



CALIFORNIA *Perspective*

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**ADVANCING EQUITY FOR
WOMEN AND GIRLS
THROUGH ADVOCACY,
EDUCATION,
PHILANTHROPY, AND
RESEARCH**

JAN COOK 2017 STATE NAMED GIFT HONOREE

Sharon Westafer, Chair
AAUW Fund

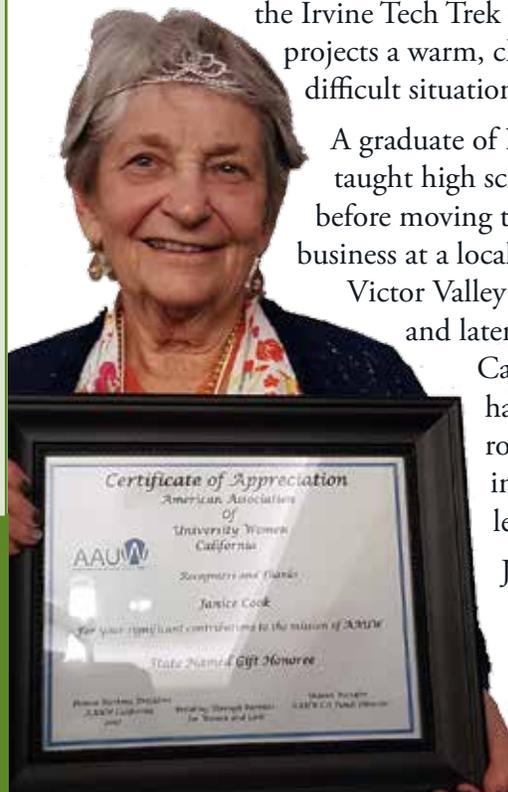
Sharwest1@hotmail.com

The State Named Gift award is the highest award given by AAUW California other than having a fellowship or grant named in one's honor. This award is given to recognize a member who has done outstanding work to promote the programs, goals and mission of the AAUW Fund and/or AAUW California.

Jan Cook has been a member of AAUW for 17 years and has served in leadership positions in her branch, Interbranch Council and at the state level. The AAUW Fund is her passion and she continues to remind her branch that the Fund is the "heart of AAUW". She has served as her branch Fund chair multiple times, served on the state Bylaws Committee and the Special Projects Fund board, chaired the Financial Literacy Committee, and was a TechTrek dorm mom and the Irvine Tech Trek camp director 2010-2012. Jan projects a warm, cheerful attitude and handles difficult situations with patience and tact.

A graduate of Ball State University, she taught high school classes in Orange County before moving to the high desert and teaching business at a local charter school. She joined the Victor Valley Branch of AAUW in 2001 and later became a dual member of the California Online Branch. She has served in multiple leadership roles in both branches, including president of the Victor Valley Branch.

Jan has also served on the Victor Valley Community Services Council Board and the Apple Valley Angels, which serves senior citizens in Apple Valley.



Certificate of Appreciation
American Association
of University Women
California
Sincerely and Thank
Janice Cook
For your significant contributions to the mission of AAUW
State Named Gift Honoree

California Perspective

AAUW California

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1310 L St. NW, Suite 1000

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or email changes to connect@aauw.org

or update your member profile on aauw.org.

MOVING AAUW FORWARD

Donna Mertens, President
AAUW California
statepresident@aauw-ca.org



Donna Mertens

This is the last time I will be speaking to you as your president and I have been searching my mind for something profound to say. It's not easy to come up with something that will be memorable, so I'm going with a topic that was given to me to speak about at a branch anniversary celebration recently. The topic is "**Expanding Your Horizons through AAUW**".

We all came to AAUW by different pathways. Like many of you, mine was unconventional. I didn't go to college right out of high school. I returned to college to improve my career. It took me 20 years to get my MBA because I was working and raising a family. But, in the end, my education improved my life situation. I retired at 51 from a full time position at a community college and that is when I started looking for something to fill my time. There were the usual women's organizations, but what drew me to AAUW was the emphasis on education.

