recap

Mary Jane Vitkovich, Neighbors Helping Neighbors Co-Chair



Erin Barrite and Mary Jane Vitkovich deliver backpacks to Sacred Heart Community Service

Neighbors Helping Neighbors' (NHN) year was capped off with our annual soiree on June 5. Our speaker, Darlene Tenes, spoke to us about the work of Farmworkers Caravan, an organization whose mission is to address needs of local farmworkers. Members generously donated new women's underwear and sport bras to the organization, and a \$500 check was also presented to her from NHN.

New school backpacks and school supplies worth \$700 were purchased and delivered to Sacred Heart Community Service for their annual Pack A Back program in late June.

Our next meeting will be held on Tuesday, September 5, at 6:30 pm.

## SAVE THE DATE

### Local Scholarship Holiday Program

Diane Trombetta, Local Scholarship Committee

Save the date for a special Local Scholarship program on Saturday, November 18 (time TBD) in the Willow Glen Library Community Room. "The Holiday Spirit: Keep it Alive 365" will describe all the different ways we can contribute to Local Scholarship and the other Community Action Projects, with estate planning, stock transfers or memorial scholarships and more. This is a pre-holiday gathering to celebrate the joys of giving, to meet grateful recipients of your support, and to thank all members for their support of AAUW San Jose. Entertainment, refreshments, and a prize drawing included!

## Busy Summer Season for the Public Policy Committee

Susan Karlins, Public Policy Committee Co-Chair

AAUW San Jose Public Policy Committee has provided letters of support for 16 bills endorsed by AAUW CA as of August 4. We continue to write letters to various committees as the bills make their way through the complex legislative process. Our Get Out The Vote efforts are focused on Virginia, which holds elections this year for all statewide offices. Voting rights, reproductive freedom, and the teaching of Black history are all on the ballot. Postcards should be sent by October 25. If you're interested in writing 10 or 20 or more postcards, contact [publicpolicy@aauwsanjose.org](mailto:publicpolicy@aauwsanjose.org). So far, 25 AAUW members and eight scholarship recipients have committed to writing postcards to Virginia voters of color. Please join us!



## Tech Trek Camps 2023

Karelle Cornwell and Anne Wustrow  
Tech Trek Co-Coordinators

AAUW San Jose sent seven middle school girls to in-person Tech Trek camp, and two to virtual Tech Trek camp this summer; all had a great time, learned a lot, and left camp inspired to pursue their interest in STEM. Here are some excerpts from the "thank you" letters that we received from the campers:

Every day here at camp has been nothing short of amazing. I learned a lot about a bunch of STEM subjects that I've never heard of until now. - Madeline

My core class (botany) was amazing! I got to dissect flowers and seeds. - Amy

I have had so much fun making new friends and getting to learn about chemistry, engineering, biology, water and coding. - Natalie

This fantastic STEM filled experience has awakened a new love for engineering in my heart and mind. - Aurelia

This helped me to improve my skills and learn more about STEM. - Brenda

I loved learning about motors and the flow of energy in engineering, along with the science behind magnets! - Evelyn

Thank you so much for allowing me to come to this amazing place that has definitely impacted me. This has been the highlight of my summer. - Madison

*welcome*

## Welcome to Our New and Returning Members

Claire Campodonico

COSSETTE FITZGERALD is a returning National member who is now affiliated with our San Jose Branch. She is a past Scholarship winner (2018). Cosette resides in Santa Clara and is employed as an Accountant.

CHRISTINA DUARTE is a returning Branch member. She is also a past Scholarship winner (2013). She attended UC Santa Cruz and Evergreen Valley College. Christina is currently employed as a Paralegal.



**UPDATE ON CARMEN RODRIQUEZ**  
**PAST LOCAL SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENT**  
Cheryl Markman, Local Scholarship Committee

Carmen Rodriguez received a Local Scholarship in spring 2022. This past June, she graduated from Santa Clara University (SCU) with a Bachelor of Science in Psychology and a Minor in Sociology. Prior to commencement, Carmen received academic accolades for her accomplishments during the last four years, graduating magna cum laude, with admission into honorary societies Phi Beta Kappa, Psi Chi, and Alpha Sigma Nu.

