

# TTAG NEWSLETTER - AUGUST 2025



## TTAG ANNOUNCEMENTS



### **CALLING TTAGers: JOIN US FOR OUR WELCOME BACK PARTY**

**Who:** Returning Techtrekkers, families, TTAGers, AAUW Branch members

**Where:** Sports Basement Bryant Street

**What:** Join our Welcome Back Party to celebrate our returning campers and share your TTAG experience!

**RSVP:** [aaufsfbranch@gmail.com](mailto:aaufsfbranch@gmail.com)

### **CA-TTAC Slack Community is OPEN + Listen to Sonia Lee's Presentation**

**Who:** All Tech Trek Alumnae

**How:** To join, fill out this brief form: [Slack Interest Form!](#)

**What:** The Slack channel for all Tech Trek Alumnae from all over California is now open and will be accepting members. These resources will help high school and college students to connect, offer college guidance, advice and mentorship.

**Questions? Contact:** [sonialeee3068@gmail.com](mailto:sonialeee3068@gmail.com)

#### **Presentation**

**link:** [https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/fny83J5diJZAWd9VUIXXJCBZ6WI5w55YxoCaX\\_nG06xGekhSC31VZtdM53wgTgTf.ZBTkCQYJK\\_4gPVKs](https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/fny83J5diJZAWd9VUIXXJCBZ6WI5w55YxoCaX_nG06xGekhSC31VZtdM53wgTgTf.ZBTkCQYJK_4gPVKs)

## GET TO KNOW THE 2025-2026 STUDENT BOARD

### Callista Leung



Hello all! I'm Callista Leung, and I'm a current rising junior at Balboa High School. I'm thrilled this year to take on the role of Co-President on the TTAG student board!

I attended Tech Trek in 2022 at UC Davis. My most fond experience was learning the science behind lightning and the sound waves that follow throughout the theater. As someone who enjoys performing, it was interesting to learn how science and art can intersect to create amazing live performances. I love the science behind it and how the systems operate through various methods of code.

In my free time, I enjoy dancing, DJing, and hanging out with friends! I can't wait for the coming year and all the fun plans in store.

### Ila Duong



Hi everyone! My name is Ila, and I'm an incoming junior at Archbishop Riordan High School. I attended Tech Trek in 2022 at UC Davis and am now excited to serve as Co-President on the TTAG student board this year! I look forward to all that's ahead for TTAG! From engaging workshops that sparked curiosity and innovation to hearing from inspiring women in STEM, Tech Trek fueled my passion for science and has inspired me to empower youth within my community. Coming back as a peer counselor this summer made me appreciate my Tech Trek journey even more.

Outside of TTAG, I enjoy spending time outdoors and reading dystopian novels. The Hunger Games is currently my favorite series.

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## Gina Gilson



My name is Gina and I'm excited to be TTAG's first VP of Membership! I attended Tech Trek during the Summer of 2022 at CSU Fresno where I got to learn about forensic science and crime scene investigation. Now, I'm a junior at Lowell High School. I'm looking forward to growing the TTAG community!

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## Kristy Wen



Hi everyone! My name is Kristy Wen and I am a rising freshman at Lowell Highschool. I am so honored to be this year's Communication Coordinator for the student board and I look forward to updating STEM-inspired girls with this monthly newspaper filled with many opportunities!

I attended Tech Trek at Fresno University in 2024. Some of my notable experiences I had was learning how to code in HTML to create your own website and meeting several scientific professionals that were in different fields in STEM. I have never felt more inspired by the people around me.

Some hobbies I have are playing the piano, volleyball, and baking!



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**Coco Kalman**

Hi, my name is Coco Kalman and I am a 10th grader at Lowell High School, and will be one of the Events Coordinators. I attended Tech Trek in 2023 at Fresno State. I made a lot of friends from different parts of California and I learned how to connect STEM to nature and art. Outside of TTAG I enjoy dancing and doing musical theater, as well as reading.

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**Katherine Tse**

My name is Katherine Tse and I'm a rising 9th grader at Galileo High School. One of my hobbies is baking. This year my role is an event coordinator.