I thought I was done learning, but was I wrong. At my branch, I got involved in the local scholarship program because of my connection to the community college. I wanted to make sure that women returning to school had support. Then, I joined our Tech Trek committee and served on an interview panel. I was so impressed with the maturity of the girls.

We were disappointed that we were only able to send a few students to Tech Trek, so I worked with a committee to start a STEM day on the community college campus. It is now 12 years later and we serve 300 girls from local middle schools each year.

After serving my branch in several leadership positions, I decided to stretch my wings and apply for service on a state committee. It was really interesting and it gave me the opportunity to interact with members from all over the state.

Finally, I ran for an office on the state board. I continue to learn each day, and I would recommend it to any of our members looking to expand your horizons. I'm not done yet, but my service will be at the local level again.

Don't be afraid to step up to the next level of service. We all have something to give to reach our goal of moving AAUW forward.

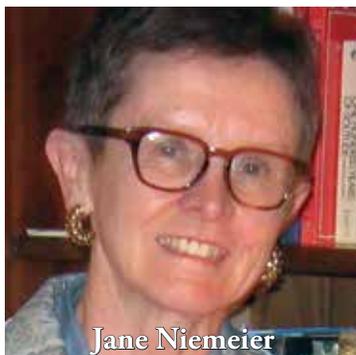
OUR 2018-19 CALIFORNIA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Shown below are the members of the 2018-19 AAUW California Board of Directors along with each leader's branch affiliation, term of office and tentative committee assignment as of our press time. Although the newly elected board members do not officially take office until July 1, work is already underway to staff and plan for the coming year. If you would like to help, please submit a vita. The vita form is available from the aauw-ca.org website.



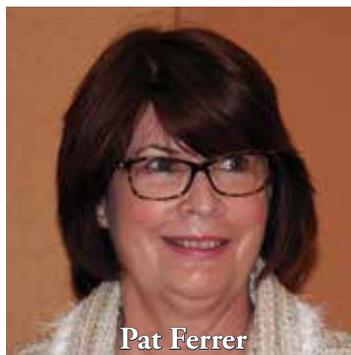
Cathy Foxhoven

CA Online Branch
Co-President 2018-20
Executive (co)



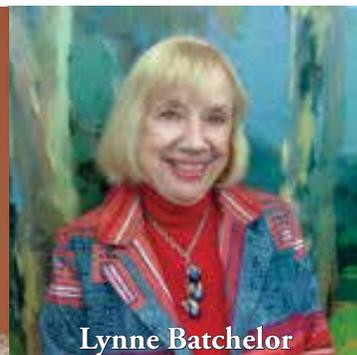
Jane Niemeier

La Mesa- El Cajon and San
Diego Branches
Co-President 2018-20
Executive (co)



Pat Ferrer

Long Beach Branch
Chief Financial Officer 2017-19
Finance



Lynne Batchelor

San Diego Branch
Secretary 2018-20
Project Oversight



Deanna Arthur

Alhambra/San Gabriel Branch
Director 2018-20
Membership (co)



Charmen Goehring

Sacramento Branch
Director 2017-19
Membership (co)



Kathleen Harper

Carlsbad-Oceanside-Vista
Branch
Director 2018-20
Program



Nancy Mahr

Palos Verdes Peninsula Branch
Director 2017-19
Public Policy



Ainsley Nies

Pacifica Branch
Director 2018-20
Branch Support



Dianne Owens

Lompoc-Vandenberg Branch
Director 2017-19
AAUW Fund



Sharyn Siebert

Monterey Peninsula Branch
Director 2018-20
Leadership Development



Melanie Wade

Danville-Alamo-Walnut Creek
Branch
Director 2018-20
Communications

6 PLUS 6

Donna Lilly, Chair Nominations & Elections

Six AAUW California directors were elected to serve from 2018-2020 at the state convention in April. Deanna Arthur, Kathi Harper, Sharyn Siebert, Melanie Wade, Lynne Batchelor and Ainsley Nies join six continuing directors to complete the board of twelve educated, reasoned and active directors to lead the mission of AAUW across the state.