Additionally, for her work in student advocacy, Carmen was awarded the Certification of Educational Promotion, reflecting her dedication and commitment to implementing inter-dimensional programs between the Ignatian Center for Jesuit Education and numerous multicultural and wellness centers at SCU. Through the Ignatian Center, Carmen was able to travel to the Appalachian region of West Virginia, where she spent a week working alongside various community and social justice leaders/advocates, and was able to explore various social, economic, and ecological injustices that the residents have and currently face. This June also marked her third and final year serving as a Peer Educator for the LEAD Scholars Program, co-chair for the Multicultural Center's Together for Ladies of Color student organization, and Peer Health Educator.

A native of the Bay Area, Carmen wants "to be able to support marginalized communities and work towards ending the sense of 'otherness' that is perpetuated throughout the Silicon Valley and beyond." Post graduation, she is exploring diversity, inclusion, and equity opportunities, seeking a multi-disciplinary career that will help address racial and gendered disparities that exist in the workplace.

In her free time, Carmen enjoys exploring the Bay Area with friends, trying new foodie spots, and relaxing along the coast.

**UPDATE ON PAST LOCAL SCHOLARSHIP  
RECIPIENT KIMBERLY LOPEZ**  
Cheryl Markman, Local Scholarship Committee



Kimberly Lopez was awarded the Grace O’Leary Scholarship from Local Scholarship in spring 2022. The first in her family to graduate from high school, she enrolled in San Jose City College (SJCC). Upon graduating from SJCC, she transferred to San Jose State University (SJSU) and expects to graduate in spring 2025 with a Bachelor’s degree and subsequently a Master’s degree, also from SJSU, in Child and Adolescent Development.

Kimberly says the scholarship has helped her to make progress toward her career goals by opening leadership and internship opportunities in organizations such as the GetSet Society of Women Engineering, a summer internship job. As a counselor there, she encourages, motivates, and exposes high school female youth to evolve in STEM careers.

Kimberly plans to become an elementary school teacher, focusing mainly on second grade, to encourage students to set goals and persist until they accomplish them. She looks forward to being a role model, offering guidance to her students and future generations. To further her progress toward that goal, Kimberly applied for and was awarded a Peer Mentor position at SJSU in the Adelante Program of the Chicanx/Latinx Student Success Center (CENTRO). The position involves offering personal and academic support to her Chicanx/Latinx peers by creating a welcoming and safe environment at CENTRO, and engaging them by providing opportunities to explore campus life and to learn about the various academic and support services available on campus.

Kimberly says a hobby of hers is dancing because she loves to dance! She tried out for the SJSU dance team to be part of a dancing community supporting school spirit and doing something she enjoys. Unfortunately, she did not make the team, but undaunted, she will be trying out for the Spartan Mambo Salsa and Bachata team that performs in events and competes. She notes that, in addition to loving to dance, it expresses a part of her Latin side. Of course, we wish her good luck!

Kimberly concludes that as she moves forward at SJSU, she is exploring, developing, and working hard to continue her journey to become a teacher.



## Spotlight on Apala Egan

Ruth Dusan and Grace O'Leary

### How did you discover AAUW San Jose?

I learned about AAUW when I was a student at the University of Illinois. In fact, at a gathering, I met a woman who said that she was a member of AAUW.

### How long have you been a member of AAUW?

Since January 1, 1984.

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

The huge variety of interest groups ranging from gourmet to walks and hikes and art appreciation. It has been a wonderful way of meeting people. AAUW also encourages people to start interest groups. When I lived in Fremont, along with a fellow member, we began a hiking group. In San Jose, Linda Snashall and I continued with the Friends Around the World group for many years where we invited speakers from other parts of the world.

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

It is important that AAUW publicizes their various local philanthropies as well as the many interest groups to the broader community. This may increase interest in people wishing to join.

