



# **Cultural Diversity, Education and Dignity- Women Globally**

**July 25, 2020**

**Facilitator: Indrani Chatterjee**



## AAUW History

AAUW's story begins in 1881, when a small group of female college graduates banded together to open the doors for women's career advancement and to encourage more women to pursue higher education.

AAUW have published hundreds of research reports, from an 1885 paper disproving a prevailing myth that college impairs a woman's fertility to, most recently, a study documenting the economic impact of workplace sexual harassment. The organization has supported the academic achievements of many thousands of scholars, from scientist Marie Curie, the first woman to win a Nobel Peace Prize, to astronaut Judith Resnik, the second woman in travel in space.

The advocacy efforts have propelled countless new laws, including the Equal Pay Act, first proposed in 1945 and finally passed in 1963; the Title IX amendment in 1972; the Family and Medical Leave Act in 1993; the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act in 2009; and the Paycheck Fairness Act, which was passed by both U.S. Representatives and U.S. Senate and signed by the President of United States in 2019. In many ways, the fight for gender equity is just getting started. Join us! [www.aauw.org](http://www.aauw.org)

**Mission:** To advance gender equity for women and girls through research, education, and advocacy.

**Vision:** Equity for all.

**Values:** Nonpartisan. Fact-based. Integrity. Inclusion and Intersectionality.

## AAUW International Influence

AAUW works to advance equality for women across the globe. Barriers still keep education, security and economic vitality out of reach for millions. Support and access to resources, education, health care and job opportunities are essential to give women pathways to thrive. AAUW also works closely with the United Nations and U.S. Department of State to improve the status of women throughout the world.

Through AAUW's special consultative status with the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs, AAUW attends briefings, organize events, and participate in coalitions to take action on issues that impact girls and women: access to education and training, women's economic security, opportunities in STEM, ending human trafficking and working with Commission on the Status of Women.

## AAUW California Mission

AAUW California facilitates California branches in meeting the vision and mission of AAUW by providing programs, education, and resources. <https://www.aauw-ca.org/>



## Importance of Cultural Diversity

The cultural diversity defines the existence of a variety of ethnic groups within a society. The cultural diversity also known as “Multiculturalism” consists of the following:

- Recognize and Respect the presence of other ethnic groups
- Acknowledge and Value the cultural differences
- Empowerment thru collaboration

Every person can make a positive contribution to the larger society like the United States of America in spite of their different ethnic background.

## Discussion Topics

1. Cultural Diversity benefits
2. What are the challenges speakers have confronted at the education institutions and at their workplaces?
3. Why is Cultural Diversity important for a non-profit membership organization like AAUW California?
4. How do speakers recommend bringing college educated women from the other ethnic group to AAUW organization?
5. How to motivate professional women with ages between 30-45 to join AAUW California?
6. AAUW California needs more diverse younger members. How to motivate them to join?



## Facilitator

### ***Indrani Chatterjee, BS, MBA***

Management Accounting

Member- Advancement Committee

AAUW National

Member- AAUW Torrance, CA



There is always something to be remembered for a lifetime journey. This happened to me when I left India to come to the United States in 1984 with my husband and my daughter to be part of that journey.

I was born in Kolkata, India and grew up in a traditional family. I attended a traditional all girls high school and completed undergraduate education in science from a girls college, while in India.

Since 1984, I have been living in the greater Los Angeles area and received another undergraduate degree in Financial Accounting and MBA from National University, San Diego. I have worked in management roles both in public and in private companies for over twenty-five years.

Since 1985, I have been a member of Dakshini Bengali Association of California. I was actively involved with the association's operation until 2003.

I joined the AAUW Torrance Branch in 2001. Since then, I have served as International Relation Chair (2002-2004), Treasurer (2013-2015) and as Branch President (2017-2019).

Then, I have expanded the boundaries to serve as International Advocacy in the AAUW California state level (2015-2020) and to serve as a member of Advancement Committee, AAUW National level (2019-2021).

I speak two other languages, Hindi & Bengali besides English.



## Speakers

### ***Diane Mitchell Henry, BA***

Entrepreneur and Marketing Consultant  
Chapter Chair, Greater Los Angeles County

American Women for International Understanding (AWIU)



Diane Mitchell Henry is a global social entrepreneur and marketing consultant. Diane is Chair of the American Women for International Understanding (AWIU) Greater Los Angeles County Chapter and is a past AWIU Board member. She is the Founder of the AWIU Career Opportunities for International Relations and Impact Awards Program (COIR), an empowerment leadership initiative for youth global engagement.

Other organization affiliations include: American Association of University Women, National Council of Negro Women Los Angeles Bethune Section, Past President, Women of Greater Los Angeles County, Founder and Chair.

Diane received her BA degree from the University of California Santa Cruz. She also attended Fuller Theological Seminary in the School of World Mission with a discipline for Cross Cultural Studies. Diane is a licensed Realtor and resides in Los Angeles.

### ***Herlinda Chico, BA***

Field Deputy for LA County Supervisor Janice Hahn  
Member & VP- Program, AAUW Long Beach Branch



Herlinda Chico is a long-time Long Beach resident and active educational leader. As a product of the California community college system, Herlinda has been committed to providing access to education for all, especially marginalized communities. She has fostered partnerships with Long Beach City College (LBCC) and local non-profits working with former foster youth and young women who escaped human trafficking. Herlinda was also instrumental in bringing LBCC classes to the Carmelitos housing development, the largest subsidized public housing in the Long Beach City College District.