Deanna Arthur noted in her goal statement that she wants to attract younger members and create visibility so we are not the “best kept secret in town.” She will work to keep our long-time members an important part of the equation.

Kathi Harper, an attorney in Orange County for 23 years, prosecuted domestic violence cases, twice before the California Supreme Court. Her passion for public policy legislation focuses on the involvement of every AAUW member and collaboration with community activists. She views visibility within the community as a great opportunity for membership recruitment.

Sharyn Siebert realized that she made a difference for students and faculty at the conclusion of her AAUW presentation at the conference for California Community Colleges. She welcomes the opportunity for AAUW outreach to dynamic college students and campus partners especially in today’s political environment.

Melanie Wade utilized the gender gap in STEM-related secondary and higher education studies as the focus of her doctorate degree at UC Irvine. She looks forward to affecting public policy in California and communicating personally with AAUW members across the state.

Lynne Batchelor brings years of experience resolving conflict, building consensus and implementing change as an educator and principal at the secondary and university levels as well as a director on many boards. She looks forward with vigor to putting ideas into action.

Ainsley Nies continues as a director who promises to share her programmer/analyst and team/project

chartering skills with the Board and branch members. UC Berkeley recently recognized Ainsley with the Distinguished Adjunct Professor Award for facilitating, coaching, mentoring and enabling collaboration.

The complete 2018-19 AAUW California Board of Directors is shown on page 3. Each leader’s branch affiliation, term of office and tentative committee assignment is shown. As you can see, board membership is evenly distributed between the northern, central and southern areas of California. Your responsibility as a member is to share your feelings and ideas with the directors. Their email addresses are on the state website <http://www.aauw-ca.org/about-us/state-leadership/>.

In addition to the elected directors, the following have volunteered for state leadership:

Sue Cochran, Governance
Bakula Maniar, Financial Literacy Chair
Dawn Johnson, Parliamentarian
Donna Lilly, College/University Chair
Indrani Chatterjee, Chair of International.

We are still searching for special people to be the Meetings Planner, and chairs for AAUW CA Branch Resource Connection, Diversity and Nominations & Elections. If you would like to help, please submit a vita. The vita form is available from the [aauw-ca.org](http://www.aauw-ca.org) website.

INTERNATIONAL ADVOCACY AT CONVENTION

Indrani Chatterjee, International Advocacy Representative
Program Committee
ichat905@gmail.com

The International Advocacy workshop “Women In STEM, Globally” was very interactive and informative. The STEM speakers were representatives from around the world and they all shared their stories of challenges and success. The discussion was animated and came to the noted conclusion that women are underrepresented in STEM fields and the resolution to be more proactive in motivating young girls.

Women filled 47 percent of all U.S. jobs in 2015 but held only 24 percent of STEM jobs (www.esa.doc.gov). The workshop speakers, through their own experiences, recommended some simple and effective solutions to



(left to right): Chelsey Jurado, Michele Freck, Dr. Ingrid Oakley-Girvan, Indrani Chatterjee, Melody Man Hing Li, and Anasua Kusari

improve the ratio. Their recommendations are:

- Early science education
- Encouragement at family level
- Mentor girls in high school
- More financial resources for college education
- Workplace flexibility for female scientists
- Improve pay equity
- Diversity

AAUW supports a strong system of public education that promotes gender fairness and equity for all women. Therefore, we must continue to push pay equity in STEM fields, mentor high school girls to pursue STEM studies in college, initiate an AAUW California state level high school program to review Tech Trek alumnae's progress, and promote diversity.

DIVERSITY - DREAM OR REALITY?

Deanna Arthur and Kathy Andreini, Co-Chairs
Membership
membership@aauw-ca.org

Look at the faces around your branch or many of our branches. We need to be inclusive, welcoming, and make our meetings a safe space for everyone if we want to change this perception and make our branches and organization truly diverse. We need to walk the walk and talk the talk. A diversity survey will be sent to members soon. Mitra Baghdadi, our diversity chair and Melissa Maceyko facilitated an amazing workshop on Diversity, Inclusion, and Marginalization. We will have this information available on the website by the time you

read this article.

