



empowering women since 1881

AVANTI

sanfrancisco-ca.aauw.net

A monthly publication of AAUW, San Francisco, est. in 1886

May 2024

Month at a Glance

May 1, 7:30 p.m.

TTAG Committee Meeting – via ZOOM

- Contact: Rosaura Valle rpcvalle.aauw@gmail.com

May 17, 1:30 p.m.

Friday Afternoon Book Group – IN PERSON

- Book: Trust by Hernan Diaz
- Hostess: Patricia Spencer
 - 415-385-9562 or cpbus6@gmail.com
 - 505 Ortega Street, San Francisco, CA 94122
- Contact/Coordinator: Michelle Mammini
mmammini@pacbell.net

May 18, 7:30 p.m.

Lunch Bunch – IN PERSON

- Location: Balboa Cafe (Plump Jack Cafe)
 - American Cuisine
 - 3199 Filmore St.
 - 415-921-3944
- RSVP: Mary Suter marsuter@yahoo.com

May 18, 11:00 a.m.

Luncheon w/ Silver Jubilee Scholarship Recipients – IN PERSON

- Contact: Barbara Spencer barbaraspencer@gmail.com

May 20, 7:00 p.m.

AAUW Board Meeting – via ZOOM

- Contact: Barbara Spencer barbaraspencer@gmail.com

May 20, 7:00 p.m.

International Book Group

- Book: The Chinese Grove by Kathryn Ma
- Hostess: Sherry Bridygham
 - 1723 42nd Avenue
- RSVP: Sherry Bridygham 415-672-0234 or
sjeny1723@gmail.com
- The June book is North Woods by Daniel Mason

May 23, 7:30 p.m.

Mystery/Adventure Book Group – via ZOOM

- Book: The Last Thing He Told Me by Laura Dave
- Discussion Leader: Elaine Butler
- RSVP (to receive link): Elaine Butler
elainebutler124@comcast.net

Co-President Message

New Members

This is a busy time of year! We have a lot going on in the branch. First of all, a warm welcome to new member Linda Miller! Linda joined the April Lunch Bunch. She is interested in various in-person activities. Please reach out to her.

We also met with recently joined members Cyndi Bireley and Annette Mixon on Zoom. Cyndi has volunteered to take on producing the monthly Avanti newsletter from Caitlin Dainas, who is graduating high school this year. Thank you Cyndi, and thank you Caitlin for producing beautiful issues every month for the past couple of years.

Bylaws, Bylaws Everywhere

Voting on national AAUW's education requirement for membership is currently in progress. If you haven't voted, please check your email from April 3 sent by AAUW. This email contains a link to your ballot as well as your unique Elector ID and password. Please vote before May 15. You can learn more about the election [HERE](#).

In the branch, we are also in the process of updating our branch bylaws to better reflect how we actually function. Please take a look at the separate article in this Avanti for more details. By law changes require a vote by the entire branch. We will be holding this vote at the annual branch meeting and brunch on June 8, 10:00 AM, at Mission Rock Resort. We hope you will attend.

Tech Trek

Tech Trek is moving along well. Early in April, we sent out acceptances to 18 girls from local middle schools after a rigorous application and interview process. Of these, 15 are for residential camps and 3 for virtual. Campers are now busy completing various additional paperwork needed. We will hold a **Tech Trek Send-Off event for them on Saturday, June 1, 2-4 PM at the Sports Basement in the Stonestown Galleria.** Please attend to cheer them on.



Scholarships

Winners for our Silver Jubilee and TTAG scholarships have been selected. This year, we will be awarding three Silver Jubilee scholarships of \$3,000 each to be presented at the annual event on June 8, and 4 TTAG scholarships of

\$4,000 each to be presented at Tech Trek Send-Off event on June 1.

Women's Professional Networking Group Event

We held a session on Saturday, April 20th and brainstormed ways of moving forward next year. The next session will be held on September 21 at 10:00 AM. More details in future newsletters. If you are interested in joining this group or finding out more, email us at aauwsfbranch@gmail.com.

Roli Wendorf, Co-President

Proposed Changes to Branch Bylaws

We are proposing changes to our branch bylaws in articles related to nominations and elections, composition of the board of directors, and board meetings. The current bylaws reflect practices from many years ago when the branch had more members, more elected officers, and elections for board positions were held on an annual basis. This has not been true for a number of years. The purpose of the proposed changes is to bring our bylaws in line with actual practice.

Here is an overview of the significant changes and their rationale:

- **Nominations and Elections:** Removes the requirement of having a nominating committee and gives the responsibility of nominating new officers to the board. With a dearth of volunteers and infrequent changes in leadership roles, a nominating committee has not been used for the past several years.
- **Board Officers:** Reduces the number of required officers on the Board of Directors to just three elected officers: President, Treasurer, and Secretary. All other elected officers such as various VPs and appointed officers for various roles are made optional and may be added as needed. We have difficulty filling board positions

and are creating greater flexibility in the size of the board. For example, we have not had VPs for programs or AAUW Funds for many years, and are making all VPs optional.