### What would you like members to know about you?

I majored in Economics in India and came to this country and studied Business at the University of Illinois. My husband and I moved to California where I worked in industry for several years. Later, I decided to teach Economics at the community colleges in California, but am now retired. We have two adult sons. At this stage of my life, I have colon cancer. There are some articles that I have written about AAUW and the links are given below.

<https://www.mercurynews.com/2020/11/24/aauw-celebrates-40th-anniversary-of-scholarship-program/>

<https://www.mercurynews.com/2020/09/24/san-jose-aauw-provides-gifts-for-at-risk-south-bay-teens/>

### How would you like to be remembered?

I have just completed translating a story collection by my grandmother, Jyotirmoyee Devi Sen, an award-winning writer, whose work is part of the Women's Studies curriculum at Jadavpur University in Calcutta, India. These stories provide a rare glimpse into a romantic yet mysterious world of royal courtesans and queens based on her eyewitness account. Her grandfather was the prime minister to the Maharaja of Jaipur. She, however, was tragically widowed in her mid-twenties and had to live according to the rules of orthodox Hindu society. Widows were deemed asexual beings. My grandmother had to wear stark white for the rest of her life and eschewed meat and fish.

My husband and I have recently made an endowment to Jadavpur University for an annual speaker series in her name with the focus being "Women, Communities, or Society." The book, *Behind Latticed Marble, Inner Worlds of Women* can be found at: <https://www.abebooks.com/servlet/BookDetailsPL?bi=31378334493>



## SEPTEMBER

Submitted by Tynka Dees, Calendar Editor

If any member is uncomfortable with unmasked members or simply wishes to remain safe, masks are always welcome. If you are unvaccinated, 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.

