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The holiday season has come and gone, and the AAUW California state board has many new and exciting plans for the coming year. In this edition, we highlight some of these plans and provide a sneak peek at the January 25th Membership webinar. Additionally, the Branch Support team will be discussing how to identify and recruit new leaders through the Nominating Committee process at the February 7th webinar.

Mark your calendars for the April 22nd Annual Event, and be sure to check out more information on Gov Trek, a new state project.

We're looking forward to a productive and successful 2023 for AAUW California and all of our branches.

Quick Links

[Committee News](#)

- [AAUW Fund](#)
- [Branch Support](#)
- [Communications](#)
- [Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion](#)
- [Finance](#)

- [Membership](#)
- [Nominations and Elections](#)
- [Program](#)
- [Public Policy](#)

[Project News](#)

- [Gov Trek](#)
- [Speech Trek](#)
- [Tech Trek](#)

AS SANDI SEES IT...

Sandi Gabe, President, AAUW California, statepresident@aauw-ca.org

JOIN THE MAGIC IN 2023!

In recent months, we've asked our members to share their motivations for stepping into leadership roles. We've shared some of their responses in the *California Connection* newsletter. Now, I'd like to share my own reasons for leaning into leadership and volunteering.

For me, leadership and volunteering go hand in hand. I'm motivated to take on these roles because they inspire me and make my world more vibrant and fulfilling. Through my leadership and volunteer work, I have the opportunity to:

- Meet new people and build connections, learning from and with them.
- Keep my brain active by learning new things and tackling new challenges.
- Use my passions to make a difference in the world. One example of this is expanding Gov Trek, a program that helps girls explore the world of politics and make their voices heard.

If you, too, are inspired by leadership and volunteering, there's a place for you on the AAUW California Board of Directors. The deadline to apply is March 1st, but why wait? Click [HERE](#) to let us know if you're interested in getting involved and being inspired.

Committee News

AAUW FUND

[Top](#)

Karen Vanderwerken, Director, AAUW Fund Committee Chair, aauwfund@aauw-ca.org

CHEERS TO ALL CALIFORNIA BRANCH FUND CHAIRS!

Because of you and your efforts, AAUW Fund exceeded our targeted goal of \$525,000 by an additional \$4,4682 through the end of November. And this exceeded last year's Fund donations by \$51,000! Did you notice that these figures didn't even include December's donations? So, there will be more! Yay!!! Check back next month.

Speaking of Fund, the Honorary Dianne Owens Fund was completed with total donations of \$5,845. These donations were designated for the Greatest Needs Fund too.

Please be sure to submit your:

- [State Named Gift Honoree](#) nomination by February 15th.
- [Branch Named Gift Honoree](#) nomination by March 1st.

What I need to know: California's donations to AAUW Fund exceeded goal!

What I need to do: Submit nominations for State and Branch Named Gift honorees by February 15th and March 1st respectively.

Should I include this in my branch newsletter? Yes, members should know how significant California's contribution is to AAUW Fund.

BRANCH SUPPORT

[Top](#)

Carol Holzgrafe and Sharyn Siebert, Directors, Branch Support Committee Co-Chairs, branch@aauw-ca.org

ASKUSFIRST! — AND YOU HAVE!

Here is what we have found:

Faltering branches have similarities. They have not been terribly active in recruiting new members. And they were hampered by the difficulty of renewals via the HUB coupled with the disruptions of Covid.

Here is what several branches have done to reinvigorate themselves:

Finding new leaders - We can help! Branch Support is offering the webinar, **"Take Me to Your Leader(s) – How to Find Them and What if You Can't?"** Add this February 7th webinar to your calendar. It will be the first of two on leaders — how to find them, how to train them, and how to engage

What I need to know: Branches are reinvigorating themselves with new leaders, great programs, and more social interaction. There will be a webinar on recruiting branch leaders on February 7th.

What I need to do: Register for the webinar.

Should I include this in my branch newsletter? No, this information is for branch leaders only.

them so they are satisfied and stay on. Click [HERE](#) to register.

Great programs - Some are offering timely and engaging programs. The [Santa Cruz County Branch](#) is focusing on Survivors of Human Trafficking on January 14th. Check their website for details and for news on a talk by Erika Woolsey, marine biologist extraordinaire, with former Tech Trekkers. Another outstanding branch program is [Morgan Hill's](#) Climate Action Group. These programs attract new members and encourage current members to take part.

Wine and Whine – Several branches meet monthly at a local watering hole to chat. What you get: new members, leaders, fun, and stronger AAUW-ship. Ask us for details. Since AAUW differs from other women's groups in having a social side, how better to introduce someone to our awesome organization? Bring a friend.

