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December 2023

You may have noticed that all Board to Board emails have a link at the top that says "View in browser." The reason for this option is that the appearance of some emails may vary depending on the device or email provider. If you have formatting issues, broken links, or oddly sized images, try clicking on the link and you will see the entire email as it was designed to be read. Another advantage of reading the email in the browser is that you can send the browser link to someone. For example, send the link to your newsletter editor asking them to include the Speech Trek article in your next newsletter.

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### As Sandi Sees It

**Sandi Gabe**, President, AAUW California, [statepresident@aauw-ca.org](mailto:statepresident@aauw-ca.org)

#### LOOKING FOR THE PERFECT HOLIDAY GIFT?

Happy Holidays from my home to yours. Navigating the holidays sometimes feels like an obstacle course as I try to celebrate my own beliefs while being sensitive to others' preferences. Sometimes I get tongue-tied trying to decide whether to say, "Happy Holidays," "Merry Christmas," or "Happy Hannukah" in an effort not to exclude or offend anyone.

This time of the year brings celebrations, opportunities to gather with family and friends. It can also lead to an increased feeling of isolation and loneliness. A 2020 study found that social isolation and loneliness pose serious health risks for the older adult population. Social isolation has been associated with about a 50% increased risk of dementia and other serious health problems.

Do you know someone who might be isolated or lonely?

You can make a difference by giving the gift of caring. Pause the frantic holiday preparations and reach out to a friend, member, or neighbor whose social circle might be small, and share a conversation. One person. One short conversation. One amazing outcome. You'll be astonished at how good this small act of kindness can feel. I encourage you to do it.

Merry Christmas.

## Committee News

### AAUW FUND [TOP](#)

*Karen Vanderwerken, AAUW Fund Committee chair, [aauwfund@aauw-ca.org](mailto:aauwfund@aauw-ca.org).*

#### QUICK REVIEW OF YEAR-END ACTIONS!

##### Donations

Fund donations from California through October 31st stand at **\$231,804**. Please keep donations coming through December 31, 2023!

##### Fund Peer Group Meeting

The next meeting of the peer group will be Thursday, December 14th, at 7 pm. Fund chairs will receive a link to register shortly. There was a lot of feedback from the November attendees about how helpful these meetings are, and folks enjoy meeting each other and contributing ideas. Join us!

##### Fund Speakers

Our scheduler, Kathryn Brown, is busy connecting branch requests with Fund fellows and grantees. Viewing their [videos](#) helps with your selection process.

If you are considering a speaker for an in-person event, be sure to determine if that person needs transportation assistance.

##### Processing Donations

Donations may be made by the member directly or by a branch leader on the member's behalf.

- Donation by member (Preferred): The simplest way for a member to donate directly is online through the Community Hub. This is the easiest and most efficient way to contribute.
- Donation via branch leader. There are two possible ways:
  - The branch leader accesses the Renewals and Donations function in the Community Hub and uses the member's credit card to make an online donation to the AAUW Greatest Need Fund.
  - The branch leader submits the Contribution Report Form with accompanying check(s) from the member(s) or the branch, following these [instructions](#).

You, our Fund chairs, are the heart of AAUW's support. Thank you for encouraging your members to support the unrestricted Greatest Needs Fund. Your dollars matter!

**What I need to know:** The deadline for Fund donations is December 31st.

**What I need to do:** Remind your Fund chairs to watch for an email to register for the December 14th peer group meeting.

**Should I include this in my branch newsletter?** Yes, share the news that Fund donations have reached \$231,804 and remind members to donate online until December 31st.

### BRANCH DEVELOPMENT [TOP](#)

*Sharyn Siebert, Director, Branch Support [branch@aauw-ca.org](mailto:branch@aauw-ca.org)*

*Sigrid Moranz, Director, Leadership, [leader-dev@aauw-ca.org](mailto:leader-dev@aauw-ca.org)*

*Marsha Swails, Director, Membership, [membership@aauw-ca.org](mailto:membership@aauw-ca.org)*

## SHARING MORE INFORMATION AND RESOURCES!

Join us on Tuesday, January 23, 2024, for our next Branch Development Peer Group meeting to explore more ways to help you keep your branch thriving. Click [HERE](#) to register. The session will be recorded and posted on the website [HERE](#).

