

President's Corner  
Tynka Dees



I am so grateful for all the members who stepped up to help with Membership, Building & Properties, BONFIRE, Programs, Finance and all the other programs/committees that keep our Branch running! All of you keep AAUW San Jose going forward. **We do still need an IT person to help with our Headquarters computer and some of our social media.**

I look forward to seeing you at our Fall Event/Fall Gathering where our Public Policy members will review the California propositions for the election. League of Women Voters' Vote 411 has other information about our upcoming election, and you can check your voter registration as well.

Our National and California AAUW organizations have additional programs you can attend by Zoom. I just attended a conversation between our National AAUW CEO Gloria Blackwell and Tiya Miles, academic faculty at Harvard and Radcliffe, author of many books, including Wild Girls, and a past AAUW grant recipient. I believe it was recorded, so that if you missed it, you can listen to it sometime when it is convenient.

Hope to see you on October 5 at Fall Gathering!

## AAUW San Jose Branch November 16 Program Boosting Mental Health

Barb Purdy, Program Development Committee

From the membership survey, you overwhelmingly voted for a Mental Health program, and we are happy to announce that Mental Health is our November program. The National Alliance of Mental Health (NAMI), will provide a two- to three-person panel of professional counselors who work with 55+ adults. Suggested topics they will be addressing: dealing with chronic pain, depression, grief, and how to be happy as we age. After NAMI's presentation, you will have an opportunity to ask questions. This event will be held at Willow Glen United Methodist Church's Kohlstedt Hall on Newport Avenue in San Jose. The program is from 1 to 3 pm, with the doors opening at 12:45 pm. This event is open to the public. Be sure to save the date and invite your friends.

Here is the link to register: <https://form.jotform.com/242506321754149>



## Save the Dates

December 1-8, 2024

Local Scholarship's online Holiday Fundraiser

Help local scholars in their pursuit of higher education

Give the Gift of Education



## Neighbors Helping Neighbors Annual Soiree

Mary Jane Vitkovich, Neighbors Helping Neighbors



Our annual soiree was held on Monday, June 3, at Headquarters where members shared camaraderie, drinks and appetizers. Our speaker was Alfonso Mendez from Santa Maria Urban Ministry (SMUM). Members also generously donated peanut butter and cereal for SMUM. In addition, a check for \$5,000 from the Dorris Miller Trust Fund was presented to Alfonso for their annual Teen Leadership Summer Camp.

Our next opportunity to give to the community will be at Headquarters during the Coffee & Conversation event on Saturday, October 26, from 10 am to noon. We will be collecting cereal, instant oatmeal and peanut butter for Spartan Cares, a student pantry on the San Jose State University campus. If you cannot make the drive, items can be dropped off in the box located in the Headquarters entryway.

Contact [Mary Jane Vitkovich](#) if you have questions.





## Help Preserve Our History

Tynka Dees

We have found an experienced archivist who is willing to help us sort Branch documents and memorabilia, and to prepare our valuable Branch mementos for storage. First, join us for an inspiring tour of Branch materials already stored at History San Jose, and view the huge collection of artifacts chronicling San Jose's fascinating history. You'll see everything from the first car built in the Valley, to the appliances and kitchen utensils your grandmother used (to be scheduled). Then, sign up to open boxes of hidden treasures currently sitting in our Headquarters basement. Some work can be done at home, and any amount of time you can spare will be greatly appreciated. Let's make sure future generations know about our accomplishments and our dedication to gender equity and a better community for all. Thank you! To sign up, or if you have questions, contact [Tynka Dees](#).

## AAUW San Jose T-Shirt is Here!

Susan Karlins, Co-Chair, Public Policy



Public Policy/Advocacy created a t-shirt to wear at advocacy events. It's bright, cheerful, and boasts our mission on the back. Several members have asked if they can order one ... of course, the answer is YES!

To make this painless for everyone, I asked Michele, our Branch communications consultant, to set up an on-demand ordering system. Here are the steps:

Go to this link - <https://www.customink.com/go/dmn0-00cw-f2pj>

Short-sleeve V-neck or long-sleeve crew shirts are available (you could order one of each!)

The total (± \$35) will include tax and shipping.

Deadline to order - Saturday, October 12, 2024. Estimated delivery is the end of October 2024.

This is a reputable merchant, and your transaction is with THEM and not AAUW San Jose. If you have ordering questions, the website has a very helpful text chat feature.