In addition to her leadership in education, Herlinda has served on several boards and commissions including the Long Beach City College's Housing Selection Panel, Long Beach City College Basic Needs Task Force (assisting students in need), Conservation Corps of



Long Beach Advisory Board, the citywide Latino Economic Impact Study working group headed by Cal State Long Beach, Long Beach Parks and Recreation Commission, Co-Chair of the Mayor's Animal Care and Visioning Task Force, Chair of the Watershed Conservation Authority and Executive Board Member of the Gateway Cities Council of Governments to name just a few.

Herlinda attended Rio Hondo Community College and transferred to California State University, San Bernardino where she was President of the speech and debate team and earned a Bachelor's degree in Communications. Herlinda is a third-generation public servant and has 20 years of legislative and public affairs experience. She currently works for Los Angeles County Supervisor Janice Hahn as Field Deputy representing Long Beach, Signal Hill, and Catalina Island and also advises on education policy and labor relations as part of her portfolio.

Herlinda has been recognized for her dedicated community service by several Long Beach organizations including the Long Beach Branch NAACP President's Award, Long Beach Gay and Lesbian Pride Whitey Littlefield Bridge Builder Award and parade grand marshal, Centro Cha's Excellence in Community Service award and the Cambodian Association of America's Outstanding Public Service award.

### ***Rosaura P.C. Valle, PhD***

VP- Operations & Strategic Alliances, Milagen, Inc.  
Member & Secretary, AAUW San Francisco Branch



I consider myself Italian by heart, French by mind and American by action.

I was born and raised in an Italian family in Paris. Fully bilingual, I attended an Italian high school, and a French university. With a PhD in molecular biology and virology from the University Denis-Diderot-Paris, I settled in the US as a postdoctoral scientist in 1990, and spent five years at the National Institutes of Health (NIH) followed by two years at the Food & Drug Administration (FDA), in Bethesda, MD. At the time, my work focused on yeast genetics and the molecular virology of a yeast virus first, and then on dengue virus, a mosquito-borne virus that causes hemorrhagic fever in humans.

I was then recruited in a biotech startup, located in the Bay Area (CA) and dedicated to the development of novel blood-based biomarkers for the early detection and management of major cancers. I joined the company 20+ years ago, at inception, and as the company remained small, I was able to wear many different hats, thus contributing to multiple aspects of biotech development. I first worked as Senior Scientist in the technology development team, then shifted gears and became part of the executive team. As such, I supervised operations, handled academic collaborations, and carried out a variety of functions from science management to intellectual property and regulatory affairs.



I joined the AAUW-San Francisco Branch eager to contribute to Tech Trek in 2018, and became Secretary last year. Because of my strong interest in promoting STEM education, this year I launched a new program around the Tech Trek alumnae to support them in their exploration of STEM disciplines through the middle and high school years, and into their transition to college. As part of this new program, we held our first event in January: “Women in STEM: A Career Panel”. My goal is to expand this program not only to hold more events during the year but also to partner with neighboring branches in the Bay Area.

At the community level, I lead a beautification project in the San Francisco neighborhood I live in, which consists in the improvement of a 186-step staircase, called the Detroit Steps, with infrastructure, lighting, landscaping and tiling.

As a working mom, I raised a multicultural family, bridging cultural differences in my own household. The cookbook I am writing is a celebration of that. Indeed, food is the most fundamental expression of cultural identity, and the food is also a universal denominator across cultures. Most often, it is around a meal that cultural differences can be understood, and cultural diversity embraced.

### ***Sampurna (Sam) Dube, BA, MBA***

Consultant

Board Member, Dakshini Bengali Association

Greater Los Angeles Area



Sampurna was born American and raised as Asian Indian.

A native of the Greater Los Angeles area, Sampurna graduated from Mayfair High School and was active in the Mayfair Academic program. She was active with South Asian Unity in the campus while completing her BA degree in Psychology from University of California, Riverside. She has also earned her MBA in Executive Management from CIAM. Currently, Sampurna is working in the consulting field.

Since her teenage years, Sampurna fell in love with the nonprofit activities and contributed her time to various nonprofit organizations. She has served as Treasurer and the Board Member of Dakshini Bengali Association of California, an Asian

Indian organization. Currently, she is serving as Youth Director and Communication Manager.

Sampurna strongly believes in youth advocacy. She is the youth member of Federation of Indo American Associations and has been recognized by the US Senate for her community services. She will chair the youth group for North American Bengali Conference (NABC) 2021.



Sampurna's deep passion for charitable work has increased as she has decided to remain active in the non-profit community. She is a youth member of the Vedanta International Cultural Center and donates her time as youth volunteer.

Being a fan of arts in the form of film and television, Sampurna's inspirations have been Audrey Hepburn (for her compassion for others) and Lucille Ball (for her innovative business leadership).

Sampurna speaks Hindi & Bengali besides English.

## Special Acknowledgement

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Sandra Gabe	AAUW California Webmaster & Past California Board of Director, Communication Team
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“There are two kinds of people, those who do the work and those who take the credit. Try to be in the first group; there is less competition there.” - Indira Gandhi