We cannot know how others feel unless we ask them. We cannot forge a relationship unless we speak to others. Read the information available on the website, talk to the people in your branch, ask them to share in planning and be open to new members.

THE POWER OF DONATIONS TO THE AAUW FUND

Sharon Westafer, Chair
AAUW Fund

Sharwest1@hotmail.com

Thank you and congratulations to the members of AAUW California for your generous donations in 2017 of \$1,336,746.56 to the AAUW Fund. The power of each donation is critical as AAUW strives to break barriers for women and girls in all areas of their lives, from education to health care to pay and employment equity. While much has been accomplished since the founding of AAUW in 1881, our work is far from over. If you haven't explored the AAUW website, we encourage you to do so as there is a wealth of information about AAUW and its many programs. (<https://www.aauw.org/>)

\$767,718.91 of the donations went to support California Tech Trek camps, the week-long math/science camps held during the summer at various colleges and universities in California. What a wonderful opportunity for girls entering the eighth grade to explore careers in these fields while being encouraged to further their educations. Because Tech Trek funds will now be administered by the California Special Projects Fund, donations are still tax deductible but won't be included in branch donations to National.

Other programs supported by your donations include the Educational Opportunities Fund which provides Fellowships and Grants, the Legal Advocacy Fund, providing case support for women in the workplace and in educational institutions, leadership programs such as the National Conference for College Women Student Leaders (<https://www.nccwsl.org>), and groundbreaking research on issues pertaining to women and girls.

It's wonderful that four California endowments were completed in 2017: Half Moon Bay branch (Half Moon Bay), Lucy Lindsey/Margaret Hankle (Hayward-Castro Valley), Helen and Marie Salandra/Friedel Volz (Alhambra San Gabriel and San Jose branches), and the Sacramento branch 100th anniversary. Congratulations!

There are still a few endowments to be completed and we would appreciate your help. The current balances on them will be listed on the AAUW CA website as soon as the figures are received from AAUW.

We realize that many of you are involved with organizations besides AAUW and there is competition for your donations. Please continue to include AAUW in your generosity! Please remember that donating money to other organizations by branches is against AAUW policies. Consult AAUW Funds on the AAUW website for more information regarding the Fund and Policy 501: Fundraising Guidelines for fundraising questions. (<https://www.aauw.org/?s=Policy+501>)

¹<https://www.aauw.org/>

²http://www.aauw-ca.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/Snapshots_5b.pdf

MUTUAL BENEFIT / PUBLIC BENEFIT RECLASSIFICATION UPDATE

Sue Cochran, Chair
Governance

governance@aauw-ca.org

AAUW California was reclassified from a public benefit entity to a mutual benefit entity during the re-organization process between 2006 & 2008. This change was voted upon by the full AAUW California membership as part of the changes to bylaws that re-structured the AAUW California board and lead to the re-filing with the State of California as a mutual benefit corporation.

Affiliates of AAUW, including AAUW California and all branches, must be aligned as a public benefit entities. The re-classification took AAUW California out of alignment with national AAUW. We have been working to resolve the issue since the classification error was brought to our attention in early 2016.

What we had hoped would be a simple process became

complex. First we worked our way through a simple appeal to the office of the secretary of state, which was rejected. Then, two separate votes were presented to AAUW California members. Although there were very few "no" votes, both votes failed because the State requires a unanimous "yes" vote to effect the change.

We are now engaged in a more complex appeal process to the Commissioner of Corporations in the Securities Division of the Secretary of State's Office. The process is moving forward and we have every reason to believe that within the next few months the problem will be resolved. Once a positive ruling is received, we will re-file our Articles of Incorporation and update our bylaws. This will then put AAUW California in correct alignment with national AAUW.

While we were involved in the initial process of appeal for re-classification the state Governance Committee assessed all branches to ensure that none of the branches faced the same issue. Fortunately, none of the branches is out of alignment. The issue is at the state level only.