**What I need to know:** The next Branch Development Peer Group meeting is Tuesday, January 23rd.

**What I need to do:** Be sure the appropriate branch leaders register.

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

## COMMUNICATIONS [TOP](#)

*Dawn Johnson, Director, Communication Committee chair, [communications@aauw-ca.org](mailto:communications@aauw-ca.org)*

### MISSING EMAILS??

We never thought we'd say this, but are you getting enough emails?

We routinely hear, "But I didn't get the email!" You can take a couple of steps to be sure you don't miss a single word from AAUW California.

- Check your spam folder. In addition, some email programs take matters into their own hands and preemptively file emails into folders such as "Social" or "Promotions."
- Once you find an errant email, take note of where it was put so you can check there periodically.
- Add the domain "@aauw-ca.org" to your email provider's "safe senders" list. Here's [how](#). If your email system's "safe" list requires a full email, add "[siteadmin@aauw-ca.org](mailto:siteadmin@aauw-ca.org)."
- Be aware of when routine communications are scheduled and watch for them. For example, the B2B is published on the 5th of the month and the *California Connection* on the 8th.
- Use your email program's Search function and poke around by subject matter or key word, such as "peer group" or "bylaws" or "reminder."

Don't be in the dark!

### B2B Bonus: Quick Tips for Things to Try

You've seen those boxes filled with dark squiggly lines everywhere: menus, fliers, advertisements, etc. These QR codes (which means "Quick Response" in case you were always wondering) are simply an easy way for someone to link to material you'd like them to see easily, especially by just pointing their phone's camera at it. The internet is filled with free tools to easily generate a QR code to place on your communications to link to your website or program announcement flier or whatever. Here's [one](#).

**What I need to know:** There are some actions you can take to avoid missing emails from AAUW California.

**What I need to do:** Follow the instructions to update your email settings.

**Should I include this in my branch newsletter?** Yes, provide them with the instructions to change their settings to be sure of receiving important emails.

## **DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION [TOP](#)**

*Charmen Goehring, Director, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, [diversity@aguw-ca.org](mailto:diversity@aguw-ca.org)*

### **MOVING BEYOND CULTURAL COMPETENCY**

For many years now, cultural competency has been cited as the ideal way to be more inclusive. And it certainly does help one on a journey towards being more equitable and inclusive. But, cultural humility is really a better aspiration. Whereas cultural competency says, “I am an expert,” and leads to a feeling of knowing everything there is to know about others, cultural humility says, “You are the expert,” and leads to a lifelong process of learning, self-reflection, and knowing we don’t have all the answers. Both are similar in that they work to address inequities and encourage collaborative work.

As we navigate the holiday season, I am reminded of a meme I saw on social media that says, “Why do I say Happy Holidays? Between November 1st and January 15th, the world’s major religions celebrate at least 29 different holidays. Mine isn’t the only one that matters.” I hope you might consider this in regards to your branches and the journey towards a more diverse, equitable, and inclusive membership.

As a reminder, there will not be a DEI Branch Peer Group chat this month. We will next meet on January 16, 2024.

**What I need to know:** Consideration of cultural humility is an aspirational elevation of cultural competency in branch activities.

**What I need to do:** Work with your DEI coordinator to help branch activities demonstrate cultural humility.

**Should I include this in my branch newsletter?** Yes, your members can benefit from understanding the different DEI efforts your branch is making

## **FINANCE [TOP](#)**

*Kathy Ford, Chief Financial Officer, Finance Committee chair, [cfo@aguw-ca.org](mailto:cfo@aguw-ca.org)*

### **BRANCH ACCOUNTING CAN BE COMPLICATED!**

As we approach the end of 2023, it’s time to start thinking of what needs to be filed in January for the calendar year and what needs to be planned for the new fiscal year.

Yes, there seems to be so much to know when accounting for a branch’s fundraising and programs and reporting it all.

Everyone interested should attend the Finance Peer Group session on Thursday, December 7th, 6:30-8 pm. Click [HERE](#) to register.

Branch finance VPs and treasurers will have the opportunity to learn more about:

- sales and use tax
- 1099 requirements
- monthly reporting and accounting system options
- annual budgeting for the next fiscal year and financial reviews

If you cannot attend on December 7th, the presentation will be recorded and the presentation documents will be posted to the Finance [Peer Group](#) page on the website.

Bring your questions and your experiences to share with your peers. It's a great opportunity to learn more about branch finance requirements and how others manage them.

