



Vantage

Diversity in the New Year

Mary Ann Takemoto and Ginny Baxter, Co-Program Vice Presidents

Welcome to February!

And Happy Lunar New Year, 2023, as we usher in the Year of the Rabbit. The Lunar New Year officially began on January 22nd, and is celebrated in many Asian communities around the world, as well as our local Asian American communities. The Lunar New Year is traditionally a time to honor ancestors and celebrate with family. It marks the end of winter and beginning of spring, and is a time of renewal and reflection as we begin a new year.



For our February program, we will continue our work in the area of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) with a presentation by Reena Hajat Carroll, the Executive Director for the California Conference for Equality and Justice (CCEJ). Reena will talk about bias and identity and the important work CCEJ does with young people in cross-racial groups. Her work is based on the premise that there are many opportunities to address injustice in our daily lives, and we can all learn to challenge racism, prejudice and discrimination.

Reena has over 14 years of experience in the DEI field. She has trained individuals on the importance of using dialogue to understand different perspectives. CCEJ has had an important presence in Long Beach for over 60 years. Their mission is to eliminate bias, bigotry and racism through education, training and advocacy for youth and adults in Long Beach and surrounding communities.

We hope that you will join us at the Branch meeting for this thought-provoking and important program on Saturday, February 4th! See the meeting information on the back page. Reservations should be made at aauwlongbeach.reservations@gmail.com

Visit our Website for more info: <https://longbeach-ca.aauw.net/>

Great Decisions Discussion Groups

The groups will be discussing global issues topics including Energy Geopolitics, War Crimes, China and the U.S., Economic Warfare, Politics in Latin America, Global Famine, Iran at the Crossroads and Climate Migration. The books are \$36.00 each if you haven't ordered one yet. Contact Rita Powell for more information about the meeting days and times or to order a book.

AAUW Mission :

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

AAUW Vision:

Equity for all.

AAUW Values:

Nonpartisan.
Fact-based.
Integrity.
Inclusion and Intersectionality.

AAUW Diversity Statement:

In principle and in practice, AAUW values and seeks an inclusive membership, workforce, leadership team and board of directors. There shall be no barriers to full participation on the basis of age, disability, gender, location, national origin, race, religion, sexual orientation, or socioeconomic status.



From the Co-Presidents

by Sunny Zia, Co-President

The Case for Women in Science Technology Engineering and Math (STEM)

In September 2022 the Bureau of Labor Statistics issued its report showing the insurmountable growth in STEM careers by 2031. These entail “some of the fastest-growing and highest-paid jobs of the future, like computer science and engineering”. Sadly, women make up only 28% of the workforce in STEM and are outnumbered by men majoring in most STEM fields in college.

As a co-president of an organization that has dedicated years of support for girls getting into STEM fields I want to share a personal story that may help further elucidate the case for STEM careers. Speaking from my own experience as a woman in STEM, specifically Engineering, who has lived across continents, I have been fortunate to have two points of comparison. I was born in Iran and came to the U.S. in my early adolescence. Early childhood in Iran was filled with lots of math that was fun and a source of play and leisure in play dates. I remember my father would always surprise me with a new math problem and encourage me to keep solving them so I would get more difficult ones. He would always say: “there is nothing a girl can’t do, in fact you can be better than the boys, especially in scholastic excellence”.

Living in the US until Freshmen year in high school as a double minority, Persian and Jewish, math was my escape from societal pressure and talismanic, helping prove me feel not so inferior. Fast forward, math gave me the ability when I moved back to Iran to thrive in education and develop a career in Civil Engineering. The only difference was that it wasn’t such a big deal in Iran. In fact, I saw more women interested and getting into STEM programs than I did when I moved back to the US over 23 years ago.