Click [HERE](#) for a head start on leadership ideas.

B2B Bonus: Quick Tips for Things to Try

- Want to renew the last few members who couldn't figure out the HUB? What about getting together for a Renewal Party? Meet with a tech-savvy member and a computer—bring your credit card, and get help finally getting onto the HUB to renew! And have fun in the process.

COMMUNICATIONS

[Top](#)

Dawn Johnson, Director, Communications Committee Chair, communications@aauw-ca.org

ATWITTER ABOUT TWITTER

We had quite a bit of feedback from members on our announcement in the *California Connection* that AAUW California terminated its Twitter account.

Some agreed; some did not. It was a good reminder that we have diverse opinions and political leanings in our organization which we should be mindful of in our communications. We responded to all the comments, thanking people for reading the *Connection* and for taking the time to send feedback. Some responded appreciatively; some didn't. It was a good reminder that most people just want to be heard.

Speaking of social media, note that our Facebook and Instagram pages are packed with content specific to AAUW California these days, which was a recommendation from the marketing consultants we engaged last year. We're currently running six(!) promotional campaigns: *Gov Trek*, *The Kindness of Color* webinar, the *Growing Membership* webinar, the *About*

What I need to know:

Communications currently has six social media campaigns running with content relevant only to AAUW California members.

What I need to do: Share, repost, copy, etc. our social media posts to extend their reach.

Should I include this in my branch newsletter? No, this information is for branch leaders only.

AAUW: *Did You Know?* spots, and the new *Famous Women in History* and *Days to Celebrate* announcements (look for the fun recent post on “Call a Friend Day.”)

The graphics for all of these are really eye-catching!

Please share our posts on your own social media pages or cut and paste the information into your newsletters.

B2B Bonus: Quick Tips for Things to Try

- Our team is increasingly using—and loving—the online graphics design tool [Canva](#). It’s free. It’s easy. It looks professional! Try using it to jazz up some of your branch communications such as social media and website posts, emails, or branch documents.

DIVERSITY, EQUITY, & INCLUSION

[Top](#)

Stormy Miller Sabia, Director, DEI Committee Chair, diversity@aauw-ca.org

LET’S TALK DEI: RECAP AND THANK YOU!

The AAUW California DEI Committee sends a great big THANK YOU for your participation in our first DEI coordinator/director community conversation - “Let’s Talk DEI.” We prepared an agenda that identified the goals of the meeting, organized breakout rooms to provide you an opportunity to get to know one another, and hoped your group of DEI branch coordinators/ directors would become collaborators around issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion. Not only did you do just that, but you collectively took the ball and hit it way out of the park! All the breakout rooms buzzed with friendly introductions and candid biographical information that showed amazing variety yet a similar longstanding commitment to equity for women and girls.

While we thought we would have to spend time explaining the meaning of DEI, you have been advocating for diversity, equity and inclusion one way or another for many years in your own milieu. Those coordinators/directors who were new to DEI quickly grasped the scope of the challenge ahead and didn’t seem to shy away. We couldn’t have asked for a better outcome from Session I. And to those who provided feedback and input, thank you for your openness and transparency as we work to improve the space and community dialogue.

Did you miss Let’s Talk DEI: Session I???

Here’s a [link](#) and password (653525) to access the recording!

With that tremendous momentum behind us, we want to maintain the collaboration and sisterhood that developed at our first meeting as we plan at least two more events between February and April. Please be on the lookout for a

What I need to know: The DEI Committee’s first peer group meeting of branch coordinators/directors was very successful.

What I need to do: Alert your DEI coordinator to be on the lookout for an email surveying the best dates/times for the next two peer group meetings. Provide the link and password to anyone who was unable to attend.

Should I include this in my branch newsletter? Yes, provide members with the recording link and password if they are interested in the peer group discussion.

separate email from the DEI Committee requesting your input on dates and times. That email should arrive in your inbox by January 6th. Let's Talk DEI Facilitators are Lenore Gallin and Barbara St. Urbain, members of the AAUW California DEI Committee.

Looking forward to working together in an equitable New Year!

FINANCE

[Top](#)

Roli Wendorf, Chief Financial Officer, Finance Committee Chair, cfo@aauw-ca.org

DRIVING STUDENTS FOR AAUW – INSURANCE ISSUES

A branch recently inquired about liability insurance coverage when a branch member volunteers to drive students to an AAUW event in their own car. This may happen with Tech Trek Alumni Group (TTAG) activities or other AAUW events. It is a generous gesture on the part of our members, but the liability implications must be considered.