Thanks for the enthusiasm. We can't wait to see the sea of purple power at upcoming events!

## New! Online Tools to Help You Plan Your Next AAUW Event

Michele Bertolone, AAUW San Jose Communications Consultant

To help our dedicated volunteers plan and implement successful events, the ad hoc Public Relations and Communications Committee has put together a series of tools and training. These include:

Templates – event planning guide and event flyer

Links to Online Training Videos – There are six 'how to' videos that cover topics such as completing the event planning guide, creating an online RSVP page, promoting your event outside of Branch members, and more.

Access this toolkit - go to the Branch's [Members Only](#) page and enter the members-only password. After you enter the password, scroll down to the section that reads "Events and Promotions Toolkit." Don't know the password? Email [Membership](#).

If, after looking at things carefully you still have questions, feel free to email [Michele Bertolone](#).

Happy planning!

### Meet our New Archivist, Rebecca Fong

Diane Trombetta



We are happy to announce the hiring of a professional archivist, Rebecca Fong, to lead our Archiving Committee. Rebecca is from Fremont, CA, and is about to complete a Master of Library and Information (MLIS) degree at San Jose State University. "I have always had a passion for history and supporting the local community. I am eager to support the legacy of AAUW-San Jose!" We have two Archive Committee volunteers so far and would like two more. Can you help??

Contact [Diane Trombetta](#) .



## Public Policy/Advocacy News

### Important Voting Information

Public Policy Leadership Team

- **Don't miss the opportunity to learn about November California ballot propositions** at the Fall Gathering, Saturday, October 5 from 10-noon.
- **When voting for school board candidates**, be aware that pro-censorship/anti-LGBTQ candidates don't directly announce their views and often use "parental rights" as their cause. If you want to AVOID candidates promoted by Moms for Liberty who oppose AAUW CA's commitment to bias-free education, their list of pro-censorship candidates can be found here: [http://momsforlibertysantaclara.com/candidates\\_2024.php](http://momsforlibertysantaclara.com/candidates_2024.php)
- **Use the LWV's Voting Guide**, which uses your actual address so is most helpful in pointing to candidates. Find them at <http://vote411.org/> for credible voting information. If you want Republican party recommendations for our County, go to <https://vote.svgop.com>. For Democratic party recommendations for our County, go to <https://sccdp.org/index.php/vote/>
- **SCC League of Women Voters** is sponsoring candidate forums. Find out about them and sign up at <https://my.lwv.org/california/southwest-santa-clara-valley> (Southwest area) or <https://www.lwvsjsc.org/candidate-forums> (Central SJ and eastside).
- **72 AAUW SJ members**, along with some of our friends & family, wrote 4,255 postcards to encourage voter engagement in the State of Georgia!
- **CA Legislative Update**—Several of our bills are on the Governor's desk, awaiting his signature, as of writing this. These 3 bills have already been signed into law:

**AB 1955** will prohibit school districts from requiring staff to notify parents if a student uses a different name or pronouns or identifies as a different gender than what is on their birth certificate.

**AB 1790** will strengthen protections against sexual assault and harassment at Cal State (CSU) campuses by requiring two reports from CSU on the status of their implementation of the State Auditor recommendations

**AB 2608** will require the California Community Colleges and CSUs and request from University of California educational and preventive information on sexual violence and harassment, including how to recognize if someone is at risk of drug-facilitated sexual assault.



## An Update on Julia Ocher

### Two-Time AAUW Scholarship Recipient

Cheryl Markman, Local Scholarship Committee



Julia Ocher received an AAUW Local Scholarship in 2023 and again in 2024. When she received the first scholarship, she had just applied to the Bachelor of Fine Arts (BFA) program for Graphic Design at San Jose State University (SJSU). As the BFA for Graphic Design takes five years to complete, this program adds a year of schooling, so she will graduate in 2025 rather than in 2024 as she had expected. Noting that only 24 people were accepted into the program her year, she was very nervous and unsure of herself and her abilities. But looking back, Julia says that applying to this program was the best decision she could have made. She has learned so much, made strong connections with her peers and professors, and now has confidence in her own skills that she didn't have before. Julia is very grateful for AAUW and how these scholarships have allowed her to further her education in the design world.