To this day, it astounds me there is a level of bias, implicit and explicit, in our society, even as the leader of the free world. The amount of off-color comments I have received being an engineer living in the U.S. are too numerous to outline. There was... “You’re too pretty to be an Engineer”, “What are you doing inspecting wells and trenches, shouldn’t you be in the nail parlor”. I never heard these types of comments in Iran, a third world country. Most of these biases are deeply rooted in our society, but that doesn’t mean we can’t change them. Solving this problem may not be easy, but it’s simple to start. Projects like the upcoming STEM conference, continued great research such as [AAUW Solving the Equation Report](#), incentive induced policies and legislation, and shared successful personal stories provide tangible, meaningful, and dare we say, a splendid tapestry of solutions for increasing the percentage of women in STEM and the corollary high paid wages.

We encourage you to start by talking about the successes of the STEM program. Starting with picking our resident expert Frances Rozner’s brain about the great statistics on this front. Let’s do the math, if each of us talk to 5 girls/women about the many benefits of a STEM career and each of those 5 talk to another 5, we can reach 1,325. Let’s be visible, vocal, and vigilant and close the STEM gap!

Calendar Dates to Note

Feb. 4	Branch Meeting
Feb. 14	Valentines Day
Feb. 24	STEM conf at SATO
Mar. 4	Branch Meeting
Mar. 17	St Patricks Day

Contact Us

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Diversity Corner

by Dr. Sharifa Batts, Member, DEI Committee

February is African American Heritage month, so I would like to capitalize on the opportunity to highlight a few thoughts about African Americans in the workplace. Although efforts have been made to advance Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, representation of Black professionals with leadership roles in corporate America are lagging and leaders in these key positions are not feeling included. Boards and Executive levels are disadvantaged when their composition fails to align with their employee population or the stakeholder groups they serve; they are neglecting the contributions of minorities and women.



African-Americans account for 13% of the U.S. population, but account for only 8% of professional roles, and individuals from this marginalized group are not feeling a sense of inclusion and respect in the workplace according to Coqual's report, *Being Black in Corporate America*. While most firms serve a diverse population, many have no minorities or women serving as members on their board, nor are they represented at the Executive levels. Corporations are at risk of losing highly educated African-Americans, especially women, along with their unique perspectives and valuable abilities.

Research findings revealed women and minorities human capital (education, experience, knowledge, skills, & abilities) and social capital (internal and external network), coupled with their contributions of learned strategies and unique interactions, results in a positive influence on both the board and firm effectiveness. Education is an indicator of the valuable knowledge, individual achievements, expertise, and ability that can be contributed. Ultimately, firms benefit from valuable skills linked to higher education as minorities and women offer a new perspective on intricate issues that can assist with informational biases in problem-solving and strategy formulation. African-Americans bridge boundaries across cultural divides and may better understand other people's perspective, constraints, and vocabulary if they have cultural-specific knowledge.

The social networks of minorities and women are usually more diverse than Caucasian males because they produce non-redundant information that can be critical to an organization's success. When organizations have diverse connections, they can innovate and engage in interactions that contribute to the quality of decisions. It is imperative that minorities and women comprehend not only how their unique human and social capital adds value to a firm, but understand the Optimal Imperviousness Theory. The basic premise provides a framework for minorities and women as they encounter challenges such as systemic racism or gender bias in the workplace and the importance of developing strategies and becoming impervious. Optimal interactions and success are achieved when minorities and women develop skills that allow them to be viewed as trusted peers resulting in increased promotions and inclusion in the workplace.

Batts, Sharifa Ife, "Social and Human Capital Contributions of Diverse Board Members" (2021).

Theses and Dissertations. 1235. <https://digitalcommons.pepperdine.edu/etd/1235>

Coqual "Being Black in Corporate America" https://www.talentinnovation.org/_private/assets/BeingBlack-KeyFindings-CTI.pdf

STEM Career Conference

Mary Lamo & Frances Rozner, Event Co-Chairs

The STEM Career Conference scheduled for **Friday, February 24, 2023**, is coming together: we have all ten schools now marketing the event to their students and ten workshop speakers committed to sharing what they love about their STEM Careers - plus an inspiring Keynote Speaker.



Have you signed up to volunteer? Times are from 2:15pm to 7pm for a variety of interesting activities: photographing the event, assisting with school arrivals and departures, setting up signage, managing traffic flow and facilitating workshop speakers. We are also seeking volunteers to help with the pre-conference stuffing of folders and goodie bags on the prior Monday and to help prepare the Sato Academy auditorium on the Friday morning of the event.