**What I need to know:** The December 7th peer group meeting will cover requirements for the end of this year and preliminary budget work for next year.

**What I need to do:** Remind your branch financial officer(s) to attend.

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

## **NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS [TOP](#)**

*Deanna Arthur, Nominations and Election chair, [nominating@aauw-ca.org](mailto:nominating@aauw-ca.org)*

### **IT'S ALIVE, IT'S ALIVE.....**

The nominations and election information is live on the website. Please click [HERE](#) to visit the page and nominate yourself for your dream job. I know this is the time of year when everyone wants money and gifts from all of us. What organization is more deserving of the gift of your time and expertise? Help women and girls achieve their goals. Everything AAUW does centers on this objective. Think about it and do something about it – you don't want to think back in 10-20 years, "I should have run for state office."

Please call me at 626-818-6536 with questions, concerns, and your intention to run. You know you want to do it. Don't be shy. Sit down at the computer and start filling out the form. The deadline is March 1st, but remember your placement on the website is based on your application date.

### **B2B Bonus: Quick Tips for Things to Try**

Don't forget to let me know of any possible candidates who are just waiting to be asked.

**What I need to know:** Information on the AAUW California board election, including the nomination form to run for office, is available on the website.

**What I need to do:** Look for possible candidates in your membership and encourage them to submit a nomination form.

**Should I include this in my branch newsletter?** Yes, you may have members considering volunteering at the state level.

## **PUBLIC POLICY [TOP](#)**

*Amy Hom and Melissa Maceyko, Directors, Public Policy Committee Co-chairs, [publicpolicy@aauw-ca.org](mailto:publicpolicy@aauw-ca.org)*

### **SAVE THE DATE! LOBBY DAYS 2024 WILL BE HELD ON TUESDAY AND WEDNESDAY, APRIL 2nd AND 3rd**

We encourage all AAUW California members to participate in this act of advocacy that is essential for achievement of our legislative priorities. In addition to our members, we plan to invite college students to join the event. Their participation will enable us to reach more legislative offices, and we hope that this introduction to our organization will inspire these advocacy-minded young people who share our values to join AAUW.

We are planning a hybrid event with meetings scheduled virtually over Zoom as well as in person at the Capitol. Members who live in and around Sacramento will have the option to participate in person. Legislative offices are willing to meet virtually or in person, and the virtual option makes it easier for AAUW members around the state to participate.

Training materials on the bills and the event will be posted on the state website in mid-March, and a mandatory training webinar will be held on March 25th.

Lobby Days provide a wonderful opportunity to meet with your legislators and advocate for legislation to promote gender equity and improve the lives of women and girls. We hope that you will join us in this important activity to advance our values.

An interest survey including a registration form will arrive in your inbox mid-January. Be sure to complete and return the form to be added to the communications list for the event.

#### **B2B Bonus:** Quick Tips for Things to Try

In the new year, the Public Policy Committee will be launching a social media education program. Sign up for Legislative Action Alerts [HERE](#)! Share the sign-up link with anyone you think may be interested. AAUW members and non-members are welcome. Just copy and paste the link above.

**What I need to know:** Lobby Days are scheduled for April 2nd and 3rd and give members an opportunity to meet with legislators virtually or in person to advocate for legislation supported by AAUW.

**What I need to do:** Add the dates for Lobby Days to your branch calendar and encourage your members to register to participate.

**Should I include this in my branch newsletter?** Yes, make your members aware of how they can personally influence the legislative process.

## Program News

### **GOV TREK** [TOP](#)

*Shauna Oenning Ruyle, Gov Trek Program Director and Gov Trek Committee chair, [govtrek@aauw-ca.org](mailto:govtrek@aauw-ca.org)*

#### **WE'RE GAINING MOMENTUM...**

We are pleased to announce that, to date, 40 young women leaders from across California have registered for Gov Trek 2024! Thank you to the inspiring branch leaders who rallied girls in their communities to join AAUW California's leadership program for high school girls.

Our aim is to have 140 students in the program, and we need at least 50 to proceed. With your help, we can inspire more women to step up and take the lead! Together, let's drive the change we want to see and elevate more women to leadership roles.

**Share the Gov Trek flier** with your local high schools, public libraries, and nonprofit partners, and post it at Starbucks! The flier (in English and Spanish) can be found [HERE](#).

