



AVANTI

empowering women since 1881

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

July 2024

Month at a Glance

July 3rd, 7 p.m.

TTAG Committee Meeting

July 15th, 7 p.m.

International Book Group

- Book: The Heaven and Earth Grocery Store by James McBride
- Hostess and RSVP: Barbara Spencer

July 17th, 12 p.m.

Lunch Bunch

- Where: Ofena
- RSVP to Mary Sutter

July 19th, 1:30 p.m.

Friday Afternoon Book Group

- Book: Still Life by Sarah Winman
- Hostess: Mary Renner
- Coordinator: Michelle Mammini

July 25th at 7:30 p.m.

Mystery/Adventure Book Club

- Location: Virtual by zoom
- Book and Author: Blind Spots by, Thomas Mullen
- Discussion Leader: Sandra Tye
- Link available from Elaine Butler

Co-President's Message

A new AAUW year begins! For those new to AAUW, our official year goes from July 1 to June 30. This is a time to reflect on the accomplishments of the past year, plan for the coming year, renew membership, and also take a break to enjoy the summer. The past year was my first as branch co-president, working along with Barbara, who has been doing this gig for many years. I have found it very rewarding.

Our programs have done well. 17 girls are going to Tech Trek camps – 6 of them in June to Fresno, and the remaining in July, 9 to Santa Cruz and 2 to Virtual camp. The Send-Off event for campers was held on June 1. It was well attended and effective. Elaine stepped down from Tech Trek leadership after many years of dedicated service. A new committee of 6 successfully took the reins and ran with it.

Under the guidance of Rosaura, TTAG has continued its good work of creating a supportive community for Tech Trek alumnae. New leadership opportunities were created by having a student run board manage many TTAG activities. The students acted responsibly and grew from the experience.

The branch gave \$25,000 in scholarships for college education this year. TTAG members received four scholarships of \$4,000 each. Three Silver Jubilee scholarships of \$3,000 each were also awarded. One of them went to our own member Maggy Kepler. We wish her the best in completing her Master's degree at UCSF.

We also sent one of our TTAG college students, Lexian, to NCCWSL, AAUW's conference for college women student leaders. Her report is included in this issue.

We started a new activity this year, the Women's Professional Networking Group, to provide support for our younger members who are in the workforce. We held three sessions, which were valuable. The group is still in its infancy, and we expect to tweak it in the coming year to keep it relevant and engaging.

We have added several new members this year. One of them, Cyndi Bireley, will be joining the board as our new newsletter editor. We also updated our branch bylaws after many years to better reflect how we administer the branch now. The bylaws were approved at our enjoyable annual meeting and brunch held on June 8.

As we look forward to another year, we can be proud that our branch still has the energy to keep moving forward. The board will be planning the activities for next year at our meeting on Saturday, August 3 at 10:00 AM. If you are interested in participating, please let us know. Have an enjoyable summer!

Roli Wendorf, Co-President

OPENING DOORS TO SUCCESS



Australian born Lowitja O'Donoghue spent her long and productive life as an activist creating pathways to economic opportunities and cultural inclusion for the tens of thousands of members of the "Stolen Generations" of Aboriginal people. This is the story of how she managed to succeed against overwhelming odds. She became one of the most respected and influential Aboriginal people in Australian history.

Lowitja herself was a member of what is called the "Stolen Generations", the mixed race children whom the Australian government forcibly removed from their families from 1910 to 1970 and resettled in orphanages, missions, and non-Indigenous foster homes as part of a questionable strategy of Anglo-Australian cultural assimilation. At age 2, she and two of her sisters were removed by the Aboriginal Protection Board. She was not to be reunited with her mother for more than thirty years. Most of the girls were trained to go into domestic service at age 16. Lowitja was determined to become a nurse, a career choice blocked by institutional racism. Her application to pursue nursing training at the Royal Adelaide Hospital was refused. In the 1950s after the Aboriginal Advancement League made gaining admissions to nursing programs one of their main causes, Lowitja was finally admitted. In 1954, she became the first Aboriginal trainee nurse in the history of the hospital that had originally barred her. After she had worked as a charge sister for ten years, she traveled to Assam in northern India to work as a nurse at a Baptist mission hospital. Her sojourn in India opened her eyes to the problems of other marginalized and colonized people.

By 1962, having returned to Australia, she joined the South Australian Public Service as an Aboriginal liaison and welfare officer. She moved on to hold various and increasingly influential positions in the newly created Department of Aboriginal Affairs. As an active member of the Aboriginal Legal Rights Movement she worked on issues involving the return of tribal lands, health care

improvements, and fair housing opportunities for Indigenous people.