Throughout the program, Julia has learned many forms of graphic design. One of her favorite projects was to create branding for a fictional conference focused on a recent technological advancement. For her hypothetical conference, Julia chose the topic of vertical farming, creating an animated poster (see picture), personalized name tags and a 3D sculpture. Another project she enjoyed was to create a bus stop poster based on a graphic design topic of her choosing. She chose the golden age of illustrated books as her focus. These projects and others have allowed her to explore the limits of her creativity and expand her design skills. The culmination of all her design work will be featured in her class's Senior show. After graduation, Julia plans to look for job opportunities in the graphic design field. Although not totally set on anything just yet, she notes that she would love to work in advertising or poster design.



In her free time, Julia loves to refine her fine art skills by drawing and painting. She has been experimenting with oil painting, a different medium than the acrylic paints she usually uses. She has been creating a series of oil paintings as a gift for her mother, with each painting featuring architecture from a particular country including scenes inspired by Italy, France and Greece. Outside of art, she loves to swim with her friends, attend concerts, and read all of the library books she can "get her hands on!"

Poster created by Julia for Graphic Design class branding project





## An Update on Kimberly Lopez Two-Time AAUW Scholarship Recipient

Cheryl Markman, Local Scholarship Committee



Kimberly Lopez was awarded the Grace O’Leary Scholarship from AAUW Local Scholarship in spring 2022, and a second scholarship in 2023. A student at San Jose State University (SJSU), she 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.

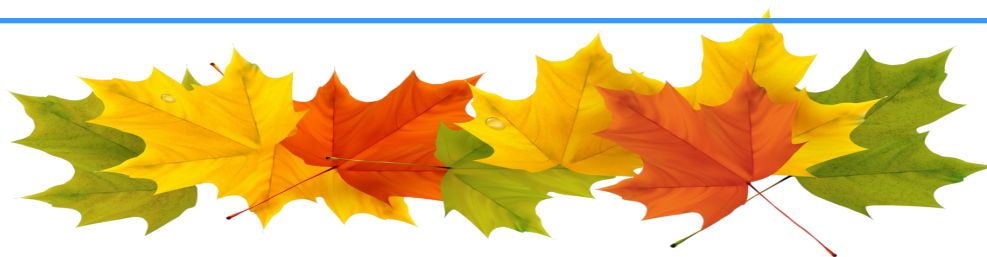
Kimberly notes that the second AAUW scholarship helped continue her goal of becoming an elementary school teacher, focusing mainly on 2nd grade. She looks forward to being a role model for her students and future generations. Toward that end, she works with children at an after-school program called "Give Every Child A Chance," which inspires youth to be successful in lifelong learning by providing safe, structured and fun educational activities in elementary schools. Kimberly helps students with their homework and supports them with enrichment activities that align with the Common Core and the Quality Standards for After School Learning (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math (STEAM)) projects, health education, project-based learning, character building, social-emotional learning, art, drama productions and physical education, which help students grow as individuals and in their learning. Kimberly says she is learning so much, is motivated to finish her education and have her own classroom soon. She is lucky to be part of the SJSU Spartan Accelerated Graduate Education (SAGE) program, which allows her to do her undergraduate classes and master's coursework together in the same degree.



### We Welcome a New Member

Claire Campodonico

CORINNE CARTER, a Saratoga resident, joined in August at a Coffee & Convo event. She lived in Boston for most of her life and raised her family there. She attended the University of Buffalo in New York before moving to California because of her husband's job. She then graduated from San Jose State University with a degree in English. Now retired from her career as a travel agent, she loves to play duplicate bridge. She wanted all of us to know that with her East Coast roots, she will always be a Yankee! A warm welcome to Corinne.





## Spotlight on Alyce Athanasiou

Ruth Dusan and Grace O'Leary



### How did you discover AAUW San Jose?

AAUW discovered me! In 2002, I had mentioned to a coworker that I wanted to join a book club, and she told me she belonged to AAUW, which had several interesting book clubs. I joined a mystery book group and later dropped into a craft making get-together, where I met the president of AAUW, Cynthia Ptacek (2004-2005). She encouraged me to join the Board, which I did, as the chair of Legal Advocacy Fund.

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

I joined in 2002.

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

AAUW has women who lead other women to do things they didn't think they would ever be taking on.