Failure to reclassify as a public benefit corporation/entity would put our affiliate status with national AAUW in jeopardy and could have far reaching consequences for programs such as Tech Trek which is a collaborative project between national AAUW and AAUW California. National AAUW has been working with us during this appeal process and the program will continue without interruption as we move to a speedy resolution.

Further updates, as we complete the process with the State of California, will be posted on the AAUW California website and in the monthly Board to Board postings to branch leaders.

COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY SUMMER OPPORTUNITIES

Tina Byrne, Chair

College/University (C/U) Relations

aauwtina@gmail.com

As this year winds down at educational institutions we reflect on your accomplishments for this year and hope to help you prepare for next year. In California, you have recruited 84 AAUW College/University Partners, and 883 student affiliates at 80 colleges and universities. There are 58 branch C/U Chairs in 42 branches.

Student groups are on 15 campuses and many of those groups are working with your branches.

Preparing for the 2018-2019 year:

Opportunity one—Please remember to include your branch C/U Chair names in your Branch Officer Report when it is sent to AAUW national and AAUW California. Chairs will receive the Campus Connection newsletter from national, communicate with the California C/U Relations Committee throughout the year, and have the opportunity to communicate with other Branch Chairs.

Opportunity two—Invite the C/U Representatives at your local partner school to become members of your branch. C/U Representatives already have free national membership and they also have free AAUW California membership. You can waive branch dues or have them just pay branch dues.

Opportunity three—Invite a NCCWSL student to speak at a meeting. There will be a list of California NCCWSL attendees available in the summer that will be sent to the C/U Branch Chairs.

Opportunity four—Give a Grad a Gift! As a member of AAUW, you can give the gift of national and state membership to anyone graduating within the last two years. Go to <http://www.aauw-ca.org/give-grad-gift/> for information and to access the form.

Opportunity five—Check to see if your local partner school has renewed their partnership. You can contact Tina Byrne at aauwgina@gmail.com for updated information throughout the summer.

Just a little summer work will have you ready to be back on campus in the fall.

PUBLIC POLICY To-Do's FOR THE SUMMER

Nancy Mahr, Chair
Public Policy

publicpolicy@aauw-ca.org

1. Appoint a Public Policy Chair for your Branch.
2. Encourage your members to sign up for Action Alerts (national website)
3. Plan election activities for the fall – Voter Registration, Candidate Forum, Issue-based Education

Program, Get-Out-the Vote Activity.

4. Join up with another community organization for election activities.
5. Visit your legislators – choose a Friday when they are in session.

It is important for legislative advocacy activities to be coordinated. Our advocate, Shannon Smith-Crowley, develops the advocacy plan for each of our priority bills. She directs our Action Alerts and also lets the Public Policy Chairs know when more branch and member action is needed, including which legislators should be contacted. Branches can be prepared to act when called upon by building some rapport with local legislative offices in advance. If the legislative offices already know what AAUW is and who we are, they will be more receptive when asked for support on a bill.

AAUW's messaging reflects our long-standing commitment to issue-based advocacy for policies that empower women and girls. Our positions are on policies, not people or parties. We are a non-partisan organization.

In Memorium

CHARLOTTE PEDERSEN

Kathy Schmidt
Petaluma Branch



AAUW California past president **Charlotte Pedersen** slipped away from this world on April 15th.

She was a member of AAUW since 1967 joining, in succession, the Merced Branch and then the Petaluma Branch.

A talented and dedicated woman, Charlotte was both appointed and elected to various AAUW California committees and offices including:

Resolutions Committee ('80-'81)
Chair, Taking Hold of Technology ('81-'83)
Chair, Women's Issues ('83-'85)
President Elect ('85-'86)
President ('86-'88)

Charlotte helped in many other ways. Many of our members and state representatives will remember her as charming, polished and someone who knew how to get things done.

300 Celebrate 20 Years of Tech Trek!



I'll graduate with my doctorate in Biochemistry from Georgia Institute of Technology in Atlanta. I have enjoyed being involved with science outreach at schools, Girl Scouts and science and engineering fairs.