- **Board Meetings:** Clarifies that board meetings may be held virtually or in-person. Almost all our board meetings are on Zoom now. Also, the quorum for a board meeting is changed to a majority of elected officers rather than a majority of elected and appointed officers. Not all appointed officers are able to attend meetings, and reaching quorum has been difficult at times.

In the table below, all changes are given in detail. You can see a comparison of the wording in the original (current) bylaws and the proposed modifications.

Original	Modified
<p>Article IX. Nominations and Elections Section 1. a. There shall be a nominating committee of three members, appointed by the board, plus the board secretary who shall serve as chair. b. The term of service on the nominating committee shall be for one year, from time of appointment until the Branch election.</p>	<p>Article IX. Nominations and Elections Section 1. a. Nominations for elected office shall be made by the board. b. (deleted)</p>
<p>Article X. Officers Section 1. a. The elected officers for the branch shall be president, finance officer, secretary, and vice-presidents for program, membership, AAUW Funds. b. The appointed officers shall include</p>	<p>The elected officers for the branch shall be president, finance officer, secretary, and may include vice-presidents for program, membership, AAUW Funds. The appointed officers may include public policy chair, newsletter editor,</p>

<p>public policy/reproductive choice, newsletter editor, Tech Trek Chair, website/technology, Silver Jubilee Scholarship Fund, and hospitality. They shall be appointed by the president with the consent of the board. c. Officers shall serve for a term of two years or until their successors have been elected or appointed and assume office. d. All vacancies in office shall be filled for the unexpired term by the board with the exception of a vacancy in the office of president, which shall be filled by the vice-presidents in order listed in Section 1-a.</p>	<p>Tech Trek Coordinator, TTAG Chair, website/technology manager, Silver Jubilee Scholarship Fund Chair, and other positions as needed. They shall be appointed by the president with the consent of the board. c. Officers shall serve for a term of one or more years. d. All vacancies in office shall be filled for the unexpired term by the board.</p>
<p>Article XI. Board of Directors Section 3. Meetings. Meetings of the board shall be held at least six times a year at a time and place agreed upon by the board. Section 5. Quorum. The quorum for a meeting of the board shall be a majority of the voting members.</p>	<p>Article XI. Board of Directors Section 3. Meetings. Meetings of the board shall be held at least six times a year at a time and place agreed upon by the board, including virtually. Section 5. Quorum. The quorum for a meeting of the board shall be a majority of the elected officers.</p>

The proposed changes described above have already been unanimously approved by the board at our April 8, 2024 meeting. They will be put to vote for the approval of all branch members at our annual meeting on June 8, 2024 to be held at Mission Rock Resort. For passage, these changes need to be approved by two-thirds of the voting branch members.

The complete bylaws as they currently stand, dated 2017, can be found on the website: [HERE](#)

Roli Wendorf and Barbara Spencer, Co-Presidents

Meet the AAUW-SF Women in STEM

Did you just miss the Women in STEM panel on Sunday April 28? The TTAG online event “Meet the AAUW-SF Women in STEM” featured Maggy Kepler (graduate student, genetic counseling master, UCSF), Leslie Yuan (public health and IT, Chief Information Officer, Clinical and Translational Science Institute, UCSF), Aisha Sawatsky (architecture, Designer and Preservation Specialist for historic buildings), and Tracey Harding (IT, Solution Architect with a specialization in Data and Artificial Intelligence) in conversation around STEM career paths and their challenges.

This year our awesome TTAG student Board, including Azelea, Sonia, Julie and Caitlin, joined me in hosting the panel. In addition to several of our San Francisco Branch members, attendees included representatives of other AAUW branches (i.e. Oakland, Healdsburg, Novato, and Poway-Penasquitos) and Orange County TTAG members! Alumnae ran the panel by asking both general and speaker-specific questions and the audience participated with active comments in the chat.

A warm thank you to our speakers who made this event a huge success and shared their outstanding insight and valuable professional and career expertise.

Watch or rewatch at:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/p0prUFh0Opj-yVif6C8N0sQl6rQziEJCpHN-EjPMCUL8QfeTU6jIGiVtx0MzQu09.5eId37cFhEuz2rij>

Password: fst?q?f0

Tech Trek Alumnae receive TTAG Scholarship

This year the TTAG Scholarship Review Committee received more applications it could offer! Among the final recipients, two of our applicants were renewing their scholarship with flying colors: Kimia and Lexian.