With the AAUW liability insurance coverage, the primary insurance will be the auto insurance of the member driver, and AAUW insurance is a secondary provider.

When there is a need to drive minors, it is better to have signed parental permission to say that they understand the risks involved and agree not to hold AAUW liable. We have an example permission form which was developed in consultation with our attorney for a specific project and could be modified for other branch projects.

In addition to the parental permission form, you should have a form for the member volunteer driver to fill out that asks for their car and insurance information and signed consent to follow safety guidelines. We have an example of this form also. To obtain examples of the forms, see our website under [Forms and Documents](#) or contact the CFO [@cfo@aauw-ca.org](mailto:cfo@aauw-ca.org) or our office manager at office@aauw-ca.org.

What I need to know: Branches must understand the issues of liability insurance coverage when having members drive students to AAUW events.

What I need to do: Review the explanation in this article and obtain samples of the related forms as directed.

Should I include this in my branch newsletter? No, this information is for branch leaders only.

MEMBERSHIP

[Top](#)

Marsha Swails, Membership Committee Chair, membership@aauw-ca.org

WOMEN WITH A DREAM: LET'S GROW!

As I say goodbye to 2022, I often think about opportunities that I should have pursued. One particular one makes me realize that finding new members for AAUW is as simple as asking. A close friend of mine was willing to meet with my branch leadership team to talk about some creative fundraising ideas. She was about to leave on a trip to

What I need to know: The Membership Committee is hosting the webinar "Growing AAUW California" on January 25th with new ideas for member recruitment.

What I need to do: Register for the webinar and encourage your other branch leaders to join you.

Europe when I became ill and needed surgery. After she returned and I recovered, I mentioned that I would still like her to meet with our branch leaders. She hesitated. Then she said, “I was waiting for you to ask me to join AAUW, but another friend invited me to join a group in Manhattan Beach. I just don’t feel I have the time now.” True confession. Here I am a leader in AAUW and I missed this opportunity. I still hope to draw her in, because I see her skill and talent. She actually wanted to find a community of women. I will not give up on her, but I see that all I had to do was ask. I truly believe she will still join! (I have a plan ☺)

What did I learn? We are dreamers. We look at the girls who join Tech Trek, Speech Trek, and now Gov Trek and we viscerally know that our mission to empower women and girls can change the world. I should never hesitate to extend the chance to simply say the words “join me” to be part of a life-changing organization.

On January 25th, the Membership Committee invites you to our webinar “Growing AAUW California.” We are so excited to share some new ideas to energize and grow your branches. What might be in store for 2023 for your branch? Be part of this energizing discussion!!! Register [HERE](#).

B2B Bonus: Quick Tips for Things to Try

- January is the first month of 2023. At your next branch meeting simply do this: ask each person present to invite a friend, neighbor, family member, or colleague to come to an AAUW event or meeting. Then, when they come, “ASK” those people to join. This is exciting and energizing!!! Let’s grow!

Should I include this in my branch newsletter? Yes, members might enjoy this story of a “missed opportunity” and be reminded to also just ASK.

NOMINATIONS & ELECTIONS

[*Top*](#)

Charmen Goehring, Nominations & Elections Chair, nominating@aauw-ca.org

JOIN THE AAUW CALIFORNIA TEAM!

This spring we will be electing a CFO, a president-elect, and three directors. In the last issue, we focused on the duties of the CFO. In this issue, let’s consider the responsibilities of a state director.

Directors are expected to attend monthly meetings of the state leadership team and a summer retreat. The work includes chairing a state committee, developing a strategic plan for their committee, reporting accomplishments to members at state meetings, reviewing and approving the annual state budget, communicating with other directors and branch leaders, hosting relevant webinars, organizing peer group meetings, and writing monthly articles for the Board to Board.

For a more complete description of duties and responsibilities, click [HERE](#) to read the Policies and Procedures.

What I need to know: There are five openings on the state board of directions. Anyone interested in observing an actual meeting is invited to the in-person leadership team meeting on the weekend of January 14th in San Diego.

What I need to do: Consider running for a position on the board of directors or encouraging a potential candidate in your branch.

Should I include this in my branch newsletter? Yes, encourage your members to step up to a state position.

Being on the board is work, but it is also a wonderful way to meet other outstanding leaders who come from all parts of California. You won't regret joining the AAUW California team!

A CHANCE TO ATTEND A BOARD MEETING!

Our state leadership team meeting is not quite a vacation, but it's close! We don't typically plunge into the pool, but we do have passionate conversations, yummy food, and lots of dessert while sharing our successes and planning for upcoming events.