Lowitja lived to be in her early nineties. She earned countless lifetime achievement awards during her lifetime, including honorary university doctorates, degrees from the Royal Australian College of Physicians and the Royal College of Nursing, an Australian of the Year, a National Living Treasure Award, and a Companion of the Order of Australia.

Hers was an outstanding career for a determined woman who persisted and overcame great odds. Her work has opened doors for thousands of other Indigenous women who followed her lead and did not give up their dreams.

www.bbc.com

www.sbs.com/au

www.ictnews.org



Lexian Attends NCCWSL

I recently had the incredible honor of attending NCCWSL 2024 at the University of Maryland in College Park, hosted by AAUW! There were over 500 attendees from 127 colleges and universities, who all came to learn about leadership, empowerment and equity. At the conference,

I met so many kind, amazing, inspiring attendees and speakers. It was a formative experience filled with opportunities for networking, growth and reflection. There were workshops/events for all students from all fields of study, with topics such as financial literacy, resume writing, mental health, authentic leadership, and many more!

I personally was able to attend 3 workshops and a resume review session, as well as visit all of the exhibitors and learn about the sponsors behind NCCWSL. I got to hear Dr. Karin K. Moore's PhD research findings during her Success Strategies and Barriers for Women in STEM. She discussed important issues like the role of family influence in young women, resource availability, motherhood wage penalty and the gender pay gap. She also talked about strategies like getting tutors to get ahead and get more comfortable asking questions in class or during internships, joining student organizations, building a supportive network of women around you and wage negotiation.

I attended Catherine Okafor's session titled "Communicating Your Personal Brand", which provided a safe space for me to reflect on my strengths, weaknesses, and leadership styles, as well as how to communicate who I am through my resume, elevator pitch and during an interview. I also was able to get my resume reviewed, and got tips on formatting, recommended length, and what experiences to include. One of the most useful sessions I attended was about scholarships, and I learned how to maximize my potential of receiving scholarships by crafting my essay responses. As a student who values financial freedom, this session was incredibly helpful, as I hope to graduate college with minimal debt and burden to my family. Another workshop I attended was an introduction to Arduinos, which was hands-on, interactive, and a fun way to meet other students who are in similar fields of study.

During the Women of Distinction event in the evening, I got to hear from all of the 2024 awardees, who emphasized the importance of education, resilience and persistence. It was so empowering and inspiring to hear about how all of these incredibly successful women had challenges along the way, but overcame them to get to where they are today. One of my key takeaways from their speeches and experiences was the power of knowledge, and to never stop pursuing education. I was especially inspired by awardee Gitanjali Rao, who is only 19 and like me, has just finished her freshman year of college. She has already done so many incredible things for the world, including scientific inventions, inspiring children to be innovators and advocating for education.

I am so grateful for the personal and professional networking opportunities the conference offered, as well as to AAUW of San Francisco for sponsoring me. Hearing the wide range of perspectives and experiences from women across the country has been so uplifting, motivating and enriching. I'm looking forward to applying all of the leadership, personal growth, networking tips and success strategies I learned from NCCWSL to my personal and professional life.

Lexian Nguyen





Welcome New Member

Hello to you all! My name is Annette Mixon and I've been a small business owner, franchise consultant, educator and people manager with over 25 years of service and experience in the private, franchise and public education sectors. What prompted me to join AAUW was to explore the opportunity to meet like minded women who want to make a difference in our world – especially when it comes to allyship, supporting other women and working towards a collaborative and more powerful united voice. I've lived in San Francisco for 30 years now and absolutely love this city – and I love to travel whenever I can. I've been very dedicated to my career and at this point I'm interested in exploring options to get involved in other activities and organizations beyond work. I look forward to learning more about AAUW and its projects and members!



Annual Brunch



Mary Suter delivering the Silver Jubilee Scholarship to



Chelsea Connor, SFSU MS

Barbara Spencer, Co-President, and Caitlin Dainas. Caitlin has been our Avanti Co-Editor for the past two years and is now successfully heading to Boston U

AAUW California Public Policy News

Dear Public Policy Chairs and Presidents,

Please click [HERE](#) for the June issue of Public Policy News. This issue contains an article "2024 Updates to Title IX: An Overview of Changes and Challenges" for inclusion in your branch newsletters.

Thank you for all you do to advance gender equity for women and girls.

Amy Hom and Missy Maceyko

Co-chairs, AAUW California Public Policy Committee

publicpolicy@aauw-ca.org



July Birthdays

Bickley Simpson	July 9th
Sheila Bost	July 14th
Elaine Butler	July 19th

AAUW-SF Board

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(TTAG) Chair**

Rosaura Valle

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

Kelly Joseph

"Success doesn't come from what you do occasionally. It comes from what you do consistently".



Marie Forleo

Avanti Editor

AAUW

San Francisco Branch

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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.