Kimia attended Tech Trek in 2016 and ever since has enjoyed participating in Tech Trek candidate selection interviews, Tech Trek Send Off and Welcome Back Parties. In addition, Kimia participated with enthusiasm to our first TTAG college workshop in 2021, and to our 2024 Tech Trek Alumnae online panel. As Kimia stated she has always known she wanted to do STEM: she is now on track as a 2025 candidate for BS in Mechanical Engineering at UC Berkeley, interested in sustainable technology and energy efficiency. Kimia is thinking of getting involved in research and earning a PhD!

Lexian has applied to the renewal of her TTAG Scholarship as an incoming sophomore at UC Davis with a declared major in Computational Cognitive Science, linking her interest in neuroscience and computer science. Lexian, a Lowell High School graduate like Kimia, was the first Tech Trek Alumna to actively participate in TTAG events and help with the TTAG Newsletter; she also shared her direct experience in writing college application essays at a TTAG workshop last year.

Involved in many clubs and extracurriculars at UC Davis, Lexian has also been sponsored by our branch to attend the AAUW National Conference for College Women Student Leaders in the DC Metro area on June 1st. As a current officer in the Women in Computer Sciences Club at UC Davis, Lexian would like to improve her leadership skills, gain career advice, and develop her interpersonal skills.

We are sharing Kimia and Lexian’s thank you notes, as they are addressed not only to the Scholarship Review Committee but to all branch members who are making these scholarships possible.

Two other scholarships were offered to high school seniors Azelea Artiga and Sonia Lee: more in next Avanti! Last but not least, on June 1st, the recipients will be officially recognized at the Tech Trek Send Off Party taking place at the Stonestown Sports Basement.

You are invited (see invitation below): please come and join us in celebrating the Tech Trek Alumnae's success while sending off the next cohort of Tech Trek campers!

Congratulations to all!

THANK YOU NOTES

From Kimia:

I am honored to accept this scholarship. Thank you for selecting me as a recipient. As I am completing my undergraduate degree and looking into graduate school programs, this scholarship will be of great help to me, and it will make it easier for me to focus on my academics and engineering extracurriculars. I am incredibly grateful to the Tech Trek program for the experience it gave me, and I am looking forward to continuing to be an active member in TTAG. I am available to make it to the Tech Trek Send Off Party on June 1st. ..Thank you again for your belief in me and your support.

From Lexian:

Thank you so much for the award! I'm so grateful to TTAG and AAUW, and I'd love to attend the Tech Trek sendoff, but unfortunately I'll be traveling for the AAUW NCCWSL conference. However, if any TTAG members want to hear about the conference afterwards, I'd be open to talking about it, or even college experiences in general...

Rosaura Valle, TTAG Chair

San Francisco Silver Jubilee Scholarships Fund

The San Francisco Branch welcomes three new scholarship recipients. They are receiving different degrees and are very involved with their programs.

MARGARET (Maggy) KEPLER (University of California UCSF) - Maggy is fascinated with genetic patterns to study genetic counseling. She was in her fourth year of undergrad and found it a good fit with her passion for genetics and patient interaction. The major point is she looks forward to opportunities to provide care to individuals with disabilities and marginalized identities who may have faced discrimination from the healthcare system. Also, Maggy is involved in a "capstone research project" to get knowledge of embryos for research studies for families. This summer Maggy wants to travel to the National Society Counseling Annual Conference. She will get information about genetics and be able to meet genetic counselors and future employers.

CHELSEA CONNOR (San Francisco State University) - After collecting a data project on anoles with Operation Wallacea on Dominica, Chelsea found her niche. Working with high school students about her island anoles with Operation Wallaces , It gave Chelsea the opportunity to teach about her island, culture and the animals and plants where she grew up This sparked her inspiration for her popular anole research. There are 436 anoles on the island and Chelsea wants to locate as many as she can while researching for a book. Earning a graduate degree in the field, would allow her to do meaningful research as to teach and to serve as a mentor for inspiring young biologists.

KAIA MINOR (Academy of Art University) - Kaia is majoring in Animation and Visual effects. Kaia has three associate degrees in Math and Science, Arts and Humanities, and General Science. She graduated from high school as a Salutatorian. Teaching at the Crocker Art Museum she worked with underprivileged students. With her colleagues, she developed a book called COLOR US HOPEFUL She authored and illustrated an art book called SURVIVING OUR NEW NORMAL. . Kaia has taken many courses to prepare herself with animation. She would like to be a 3d animator using her knowledge of software tools and art background with a known company.

Kaia sums it up in her application. "I am thankful that Silver Jubilee Scholarships are out there to help women stay on the right path to achieving their dreams"

ML Suter, Silver Jubilee Chair

Alone in the Arctic



In 1921, a twenty-one year old Inupiat woman found herself unexpectedly stranded in the high Arctic with only a kitten for company. This is her amazing story of survival.