Vanessa Cox, Stanford 1999

I graduated from UC Santa Barbara in June with a BS in physics. The experience that stuck with me the most was the star gazing astronomy night. That night really inspired me to look further into astronomy, which sparked a fascination with astrophysics, cosmology and quantum mechanics.

Maddie Sullivan Hames, Stanford 2007

I am currently studying Chemical Engineering at Columbia University in NYC. The most inspiring part of the camp for me was listening to women talk about their careers in STEM. Their confidence and success reminded me that women are capable of so much.

Kelsey Reed, Stanford 2008

20 YEARS of Tech Trek were celebrated at AAUW California's biennial convention. Over 225 members and friends attended the anniversary luncheon on Sunday, April 29th, in Irvine. In opening remarks, AAUW California President Donna Mertens remarked that it was Tech Trek that made her become active in AAUW. National Vice President Abigail Lewis said, "Some might call it a revolution."

A panel of Tech Trek alumnae demonstrated the value of Tech Trek.



Shannon Esswein

Shannon Esswein earned a BS in Physiological Science at UCLA in 2013 and a MS in Biochemistry at the University of Cambridge through a Gates Cambridge Fellowship. Now she is in a Medical Scientist Training Program, pursuing an MD at UCLA with an interest in neurooncology and a PhD in Biochemistry and Molecular Biophysics at Caltech. She is investigating the structure of Zika virus and direct vaccine design using cryo-electron microscopy and

X-ray crystallography.

Amanda Nguyen is pursuing a BS in Biological Science at UCI. She is a coordinator and instructor for the Enhanced Academic Success Experience (EASE) initiative for UCI's Ayala School of Biological Sciences. The EASE initiative provides tutors and mentors to first year biology majors. Amanda is also a marketing and events coordinator for the Dean of the Ayala School of Biological Sciences.



Amanda Nguyen



Jessica Brough

Jessica Brough earned a BS in Aerospace Engineering with a concentration in Astronautics and is now an Engineer designing parts for a new large booster rocket engine being developed by Aerojet Rocketdyne. She also mentors an all-girls high school robotics team, "Heat it Up and Keep it Cool".

Leslie Edwards earned a BS in Architectural Engineering in 2012 and is now a licensed civil engineer working for the Kern County Public Works Department. She attended Tech Trek Fresno in 2003 and has been a staff member there since 2009. Now she is the Assistant Director.



Leslie Edwards

AAUW of California member Marie Wolbach founded Tech Trek in 1998 with the help of an AAUW Community Action Grant. Since then, 15,000 girls have gone through the program. Today AAUW Tech Trek operates 10 camps at 8 sites in California, 20 camps nation-wide. A 2013 survey of AAUW Tech Trek alumnae from California found that the program has lasting effects on many levels, including interest and confidence in STEM fields, decision to pursue those fields, and future career plans. Alumnae surpass the national average in most advanced math and science courses. Girls learn about STEM careers that align with their passions and help them solve big problems.

Illness kept Marie Wolbach away from the festivities, but in a letter to attending Tech Trek alumnae she said, "It is gratifying to all of us involved with the program that you have met, and exceeded, the expectations of teachers who nominated you and AAUW members who sponsored you."

A reception followed the luncheon and the attendance grew to over 300. Attendees were given commemorative USB wristbands. After being welcomed, the camps congregated together to catch up while a slideshow of 20 years of Tech Trek played in the background. Tech Trek Alumni Groups manned their tables showing displays highlighting their activities, and signed up new members. The speakers from the luncheon were available for one-on-ones with the other campers.

Alumnae are encouraged to email their camp directors or local branch coordinators with annual updates of what they are doing academically, professionally, or personally. The Tech Trek Alumnae Group (TTAG) can be reached at techtrek@aauw-ca.org. Information about Tech Trek can be found on the AAUW California website (aauw-ca.org)

Thank you so much for this amazing experience. I know now what I want to be. I want to be a mechanical engineer. I loved how they explained to us about the jobs at career night.