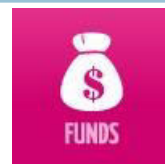
This is our 19th Annual Conference and our second year at Sato Academy, located just east of the CSULB campus at Iroquois Ave. and Anaheim Street. Come experience the volunteer comradery and the excited energy of the 7th and 8th grade girls who attend.

Contact Darlene Daclan at Darlene_daclan@yahoo.com with your volunteer preference(s). (If you are new to this event, please check out its effectiveness at <https://www.aauw-ca.org/energizing-potential/>)

AAUW Fund

by Linda Westman and Tobi Balma, Co-AAUW Fund V.P.s

Not only has our branch contributed to the innovative programs that promote education and equity for women and girls through our seven branch endowments, but we have also been the recipients! (<https://longbeach-ca.aauw.net/aauw-fund-recipients/>)



It is indeed an honor to receive one AAUW Fellowship or Grant, but Linda Sciaroni beat the odds and has received two! Linda has been a member of four AAUW branches. Her mother was active in the San Pedro Branch and gave Linda a life membership for her college graduation in 1986. She joined the Long Beach branch just before Covid.

Linda received the Eleanor Roosevelt Teacher Fellowship (ERTF) in 1990-91. Although no longer awarded, applicants needed to be female, a public school teacher, a U.S. citizen, dedicated to improving educational opportunities for women of all ages, employed with at least three years full-time teaching experience, and planning to continue teaching for three years. The award supported professional development for teachers, educational opportunities for girls, and advancement of gender equity in the classroom.

Linda began teaching in 1984 with a degree in Biology. She taught chemistry, astronomy and geology with little academic training. She needed to increase her knowledge in the breadth of science, and the classes she needed were seldom offered in night school. After 6 years in the classroom, Linda applied for and received the ERTF. This allowed her to take a one-year sabbatical that paid half of her teacher's salary. She attended Pasadena City College full time for an entire school year, earned two additional teaching credentials in chemistry and general science, and got halfway through a math credential. After her sabbatical year, Linda served on many local and national efforts to address gender equity in schools, represented teachers at many events and spoke to dozens of branches.

Community Action Grants



Recipient:

Hawaii State Science Olympiad

Project Director: Linda Sciaroni

Award Year: 2010-11

Award: Community Action Grant

Location: Honolulu, Hawaii

Term: One-year grant

Project Name: Kauai Island Access to the Science Olympiad

The AAUW Kauai (HI) Branch has partnered with Kauai Community College and the Hawaii State Science Olympiad to create a successful regional tournament. This grant will fund lab and project materials for teams from Kauai in the regional and state competition. If victorious at the regional tournament, teams must fundraise to attend the state competition, and scholarships toward plane fare will be granted to team members.

Linda moved to Kauai after teaching middle school science in east Los Angeles for 16 years. It was there that she applied for a Community Action Grant. CAG's began in 1972 and provide (\$3,000-\$10,000) funding to individuals that promote education and gender equity. Two years after moving to Kauai she saw a niche hosting the Kauai Tournament of the Science Olympiad, running family science nights and school level Future Scientists and Engineers of America clubs. Her 2010-2011 CAG helped fund her science club.

When she returned from Kauai to care for her mother in San Pedro, the number of young people with biology degrees had increased to the

point where she could not find employment with a biology degree. She is eternally grateful to have received the ERTF because the two additional credentials she earned ensured her family's financial security. She currently teaches chemistry and math at a high school in Lynwood. She has a Mesa (engineering) Club which enters engineering competitions. She has written grants bringing more than \$200,000 to the schools where she has worked.

NOTE: Although this article spotlights Linda Sciaroni, we'd like to share that both Frances Rozner and Daphne Ching-Jackson have also received Community Action Grants on behalf of the branch. Please let us know if you are aware of other branch members who may have received CAG's on behalf of the branch or have been an AAUW Fund recipient.