Join us and see what all the buzz is about when your AAUW California Leadership Team meets at the Bay Club Hotel in San Diego in January. Vacations have options. So do you! Choose one or both opportunities to meet the leadership team.

- Join the no-host "Meet and Greet" at 5 pm on Friday, January 13, 2023, in the lounge.
- Observe the leadership team meeting on Saturday, January 14th (9 am – 4 pm) and/or Sunday January 15th (8 am – 12 noon). See how we work. Saturday lunch is included for the first ten people who sign up. You're responsible for your own accommodations if you don't live in San Diego.

Click [HERE](#) to save a seat for YOU. **Please respond by Friday, January 10th so that we can have enough dessert!**

- The [Bay Club](#) Hotel
- 2131 Shelter Island Drive
- San Diego, California 92106

PROGRAM

[Top](#)

Janice Lee, Program Committee Chair, program@aauw-ca.org

START THE NEW YEAR WITH EXTRA KINDNESS AND WISDOM

We know branch leaders are kind and wise... we also know you always welcome a learning experience. So mark your calendars for two webinars in January that are sure to be rewarding.

The Kindness of Color, Tuesday, January 10th at 7 pm

Two families: one Japanese American and one Mexican American. Two true stories of their separate battles with racism, incarceration, and school segregation in the WWII era. Unexpectedly, their lives intersect, paving the way for a landmark court decision in California. Join author and descendant Janice Munemitsu for the intimate story of how the kindness of friends and strangers provided hope and

What I need to know: Two webinars of interest will be offered in January.

What I need to do: Share the webinar registration information with members, specifically those in leadership roles who will find the membership recruitment presentation helpful.

Should I include this in my branch newsletter? Yes, encourage all members to attend *The Kindness of Color* for a compelling story and *Growing AAUW California* for tips on being member recruitment ambassadors for the branch.

strength to persevere against unjust treatment. Invite your friends for an evening of enlightenment.

Register [HERE](#).

Growing AAUW California, Wednesday, January 25th at 7 pm

The AAUW California Membership Committee will be sharing fresh ideas and creative approaches on how you can recruit and maintain new members. Recruiting new members is not just a branch officer's responsibility. Every member is an AAUW ambassador within our communities.

Learn how to get members engaged in the work of identifying and persuading new members to join in our dedicated association. Be sure to invite all branch members to this webinar for gaining new wisdom for the start of an exciting and challenging 2023.

Register [HERE](#).

If you have an evening open on January 10th and January 25th, consider an AAUW California webinar to enhance your perspective on how extensive kindness can be and to gain a little wisdom about membership recruitment that will go a long way.

PUBLIC POLICY

[Top](#)

Kathleen Harper, Director, Public Policy Committee Chair, publicpolicy@aauw-ca.org

NEW CONGRESS, NEW LEGISLATURE, NEW OPPORTUNITIES TO GET INVOLVED IN PUBLIC POLICY - SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE IN 2023!

Your AAUW California Public Policy team has been hard at work planning all kinds of public policy activities to engage you, your members, and your branches. Here's a preview:

- January – Lobby Days Opportunity for all members to sign up to help advocate for our priority bills. Sign up to participate and register for training [HERE](#). Deadline is January 18th.
- February – [Black History Month](#).
- March – Busy Month!
 - Women's History Month
 - AAUW California Legislative Agenda released, will be available on our website
 - Equal Pay Day – March 15th*. Opportunity to educate your community and your membership about the Gender Pay Gap

What I need to know: There are extensive upcoming opportunities to become involved with AAUW California public policy issues, in particular participating in Lobby Days to meet with legislators and advocate for top priority bills.

What I need to do: Be sure these monthly events are noted on your branch calendar and in your branch communications.

Should I include this in my branch newsletter? Yes, share the opportunity to your members to sign up for Lobby Days and make their voices heard with local legislators. Deadline: January 18th.

- Lobby Days! Mandatory training for all participants on March 20th; two days of advocacy with state legislators, March 21st and March 22nd
- April – Proposed changes for 2023-25 Public Policy Priorities submitted for vote by all members. Opportunity for all members to weigh in on the committee's recommendations.
- May – Asian American and Pacific Islander Women Equal Pay Day, May 3rd
- June – Pride Month. Opportunity to educate your members on the challenges faced by women in the LGBTQ+ communities

*Note that these dates are tentative; they are not official AAUW-confirmed dates at this point and may be subject to change.

If you joined AAUW because you believe in our mission to advance equity for women and girls through advocacy, education and research, don't miss one or more of these opportunities to get involved!