Alexa Marquez, Fresno 2014

We are all Mathematicians, Marine Biologists, Coders, and Engineers. But most importantly, we are all girls and when we work together we can come up with solutions for the world's most difficult problems.

Lucia Landeros, UCSB Hypatia 2016

I am very happy that there are still people like you that care about the education of children like us.

Sintia Khosravian, Whittier 2017

At Tech Trek, I had an amazing time getting to know so many like-minded girls that also love science, math, technology and engineering. I felt like I had found my people! Our experiences at Tech Trek provided us with a bond that will never be broken.

Mia Puljiz, Sonoma 2017

I never would have known that I had an interest in technology, computer security, astronomy or entrepreneurship. The field trip to the Cove opened my eyes to what I can do now for my community.

Kaitlin Martin, Irvine 2017

It took me out of my comfort zone, taught me ways to solve problems and showed me that taking risks could get me where I wanted to be. Now I am a very successful high school math teacher and I tirelessly try to inspire more girls to go into careers in math and science.

Ashley Brinegar, San Diego 1999

California Tech Trek Camps in Order of Opening

1998	Stanford Univ. I	2001	Whittier College	2008	Stanford Univ. II
1999	CSU Fresno	2005	UC Santa Barbara I	2010	UC Irvine
1999	UC San Diego	2008	Sonoma State Univ.	2011	UC Santa Barbara II
2001	Mills College		(Moved from Mills)	2011	UC Davis

JEANNETTE MILLER WINS AAUW JEOPARDY

Cathy Foxhoven
Co-President Elect

Jeannette Miller, past AAUW California President, was the big winner of AAUW Jeopardy at Convention 2018 in Irvine. There was no cash prize, but Jeannette won her very own “Nevertheless, She Persisted” coffee mug. AAUW Jeopardy was one of the workshops developed by the Leadership Development Committee. The purpose of the workshop was to educate members about AAUW and AAUW California. Facts about AAUW were organized in four categories: (1) Public Policy, (2) AAUW Acronyms, (3) AAUW History, and (4) Important Facts. Great fun was had by all! If you would like to play AAUW Jeopardy in your branch, please contact aauwfox@gmail.com.

Other leadership development convention offerings were the workshop “Alternative Board Design”, expertly presented by Branch Support Chair Ainsley Nies, and the Sunday plenary “AAUW – Advancing Equity for All”. This event featured a panel of diverse, distinguished speakers.

All three events received praise from their audiences. If you would like to be a part of the Leadership Development Committee, the vitae is available online under “AAUW CA Leadership Team” at www.aauw-ca.org.

2018 ELEANOR STEM ALLEN MEMORIAL SPEECH TREK INSPIRES

Marlene Cain, Speech Trek State Coordinator
aauwcaain@earthlink.net

“Inspirational!” “Entertaining!” “Educational!” Such was the feedback heard at the Eleanor Stem Allen Memorial State Speech Trek Finals at the Saturday Luncheon on April 28. Over 150 attendees enjoyed the highly competitive speech contest. The three finalists captivated the audience with their unique stories as they offered their perspectives on “How Can We Stand Up to Sexism?”

Caroline Irving, sponsored by the Redlands Branch, was awarded 1st Place. She urged the audience to, “Learn to



Caroline Irving



Rohan Sharma



Chloe Johnson

“speak up about injustice.” “We must carry this torch until we have lighted all corners of the world, all communities, and helped all people and until the day when sexism is another chapter closed in the writings of history.”

Rohan Sharma, sponsored by Roseville/South Placer Branch, was awarded 2nd Place. He said, “The most important thing we can all do is to encourage all of the women in our lives to be limitless instead of confining them to the boundaries of how a woman should behave.”

Chloe Johnson, sponsored by Stockton Branch, was awarded 3rd Place. She said, “We must change the way we think about gender. It is not a black and white issue. It is not two sided, and the belief that it is, is what makes sexism possible.”