**Share the Gov Trek informational video** on your Facebook account. Find the video link [HERE](#). Cut and paste the video link into your post. The video will appear as the image. You can remove the video URL from the text portion and replace it with the following text:



ATTENTION: California High School Junior and Senior Girls

Are you or someone you know interested in exploring career opportunities in public service or elected positions? If so, tell them about this free virtual program presented by AAUW California.

Students can register online, on a first come, first-served basis on the AAUW California website.

The registration deadline is January 20, 2024.

### **Are You Taking An RMD? The Smartest Thing You Can Use It For Right Now is Help Women Run & Win!**

Make a tax-deductible donation by December 10th (if using RMD) to Gov Trek, and share your financial success with the next generation of women leaders! Every act of generosity adds up to great change!

Donating will contribute towards providing state-level awards, prizes, and Gov Trek merchandise for the winners of the yearly simulated election campaign challenge.

Make your check payable to "AAUW California SPF" and write Gov Trek in the memo field. Mail to: AAUW California Gov Trek, 729 Greenery Cir., Oceanside, CA 92057. Or donate online [HERE](#).

Our heartfelt thanks for backing Gov Trek! With your help, we can inspire the next generation of women leaders to new heights.

Let's keep the momentum going! As always, thank you for your support of Gov Trek!

**What I need to know:** Gov Trek registrations are coming in. The goal is to enroll 140 students by January 20, 2024.

**What I need to do:** Promote Gov Trek in your local high school(s), using the effective materials available on the website.

**Should I include this in my branch newsletter?** Yes, share the excitement of Gov Trek's momentum and remind members that they can donate to support this novel program. only.

### **SPEECH TREK [TOP](#)**

**Lana Widman**, Speech Trek Program Director, and Speech Trek Committee chair,  
[spechtrek@aauw-ca.org](mailto:spechtrek@aauw-ca.org)

### **SPEECH TREK SEASON IS IN FULL SWING!**

Sixteen branches are holding Speech Trek contests this season. Some ambitious branches have already held their competitions!

If your branch has already held your competition or is not holding a competition this season AND you receive an inquiry from an interested student, please refer them to the California Online Branch. The Speech Trek coordinator for California Online is Cathy Foxhoven and she can be contacted at [iambasque@gmail.com](mailto:iambasque@gmail.com).

Don't forget: Mark January 10, 2024, on your calendar for tips on how to prepare your judges. Look for the announcement with the Zoom registration link coming soon!

**What I need to know:** Speech Trek is underway with sixteen branches participating.

**What I need to do:** Refer interested students to the California Online Branch if your contest is over already or you did not hold one. Remind your Speech Trek coordinator to attend.

**Should I include this in my branch newsletter?** Yes, let members know students can participate through the California Online Branch if your branch has completed the competition or is not participating.

## **TECH TREK [TOP](#)**

**Mary Isaac**, Tech Trek Program Director, and Tech Trek Committee chair, [techtrek@aauw-ca.org](mailto:techtrek@aauw-ca.org).

### **THE ELVES HAVE BEEN AT WORK!**

As we get ready for the holiday season, let us not forget all the folks toiling in the backroom getting a brand new, shiny Tech Trek season ready for you in 2024, nor the new volunteers we will be adding in the next few months.

And especially, let's not forget the newly minted "elves" who are here to help you spread the word about the program: our past campers, now Tech Trek alumnae!

For the past year, the Tech Trek Alumnae Community Advisory Board has been busy working with the TT committee to create a [toolkit](#) for branch folks and alumnae to use as a guideline for getting more former campers engaged locally, so consider this your first gift of the season!

Branch coordinators, please don't forget to complete the [Branch Participation Request form](#) by December 15th telling us how many campers you wish to sponsor and how many volunteers you can send to help.

Recordings of the Tech Trek Branch Coordinator Peer Group meetings are available on the website under Branch Tools [HERE](#). Scroll to Tech Trek. The recording of the November 30th peer group meeting is now posted there.

### **B2B Bonus:** Quick Tips for Things to Try

Add [techtrek@aauw-ca.org](mailto:techtrek@aauw-ca.org) as a Safe Sender in your email settings to ensure you get all of the important mailings in the next few months.

**What I need to know:** December 15th is the deadline for submitting your request to participate in Tech Trek. Tech Trek has released a toolkit for branches to establish alumnae groups.

**What I need to do:** Be sure you submit the Branch Participation Request form by December 15th indicating how many campers and volunteers you anticipate.

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



AAUW California

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