Ada Blackjack, recently divorced from an abusive husband, needed money to be able to support her only surviving child, Bennet. His chronic tuberculosis condition forced Ada to place him in a missionary home where he could get the necessary care. She herself could not afford the costs. She heard that an Arctic expedition was being formed by some Canadians to explore a little known area north of Wrangell Island with the hopes of claiming land for Canada. Reluctantly, she hired on to be a cook, seamstress, and English translator. Hardly anything about this trek was going to go according to plan.

When the day came for the small group of men to sail for Nome to begin their trek, Ada discovered that she was going to be the only woman...Plans to hire Inupiat hunters along the way farther north proved to be unsuccessful. The explorers had been counting on their help with hunting. Ada had no

experience tracking animals or using a weapon. Hunting was men's work in her society. Due to advice from a shaman, she was terrified of the polar bears that prowled around the camp. She became afraid of these men and they resented her. The six months of packed in food supplies ran low. Due to heavier than usual pack ice off the coast during the first winter, the ship bringing additional supplies never made it. Scurvy and depression began to weaken them all. Starvation was also looming. Game was not as plentiful as they had assumed. The three more able men decided to go for help but were never heard from again. Ada and "Vic", the ship's kitten, were left behind to care for the one remaining man who was very ill, but angry. He eventually died in spite of Ada's novice attempts to try to hunt to feed him. After his death, Ada gradually taught herself to more successfully hunt small game to sustain herself and Victoria. She even built a skin boat from which to spear fish. Amazingly Ada, also Vic, aka, Victoria, survived together more than another year in the wilderness and darkness.

Ada Blackjack never gave up hope of rescue despite all the odds against her. Finally, on August 19th of 1923, just before the short Arctic summer was about to end, she was able to wave down a passing ship. A few local Alaskan newspapers called her "the female Robinson Crusoe". Ada, not seeking publicity, quietly went on with her life. She used the money she was owed to reunite with her son and secure treatment for him. Eventually she remarried, returned to Alaska, had another child, and lived until the ripe senior age of 85.

Ada showed herself to be a remarkably strong woman who was put under tremendous pressure. She survived her ordeal against the odds without giving up. Her goal was to regain custody of her son and live to see him grow up strong and healthy.

This she did. BTW, Victoria, the gift cat named for the ship that carried Ada to Nome, survived also...



- www.owlcation.com
- www.canagiangeographic.ca
- www.history.com
- www.outsideonline.com

Pat Camarena

May Birthdays



Delores Schoen

May 8

Lisa Aquino

May 18

AAUWSF Board

Contact Us:

aauwsfbranch@gmail.com

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**Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
(DEI) Coordinator:**

Kelly Joseph

I am thankful for my struggle because, without it, I wouldn't have stumbled across my strength.



Alex Elle

Avanti Editor

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 Address Correction Requested

The American Association of University Women (AAUW), founded in 1881, is the nation’s leading organization advocating equality for women and girls. It has a national membership of 150,000. People of every race, creed, age, sexual orientation, national origin, and level of physical ability are invited to join.

AAUW California was launched in San Francisco in 1886 and began lobbying immediately. Check out our website <https://sanfrancisco-ca.aauw.net>



AAUW advances equity for women and girls through advocacy, education, philanthropy, and research

Marie Curie & AAUW

The year was 1919. Europe had been ravaged by World War I and radium was far too expensive for a scientist of modest means to afford for experiments. This was true even for one as famous as Madame Marie Curie. As a result, her groundbreaking research had reached a virtual standstill.

Then the AAUW came to the rescue. Members from Maine to California helped raise an astonishing \$156,413, enabling Madame Curie to purchase one gram of radium and continue her experiments that helped her create the field of nuclear chemistry and forever change the course of science. Madame Curie received the Nobel Prize for her work, but was not admitted to the French *Academie des Sciences* until she won an incredible second Nobel Prize...all because she was a woman. More than 75 years later, there are still only three women members.

Pay Equity

AAUW has been on the front lines fighting for Pay Equity for over a hundred years.

AAUW was there in the Oval Office in 1963 when President John F. Kennedy signed the Equal Pay Act into law.

AAUW was there in 2009 when President Barack Obama signed the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act into law.

AAUW continues the fight for the passage of the Paycheck Fairness Act to ensure women have further equal pay protections. The pay gap is real.

AAUW will continue the fight to achieve pay equity; the economic security of American families depends on it.

Legal Advocacy Fund

Founded in 1981, the Legal Advocacy Fund (LAF) works to achieve equity for women in higher education by recognizing indicative efforts to improve the climate for women on campus; by offering assistance to women faculty, staff, and students who have grievances against colleges and universities; and by supporting sex discrimination lawsuits.

The LAF Board only approves support of cases which are currently involved in litigation, and that have the potential to set legal precedent.

The Legal Advocacy Fund’s annual Progress in Equity Award recognizes indicative and replicable college and university programs.