Nominating Committee Update

by Carol Clanton

The Nominating Committee is diligently working to fill the slate of nominees for the 2023-24 Board of Directors. We are pleased to announce that many of our positions have been filled. We are grateful for our nominees who have graciously volunteered to accept a nomination for an office on the Executive Committee. Those of us who have served know what a great learning opportunity each position provides and how much stronger our relationships grow with fellow members. It is personally rewarding to lend your expertise and enthusiasm in advancement of the valuable projects and mission of our branch.

As of this writing, we still have unfilled positions. One of these positions is **President-Elect/Vice President**. This position is integral for both the continuity and smooth running of our branch. We are reaching out to you at this time because the slate of nominees must be completed by the branch meeting on March 4th. I would like to invite every member to thoughtfully consider this position. If interested, please reach out to Carol Clanton, chair of the Nominating Committee, or any of our committee members: Darlene Daclan, JoAnn Kuroda, Barbara Vangsness, or Sharon Westafer. We need all of our members to take a turn serving on the board! Thank you for your consideration.

Holiday Event—Fun with Wassail!



Smiling faces reveal that a good social time was had by all! Thank you to everyone who helped make this annual event a success!



CULTURAL ADVENTURES Save the Date February 10, 2023

Please join us for a fun trip on the A line (formerly Blue line) from Long Beach to Union Station. We will walk to El Pueblo and Olvera St. to visit the Chinese Museum (\$2.00 entry) and La Plaza of Culture and Arts (free). Lunch will be on your own at one of many restaurants including Philippe the Original! A line cost is Day Pass \$3.50 or TAP card \$2.00. JoAnn may have TAP cards available. RSVP now to find out the time and meeting location. Call **Elaine Heber** if you plan to go. JoAnn Kuroda, Chair

Member Spotlight

by Co-Membership V Ps Jeane Relleve Caveness, Ph.D., Cacia Kim

Do you remember the childhood poem about friends?

Make new friends but keep the old;

One is silver, but the other is gold.

We at Membership take this sentiment to heart. While we are always looking for opportunities to attract new member friends to our Branch, we also know that keeping and strengthening ties with longtime members already in the Branch, particularly those who have become less active in the last few years, is just as important.



Specifically, in our effort to connect with less active members, Karen Gufstason has been on a special friendship mission checking in with each of these individuals and asking for their input on how we can make Branch activities more inviting and/or accessible to all.

Karen's outreach, so far, has found that like most of our membership, those she called are very busy having fun and are engaged in many other social groups and activities. Others joined AAUW Long Beach specifically for an interest group or activity and have no time to venture beyond. And some simply could not stomach attending a meeting on a Saturday. Even those as interesting as ours! Notably, there was much appreciation for the Zoom option for both meetings and interest group gatherings. We will provide another update on these efforts later in the year.

Whether reconnecting with old friends or making new ones, there is no better time than the month of February to do both. February is designated as "International Friendship Month," a month-long celebration of friendship in unison with the world. The purpose of "International Friendship Month" is to honor the beauty and necessity of friendships in our lives AND to reach out to those who are still acquaintances and strangers or "friends-in-waiting."

In honor of "International Friendship Month," let's reach out to friends in the Branch whom we have not seen for a while and reconnect. Let's also invite new friends, acquaintances and even strangers who share our common passion to uplift and support women and girls in our community to our next Branch event.

Public Policy

by Rita Powell, Public Policy Director

AAUW WOMEN'S MARCH, PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE NATIONAL BYLAWS AND PUBLIC POLICY PRIORITIES

This spring AAUW members will be asked to vote on amendments to the national bylaws recommended by the board of directors and the Governance Committee. In addition, these are the areas of proposed changes to the Public Policy Priorities. The Public Policy Priorities are:

- 1) To support a strong system of public education that promotes fairness, equity, diversity and inclusivity.
Address the barriers and biases that hinder the advancement of women and girls.
- 2) To achieve economic security for all women.
- 3) To guarantee equality, individual rights and social justice for a diverse and inclusive society.

True equality requires a balance between the rights of the individual and the needs of the community. Read the details on the National AAUW website. I encourage you to comment on these proposed changes by January 27.