I attended Tech Trek in 2024 at Camp Carson in UCSC. One notable experience I had at camp was when many women that had different jobs came to camp and told us about each job. One thing I learned from camp was the many ways I can use a battery and turn it into many different things with only a few other objects.

## STEM ACTIVITIES & EVENTS



### **Monterey Bay Aquarium Research Institute's Complex Luminescence Displays of the Caribbean Sea Firefly**

**Who:** Everyone

**What:** Join Trevor Rivers from the University of Kansas in a talk about the most complex luminescent communication displays known in marine habitats; ostracods. He will be discussing a summary of where ostracod research stands today and outline some of the future avenues for study.

**Where:** Virtual

**When:** August 6, 2025 11 AM - Noon

**Apply/more info here:** [http://mbari.org/event/trevor\\_rivers/](http://mbari.org/event/trevor_rivers/)

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### **Bair Island Volunteer Workday**

**Who:** Everyone (Best for ages 14+ and all minors must be accompanied by adults)

**What:** Join Peninsula Open Space Trust and San Francisco Bay Bird Observatory for this fun and unique opportunity to volunteer at the Bair Island Unit of the Don Edwards San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge. You will spend the morning weeding invasive plants and plant native species that will support the island's ecosystem.

**Where:** Bair Island Public Parking

**When:** August 9, 2025 9:00AM - 12:00 PM

**Apply/more info here:**

<https://openspacetrust.org/event/bair-island-volunteer-workday-080925/>

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### **Exploratorium's Bay Day**

**Who:** Everyone

**What:** Immerse yourself in ocean science and ecology, and join us for a variety of activities for marine enthusiasts of all ages. While showcasing their NOAA data-collection buoy out of the water for its yearly servicing, scientists will be on deck to show the fascinating organisms that grow on the buoy and elsewhere in the Bay.

**Where:** : Pier 15 (Embarcadero at Green Street), Exploratorium

**When:** August 9, 2025 11AM - 4PM

**Apply/more info here:** <https://www.exploratorium.edu/visit/calendar/bay-day-0>

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### **Virtual STEM: Modern Astronomy**

**Who:** Grades 6-8

**What:** This is a 4-week program that introduces modern astronomy concepts to 6th - 8th grade students who are interested in STEM. You can expect discussions about the emergence of Newtonian physics to give a solid background and focus on 20th and 21st-century discoveries in quantum physics and string theory.

**Where:** Online

**When:** August 25, 2025 5:30PM - 6:30PM

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**Coexisting with Coyotes: Behavior, Balance, and Safety in the Bay Area (Online Event)**

**Who:** Everyone

**What:** Join Christine Wilkinson, a PhD conservation scientist, carnivore ecologist, and science communicator at UC Santa Cruz as she talks about coyote ecology and its successful coexistence in Bay Area communities.

**Where:** Online

**When:** August 28, 2025 7PM - 8PM

**Apply/more info here:**

<https://openspacetrust.org/event/coexisting-with-coyotes-behavior-balance-and-safety-in-the-bay-area/>

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### **Science Saturday: Backyard Birds**

**Who:** Everyone

**What:** This family-friendly event invites all to explore the fascinating world of avian life through activities, educational information, and birdwatching in our Native Plant Garden. You will get the opportunity to craft your own bird feeder and learn about local bird species. Expert educators will be on hand to share insights and answer questions, making this an enriching experience for budding ornithologists and nature enthusiasts.

**Where:** Pacific Grove Museum of Natural History

**When:** August 30, 2025 10:00AM - 3:00PM

**Apply/more info here:**

<https://www.pgmuseum.org/upcoming-events/science-saturday-backyard-birds-1>

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## **TTAG NEWS**



### **TTAG Artsy Event At Upper Detroit Steps**

TTAGers Calista, Jessica, Katherine, Elise, and Kristy came together at the Upper Detroit Steps to help paint the stairs on July 31st. As they painted together under the guidance of a local artist, it turned out to be a great chance for TTAGers to bond in person. Members had time to share stories and connect in a relaxed, creative setting.