Project News

GOV TREK

[Top](#)

Shauna Ruyle, Gov Trek Program Director, govtrek@aauw-ca.org

WE ARE CLOSING THE GAP!

The leadership gender gap in CA is already changing with your promotion of Gov Trek. A sincere THANK YOU to branch leaders!

We have a diverse group of 67 girls from across California registered for Gov Trek and we are getting ready to launch an amazing program on January 28th!

It is so inspirational to see all the young leaders aspiring to public service and elected office who have registered for Gov Trek.

We've also invited 16 women leaders and legislators to address Gov Trek participants throughout the program. Topics covered will include elective office at different levels of government, the skills and challenges involved with holding office, and other related career paths in leadership and political participation. Excuse the name-drop! Here are just a few of our confirmed speakers:

- Ellen Montanari, Deputy Campaign Manager, Rep Mike Levin (D-CA)

What I need to know: Thanks to the branches, Gov Trek enrollment is currently 67 with room for more registrations. Deadline is January 14th.

What I need to do: Consider a final promotion to your schools to encourage more sign ups, possibly mentioning the stellar lineup of speakers.

Should I include this in my branch newsletter? Yes, members should be encouraged to pass along the information to eligible girls.

- Kathleen Van Osten, AAUW Advocate and Lobbyist
- Hilary Nemchik, Strategic Communications Executive, Former Director of Communications for the San Diego City Attorney's Office
- Summer Stephan, San Diego County District Attorney

Stay tuned for more speaker announcements! These women leaders will really inspire and energize students, as well as our volunteers implementing the program. The speaker sessions will be recorded and available to AAUW California members.

There's still room for additional students! Program capacity is 150. Encourage a girl to register online [HERE](#) today! The registration deadline is January 14th.

SPEECH TREK

[Top](#)

Marlene Cain, Speech Trek Program Director, speechtrek@aauw-ca.org

HOW ARE SPEECH TOPICS CHOSEN?

“Good job to all of you for making Speech Trek happen year after year...the topics you choose are outstanding!” said Remy Parmar, Fremont Branch Speech Trek Chair.

Thank you, Remy! Many of you have asked how the topics are chosen--good question! Topics change yearly, and are frequently inspired by AAUW public policy priorities, such as this year's topic:

“How can communities, organizations and citizens of all ages help protect and expand voting rights?”

The Committee strives to ensure that the topic reflects the AAUW California mission, is timely, and is of interest to high school students.

Once a topic has been selected, the AAUW California Speech Trek Committee submits it to the board of directors for approval. Topics are announced at the annual April meeting for the upcoming year.

Beyond the topic, the entire Speech Trek program inspires students beyond the podium, according to the Fremont branch. Remy reported, “We have students writing their college essays about the Speech Trek experience.”

What a wonderful way to kick off January - Happy New Year, and Happy Speech Trek 2023!

B2B Bonus: Quick Tips for Things to Try

What I need to know: Speech Trek topics are chosen annually, inspired by current AAUW public policy priorities.

What I need to do: Submit an idea for a topic for 2024.

Should I include this in my branch newsletter? Yes, members might be interested in how the topics are chosen and have suggestions for 2024.

- Have an idea for the 2024 topic? We'd love to hear from you! Email your suggestion to speechtrek@aauw-ca.org

TECH TREK

[Top](#)

Mary Isaac, Tech Trek Program Director, techtrek@aauw-ca.org.

TECH TREK PREPARATIONS ARE IN FULL SWING!

January is a key month for Tech Trek because the preliminary camp plan goes to the board of directors for approval, including what each camp's sponsorship fees are.

We have been hard at work increasing residential camp capacity. We'll be recommending adding a second week in July at the Sonoma site. This will allow us to accommodate 730 campers, which is very close to the 791 slots that branches preliminarily requested.

Sonoma and Davis camp directors are currently working on a plan that should provide a satisfactory number of camperships for all affected branches. This will be formally communicated to branches following the MOU deadline of January 20.

Branch presidents: please complete your MOU by the deadline to be counted! Click [HERE](#) for the form.

Distribution: This email was sent to the following distribution lists: All distribution lists.

What I need to know: Tech Trek has been working to fill nearly all branch camper slot requests. A second week at the Sonoma site is being planned.

What I need to do: If participating in Tech Trek, be sure you have completed your MOU.

Should I include this in my branch newsletter? No, this information is for branch leaders only.

To unsubscribe please send an email to webteam@aauw-ca.org and request to be removed from the distribution list.

www.AAUW-CA.org