|            |                   |  |
|------------|-------------------|--|
| Sun Sep 3  | 8:30am - 10:00am  | Weekend Walkers ( <a href="#">Judy Burt</a> )  |
| Mon Sep 4  | 10:00am - 1:00pm  | Bridge First Monday (RSVP <a href="#">Bobbie Eckerman</a> )  |
|            | 6:30pm - 8:00pm   | Neighbors Helping Neighbors ( <a href="#">Bobbie Baker</a> )   |
| Tue Sep 5  | 10:00am - 11:00am | German Conversation ZOOM (RSVP <a href="#">Barbara Snyder</a> )  |
| Wed Sep 6  | 5:30pm - 6:00pm   | AAUW Board Social Hour ( <a href="mailto:President@aauwsanjose.org">President@aauwsanjose.org</a> )            |
|            | 6:00pm - 7:30pm   | AAUW BOARD Meeting ( <a href="mailto:President@aauwsanjose.com">President@aauwsanjose.com</a> )                |
| Thu Sep 7  | 7:00pm - 8:30pm   | Public Policy Committee ZOOM ( <a href="#">Susan Karlins</a> )   |
| Fri Sep 8  | 9:30am - 1:30pm   | Duplicate Bridge (RSVP <a href="#">Lida Kluzek</a> )   |
| Sat Sep 9  | 10:00am - 12:00pm | Neighbors Helping Neighbors Donation Drive ( <a href="#">Mary Jane Vitkovich</a> )                             |
|            | 6:30pm - 9:30pm   | Couples Dining (RSVP <a href="#">Karen Hook</a> )  |
| Sun Sep 10 | 8:30am - 10:00am  | Weekend Walkers ( <a href="#">Judy Burt</a> )  |
|            | 11:30am - 1:30pm  | Film Fans (RSVP <a href="#">Linda Snashall</a> )   |
| Mon Sep 11 | 6:30pm - 9:30pm   | Light Gourmet (RSVP <a href="#">Cheryl Markman</a> )   |
| Tue Sep 12 | 10:00am - 11:30am | Book Discussion ( <a href="#">Lida Kluzek</a> )  |
|            | 10:00am - 11:00am | Conversacion Espanol ZOOM (RSVP <a href="#">Barbara Snyder</a> )   |
| Wed Sep 13 | 11:00am - 1:00pm  | Art Appreciation ( <a href="#">Jan Bartolotta</a> )  |
|            | 7:00pm - 8:30pm   | Wednesday Night Book Group ( <a href="#">Renee Sommerfeld</a> )  |
| Thu Sep 14 | 9:30am - 11:00am  | Great Decisions AM Hybrid (RSVP <a href="#">Monique Lee</a> )  |
|            | 1:00pm - 4:00pm   | Bridge 2nd Thursday (RSVP <a href="#">Bobbie Eckerman</a> )  |
| Fri Sep 15 | 10:00am - 1:00pm  | Bridge (RSVP <a href="#">Lida Kluzek</a> )   |
| Sun Sep 17 | 8:30am - 10:00am  | Weekend Walkers ( <a href="#">Judy Burt</a> )  |
| Mon Sep 18 | 9:30am - 11:00am  | Exploring World Literature Hybrid ( <a href="#">Diana Taylor</a> )   |
|            | 1:00pm - 4:00pm   | Interbranch Council ( <a href="#">Peg Carlson-Bowen</a> )  |
|            | 6:30pm - 9:00pm   | International Gourmet (Hostess <a href="#">Jan Bartolotta</a> )  |
| Tue Sep 19 | 10:00am - 11:00am | French Conversation ZOOM (RSVP <a href="#">Barbara Snyder</a> )  |
|            | 1:00pm - 3:00pm   | Knitting Know How (RSVP <a href="#">Margaret McCartney</a> )   |
| Wed Sep 20 | 7:00pm - 8:30pm   | Third Wednesday ZOOM   |
| Thu Sep 21 | 7:00pm - 8:30pm   | Mystery Lovers ZOOM ( <a href="#">Sharon Shephard</a> )  |
| Fri Sep 22 | 1:30pm - 3:00pm   | Local Scholarship Hybrid ( <a href="#">Tynka Dees</a> )  |
| Sat Sep 23 | 7:00am - 5:00pm   | Gifts for Teens packing in the parking lot ( <a href="#">Elaine Benoit</a> )                                   |
| Sun Sep 24 | 8:30am - 10:00am  | Weekend Walkers ( <a href="#">Judy Burt</a> )  |
| Mon Sep 25 | 11:00am - 12:30pm | Building and Properties Committee ( <a href="mailto:buildings@aauwsanjose.org">buildings@aauwsanjose.org</a> ) |
| Tue Sep 26 | 12:00pm - 1:30pm  | Lunch Bunch ( <a href="#">Diana Taylor</a> )   |
|            | 1:00pm - 4:00pm   | Bridge 4th Tuesday (RSVP <a href="#">Bobbie Eckerman</a> )   |
|            | 7:00pm - 8:30pm   | Great Decisions - PM ( <a href="#">Sharon Shephard</a> )   |
| Thu Sep 28 | 9:30am - 11:00am  | Great Decisions AM Hybrid (RSVP <a href="#">Monique Lee</a> )  |

### San Jose Branch BONFIRE

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President: Linda Goldberg

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

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San Jose Branch

1165 Minnesota Ave., Suite 100

San Jose, CA 95125-3324

Phone: 408 294 2430

Email: [www.aauwsanjose.org](http://www.aauwsanjose.org)

August 2023

AAUW BONFIRE San Jose Branch *Established 1909*

## SAVE THE DATE

### October Program Event - "Introduction to Mindfulness"

October 13, 1:30 pm - 3 pm (online only)

Ruth Dusan, Program Vice President

Stress is everywhere in our modern lives. We feel overwhelmed by work, family, relationships, and the television news! While we can't eliminate stress, we can learn how to respond to it.

Come to a presentation on mindfulness techniques for stress management by a certified mindfulness instructor. Mindfulness is the practice of focusing on moment-to-moment experiences without self-criticism and with acceptance. Mindfulness helps us mobilize inner resources to meet the challenges of everyday life.

Kelly Weisberg is a lawyer/sociologist who has taught law and human behavior classes for 40 years. Years of stress from teaching, writing, and family responsibilities led her to study stress management techniques. "An Introduction to Mindfulness" will explore the nature of mindfulness, an overview of different mindfulness programs and the benefits for you. Hope to see you there!



Kelly Weisberg,  
Certified  
Mindfulness  
Instructor



*Empowering Women Since 1881*

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