# **TTAG** **CURRENTS**

Exploring science and beyond

My STEM activity I've been doing for almost a year is tutoring an elementary student from Tennessee in math. I create a fun weekly lesson plan in the form of games and interactive fun worksheets. Through this experience, I learned how to work with younger kids, and that an interest can grow by making what you're learning fun. I learned about this opportunity at the public library and decided to apply for the position. After getting accepted and tutoring a few times, I realized I enjoy doing this.

– **Katherine Tse, 9th Grade, Galileo HS**  
 Tech Trek Alumna, UC Santa Cruz 2024



I've been reading "The Gendered Brain: The Neuroscience that Shatters the Myth of the Female Brain" by British neuroscientist Gina Rippon. Rippon unpacks the widely held belief that male and female brains are anatomically and fundamentally different, wrongfully justifying why men are the natural born leaders of the world, and why women are best fit to be homebodies. "The Gendered Brain" dismantles the gender bias that has muddied scientific waters. Rippon argues that the observable differences between female and male attributes, interests, personalities, and cognition derive from different ways in which we are taught to use our (very malleable) brains. It's so interesting to read about the various case studies and historical research Gina Rippon includes in her book. I didn't realize how much misinformation I was previously led to accept.

– **Gina Gilson, 11th Grade, Lowell HS**

Tech Trek Alumna, CSU Fresno 2022

What has piqued your interest recently? A film, a book, a fun fact, a field trip? Fill out the [TTAG Currents Feature Form](#) to share your STEM current in the next newsletter!

Contact Gina ([gina.lucia2017@gmail.com](mailto:gina.lucia2017@gmail.com)) with any questions.

## ONGOING / USEFUL LINKS

### **Watch the STEM Career Talks replay by Berkeley Lab**

Learn about the wide range of STEM professions through Berkeley Lab staff and Bay Area professionals

**Link:** <https://k12education.lbl.gov/programs/virtual/career-talks>

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### **NASA Psyche Mission Innovation Toolkit**

A free online course series based on the real-world science, engineering, technology, and teamwork behind the Psyche mission.

**Link:** <https://psyche.asu.edu/get-involved/innovation-toolkit/>

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### **GuideX.Co**

A (student-created) resource for high schoolers across the nation to find 500+ extra-curricular opportunities.

GuideX offers modules for students, employers/organizations, and educators:

- 1) High Schoolers and parents can search for opportunities
- 2) Employers/organizations can submit opportunities for high schoolers
- 3) Educators can use the tool to guide their students

**Link:** <https://guidex.co/>

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### Exploring Engineering at UC Berkeley

Are you interested in exploring different fields in engineering? Exploring Engineering at UC Berkeley, a 10 podcast series, takes listeners behind the scenes of different engineering majors. Hear from real students, faculty, and professionals as they share stories, challenges, and exciting career paths.

**Link:**

<https://engineering.berkeley.edu/students/resources/exploring-engineering-podcast/>

## STEM READS

### This Month's Topic: Secrets of the Sea

**Writer:** Helen Scales

**Title:** Eye of the Shoal: A Fishwatcher's Guide to Life, the Ocean and Everything

**Description:** Dive into the fascinating world of fish with marine biologist Helen Scales as your guide. Through vivid storytelling and scientific insight, Scales introduces readers to strange and beautiful species, from bioluminescent lanternfish to parrotfish that sleep in mucus bubbles. Along the way, she shares how fish have shaped ecosystems, human cultures, and even technology.

**Link:**

<https://www.amazon.com/Eye-Shoal-Fishwatchers-Guide-Everything/dp/1472936841>

## IF YOU MISSED TTAG EVENTS...

If you missed an online event or are interested in past COLLEGE PREP or FINANCIAL AID workshops, please contact us for the presentation, the recordings or both at: [rpcvalle.aauw@gmail.com](mailto:rpcvalle.aauw@gmail.com)

## CONTACT US

It's our goal to bring you workshops, camps, extra-curricular activities, internships, and other exciting opportunities in STEM. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you would like to share with your TTAG community any cool STEM Ed event taking place at your high school. Want to share info and opportunities or give us feedback?

Please contact us at:



- [kristywen10@gmail.com](mailto:kristywen10@gmail.com) (Kristy Wen)