Many thanks to Brett Allen, son of Eleanor Stem Allen, who spoke lovingly about his mother and how she inspired excellence in all those around her. Many thanks also to the talented judges--Lisa Maatz, Heather Miller, and Robert Sanders--and timer/ballot counter, Steve Cain, all of whom had their work cut out for them!

The Speech Trek Committee works hard throughout the year to produce an amazing speech event for contestants and audiences alike. A warm and grateful thank-you to outgoing treasurer, Liz Jordan, whose significant contributions to the success of the Speech Trek program during the past five years cannot be measured! Liz will continue to be an important part of the Speech Trek Committee. A big welcome to the committee’s incoming treasurer, Donna Mertens - the committee looks forward to working together!

Finally, kudos to the Poway-Pensacuitos Branch, who just announced that they will host Speech Trek next year--for the first time! Which Branch will be next to empower their students? Let Marlene Cain know at 909-866-2819 or aaucain@earthlink.net.



AAUW Lompoc-Vandenberg Branch 2018 Speech Trek winners (Left to right): Matthew Welch, 3rd Place, Lompoc High School; Sarah Nameh, 2nd Place, Cabrillo High School; and Erin McCallon, 1st Place, Lompoc High School

WHY SHOULD A BRANCH PARTICIPATE IN SPEECH TREK?

Pam Buchanan, Speech Trek Coordinator
AAUW Lompoc-Vandenberg Branch
pamelajoybuchanan@icloud.com

Participating in the Eleanor Stem Allen Memorial Speech Contest is a great tool for engaging high school students in speaking out on critical social issues, and having their voices be heard. Not only does the experience empower them in efforts to “Advance Democracy,” participating in learning the skills of public speaking “enhances interview and job-performance skills” - as stated in AAUW’s 2017 - 2018 Speech Trek brochure.

During the recent March For Our Lives, students speaking out publicly demonstrated how powerful their messages can be - and that those messages can and will promote change.

Erin McCallon, the first-place winner of AAUW Lompoc-Vandenberg Branch 2018 Speech Trek, gained confidence in using her voice in activism on issues that are critical to promoting equity, equality, social justice, and public safety. On March 14, 2018, she spoke out at her high school, and on March 24, 2018, Erin gave a powerful speech at March For Our Lives in Lompoc to a crowd of over 250 people. She inspired other students to use their voices, too. This was the impact of one high school student, who participated in one speech contest!

Branch participation in Speech Trek gives the opportunity to send a message to our communities about AAUW -- what we stand for, who we are, where we have been in history, and where we are going. Participating generates connectivity in the community and generates new members.



Zoo Curator, Bob Cisneros, and Jill Myers, the AAUW head of the Zoo Experience, at a presentation to high school students

GIRLS + ANIMALS THE ZOO EXPERIENCE

Dianne Owens, Director
Project Oversight Committee
Dianneowens9@gmail.com

AAUW Big Bear Valley Branch has been selected by the AAUW CA Board of Directors to receive the 2018 grant of \$500 for their “Zoo Experience Program.” The program will expose local teenagers to zoo managerial positions, which are currently held by very few women. They will also be introduced to the field of zoological sciences and other careers in the STEM fields.

The curator of the Big Bear Alpine Zoo and the Big Bear Valley Unified School District are collaborating with the branch and other community members in planning the mid-July project. The students will write and post entries daily describing their experiences along with their animal photography.

For more information please visit the Big Bear Valley Alpine Zoo website or contact Big Bear Valley Branch at jillrobin1402@gmail.com.



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AAUW California Office
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AAUW'S VALUE PROMISE:

BY JOINING AAUW, YOU BELONG TO A COMMUNITY THAT BREAKS THROUGH EDUCATIONAL AND ECONOMIC BARRIERS SO THAT ALL WOMEN AND GIRLS HAVE A FAIR CHANCE.

AAUW CALIFORNIA'S ELECTED AND APPOINTED LEADERS ARE WORKING TOGETHER TO DELIVER ON THE AAUW VALUE PROMISE. PLEASE JOIN WITH US -- THE PREMIER ORGANIZATION IN CALIFORNIA FOR WOMEN.

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