**Is there anything else we can do to improve membership experience?** We need to remember that not everyone who joins remains after the first year. There are many community groups, other than AAUW, which they can join to meet their needs. There are knitting groups, craft classes, book clubs and many volunteer community service groups in their neighborhoods, their children's schools, and their place of worship. What we need to do is welcome a new member we see sitting alone and introduce them to others. When they join an Interest Group, pay special attention to them. We can retain members, and even have new members bring their friends, when we provide an encompassing environment for them.

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

When I joined, I had been a critical care nurse with experience in coronary care and intensive care, a telephone advice nurse, a discharge planner for head injury and spinal cord patients and medical, surgical and orthopedic patients. I realized I was from a work environment alien to about 95% of the members and thought I had little to contribute to the "community service committees" and kept myself to the "special interest" groups. However, presidents, former presidents and active members, kept finding me and "discovering" what I had to contribute. Gloria Leonard (President, 2001-2002) recruited me to be a research team member of the Ballot Initiative Report - a report requested by the San Jose City Council. Gerri Madden (President 2013-2014) was the chair of College University Relations and, shortly after I joined that committee in 2015, she encouraged me to be the co-chair with her for two years and later the chair for another 2 years. I learned an array of skills in the four years I was on college campuses. I never thought I would be teaching Start Smart classes, organizing the NCCWSL scholarships in 2019 and 2021, and giving Equal Pay Day presentations at San Jose State University. Grace O'Leary has been a resource person throughout the years when I was stumped with how to get my committee work done.

### How would you like to be remembered?

I would like to be known and remembered as a woman who did her best to be a good wife, mother, grandmother, nurse, friend, and community volunteer.



Members & their guests  
are invited to a party  
featuring winter holidays  
from around the world

# Holiday Celebrations

Kohlstedt Room  
Willow Glen United  
Methodist Church  
1420 Newport Ave  
San José 95125

**Sat, Dec. 14, 2024**  
**12:30 – 3:00 PM**

Refreshments

Holiday sounds by  
Songstruck Quartet  
Harriet's Flute Group

Contact | [tddtaug@yahoo.com](mailto:tddtaug@yahoo.com)

AAUW  
San José

RSVP  
Requested  
By 12/5



## October 2024

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 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. **The most up to date calendar is always on our website.**

Tue Oct 1	10-11 am 1-4 pm	German Conversation ZOOM (RSVP <a href="#">Barbara Snyder</a> ) Film Fans Time to Be Determined (RSVP <a href="#">Nancy Wheeler</a> )
Sat Oct 5	9:30-12	Fall Gathering Willow Glen United Methodist Church ( <a href="mailto:Membership@aauwsanjose.org">Membership@aauwsanjose.org</a> )
Sun Oct 6	9-10:30 am	Weekend Walkers (RSVP <a href="#">Judy Burt</a> )
Mon Oct 7	10 am-1 pm 6:30-8 pm	Bridge 1 <sup>st</sup> Monday (RSVP <a href="#">Bobbie Eckerman</a> ) Neighbors Helping Neighbors ( <a href="#">Bobbie Baker</a> )
Tue Oct 8	10-11:30 am 10-11 am 1-3 pm	Book Discussion AM Ordinary Grace ( <a href="#">Sandy Bonnet</a> ) Conversacion Espanol ZOOM (RSVP <a href="#">Barbara Snyder</a> ) Mahjong ( <a href="#">RSVP Shelley Powers</a> )
Wed Oct 9	11 am-1 pm 5:30- 6 pm 6-7:30 pm 7-8:30 pm	Art Appreciation (RSVP <a href="#">Jan Bartolotta</a> ) AAUW Board Social Hour ( <a href="#">Tynka Dees</a> ) AAUW BOARD Meeting ( <a href="#">Tynka Dees</a> ) Wednesday Night Book Group Hybrid The Extraordinary Life of Sam ell ( <a href="#">Renee Sommerfeld</a> )
Thu Oct 10	1-4 pm	Bridge 2 <sup>nd</sup> Thursday (RSVP <a href="#">Bobbie Eckerman</a> )
Fri Oct 11	9:30 am-1:30 pm	Duplicate Bridge (RSVP <a href="#">Lida Kluzek</a> )
Sat Oct 12	7 am-6 pm 6:30-9:30 pm	Parking Lot Packing Gifts for Teens ( <a href="#">Barb Purdy</a> ) Couples Dining (RSVP <a href="#">Karen Hook</a> )
Sun Oct 13	9-10:30 am	Weekend Walkers (RSVP <a href="#">Judy Burt</a> )
Mon Oct 14	6:30- 9:30 pm	Light Gourmet (RSVP <a href="#">Cheryl Markman</a> )
Tue Oct 15	Noon-1pm 1-3 pm 3:45-5:15 pm	French Conversation ZOOM (RSVP <a href="#">Barbara Snyder</a> ) Mahjong ( <a href="#">RSVP Shelley Powers</a> ) Membership meeting ( <a href="mailto:Membership@aauwsanjose.org">Membership@aauwsanjose.org</a> )
Wed Oct 16	1:30-3 pm 7-8:30 pm	Program Event Planning Zoom (RSVP <a href="#">Ruth Dusan</a> ) Public Policy ( <a href="#">Susan Karlins</a> )
Thu Oct 17	6:30-8 pm	Mystery Lovers ( <a href="#">Sharon Shephard</a> )
Fri Oct 18	10 am-1 pm	Bridge (RSVP <a href="#">Lida Kluzek</a> )
Sat Oct 19	7 am-6 pm	Parking Lot Packing Gifts for Teens ( <a href="#">Barb Purdy</a> )



Sun Oct 20	9-10:30 am	Weekend Walkers (RSVP <a href="#">Judy Burt</a> )
Mon Oct 21	9 am-12 pm	Parking Lot Packing Gifts for Teens ( <a href="#">Barb Purdy</a> )
	9:30-11 am	Exploring World Literature Hybrid Bird Girl (RSVP <a href="#">Candace Roney</a> )
	6:30-9 pm	International Gourmet (RSVP <a href="#">Jan Bartolotta</a> )
Tue Oct 22	9 am-12 pm	Parking Lot Packing Gifts for Teens ( <a href="#">Barb Purdy</a> )
	10-11 am	Italian Conversation ZOOM (RSVP <a href="#">Barbara Snyder</a> )
	1-3 pm	Mahjong ( <a href="#">RSVP Shelley Powers</a> )
	4 pm	Bridge 4 <sup>th</sup> Tuesday (RSVP <a href="#">Bobbie Eckerman</a> )
	7-8:30 pm	Great Decisions PM ZOOM ( <a href="#">Sharon Shephard</a> )
Wed Oct 23	12-1:30 pm	Lunch Bunch ( <a href="#">Diana Taylor</a> )
Fri Oct 25	1:30-3 pm	Local Scholarship ( <a href="#">Beth Redmond</a> )
Sat Oct 26	10 am- 12 pm	Prospective Members and Member Meeting Coffee and Conversation ( <a href="mailto:Membership@aauwsanjose.org">Membership@aauwsanjose.org</a> ) with Neighbors Helping Neighbors Donation Drive ( <a href="mailto:neighbors@aauwsanjose.org">neighbors@aauwsanjose.org</a> )
Sun Oct 27	9-10:30 am	Weekend Walkers (RSVP <a href="#">Judy Burt</a> )
Mon Oct 28	11 am-12:30 pm	Building and Properties Committee ( <a href="mailto:buildings@aauwsanjose.org">buildings@aauwsanjose.org</a> )
Tue Oct 29	1-3 pm	Mahjong ( <a href="#">RSVP Shelley Powers</a> )



## “Holiday Celebrations” for AAUW San Jose Members and Guests in December

[Diane Trombetta](#), Event Leader

A team of dedicated party planners are busy organizing a holiday event you won't want to miss. You are invited to “Holiday Celebrations” at the United Methodist Church (across the street from HQ) on Saturday, Dec. 14 from 12:30-3 pm. Invite friends, family members, and colleagues to the party! Let's enjoy together the many ways winter holidays are celebrated around the world. Delight in the food, live entertainment, and colorful decorations that will say Merry Christmas, Happy Kwanzaa, Happy Hanukkah, Feliz Navidad, Shubh Diwali, Gong Hay Fat Choi, and more. SAVE THE DATE! Bring at least one friend or family member! More details in the December BONFIRE.

### San Jose Branch BONFIRE

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October 2024

AAUW BONFIRE San Jose Branch *Established 1909*

## Community Engagement Series

# Boosting Mental Health Expert Panel

Free

**Sat., Nov. 16 at 1pm**

(Doors open at 12:45 pm)

Willow Glen United  
Methodist Church

**The National Alliance of  
Mental Health (NAMI)  
presents a panel of  
professional counselors  
who work with 55+ adults.**



*Empowering Women Since 1881*

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