We are taking action and standing up for Women's Rights by Participating in the Women's March on January 22 and many of us will be participating right here in Long Beach. Our two Co-Presidents will be honored to speak at the March. We are marching on how and when we bear children and if we bear children, the freedom to raise children free from gun violence, the freedom to vote and participate fully and completely in a functioning democracy, and the freedom to live in a country where we are invested in everyone's prosperity.

BRANCH INTEREST GROUPS

Joining an interest group (or several) is a great way to get to know other members on a more personal level. Make new friends while participating in fun, informative and educational activities. To start a new interest group, submit a description to the Co-Presidents. The Contact persons listed below can inform you if groups are meeting virtually or are in person.



Book Chat Plus normally meets the first Tuesday from 10 am-noon at Lamis' home. Members present an interesting book they've recently read, a film they've recently seen or they share about a recent travel experience. Contact **Lamis Hashem** at 562-795-6605 / theHashemFamily@gmail.com



Cultural Adventures Group plans trips to museums and other points of interest several times a year. It is usually a mid-week tour with lunch scheduled. Join a group that checks out museums and other interesting locations--maybe by Zoom or in person! Contact: **JoAnn Kuroda** at 562-432-6973 / sojoinlb@aol.com.



Diversity and Inclusion holds monthly meetings to suggest how our branch may be more welcoming and cognizant of different ethnicities and points of view. Contact: **Mary Ann Takemoto** at 562-896-6825 / martakemoto@gmail.com



GovTrek is in its inaugural year. Leaders will reach out to high school girls interested in learning more about politics, leadership and volunteering. The group will meet monthly to plan activities. Contact: **Arnedra Jordan** at 310-722-6594 / ajordan6@my.keller.edu



Great Decisions Groups meet to discuss, share opinions and ideas on critical issues global issues. One group meets Friday afternoons and another meets Wednesday evenings at 6:30pm. Planning to participate in the Spring of 2023? Contact your group leader or **Rita Powell** to order your book or email riorita111@verizon.net



International Cuisine Group meets and dines at different ethnic restaurants in the local area. It is usually a dinner within an easy drive, scheduled every few months. Carpooling is an option... when we get back to driving and dining. Come join a group who enjoys unique flavors of the world. Contact: The **Executive committee as we are looking for Volunteers to lead this group!**



Literary Ladies Group meets to discuss and compare thoughts on a selected book, fiction or non-fiction. The group comes together to hear thoughts and insights from others in the group. Each member takes a turn recommending and leading the group. The book selection for February is *Lessons in Chemistry* by Bonnie Garmus. We share this information so even if you aren't able to join us, you have reading suggestions. At this time, we are at capacity, however if you would like to be added to a waiting list, contact **Sharon Westafer**, 562-493-4749.



Public Policy committee explores, discusses and supports the active legislative issues of AAUW at the local, state, national and global levels to empower women and girls. It initiates emails and uses the 2 minute activist to promote legislation protesting civil rights, economic injustice issues and equal access to education. An authorized member of the **LA County InterBranch Council**, AAUW may collaborate with approved partner organizations to work toward common local and state goals. Contact **Rita Powell** at 562-685-2096 / riorita111@verizon.net



The **Residential Rentals group** started in 2009 with a monthly 3rd Wednesday 10 am gathering. It is a discussion group on topics relating to residential rentals – things of interest/importance/concern that keep each other informed. The group has averaged 10-13 people per meeting. It continues in odd months; most often meeting at the dining room table at one of our homes or on ZOOM.

To be on the email list contact **Joan Gustafson** jwg221@aol.com or **Ellen Mathis** epmathis@verizon.net.



Under the Umbrella Book Group - The "new" Book Club will meet the 3rd Saturday of the month at 2:00 PM. Zoom meetings pending. We will read a variety of genres. We have room for more members! Ask about the titles to be read. Contact **Carol Llewellyn** 562-430-4380

Save the Date: Saturday, June 10, 2023 Enjoy our "Afternoon with Lisa See" from 2:00—4:00 pm at a location yet to be determined. All funds raised support AAUW Long Beach Scholarships at LBCC and CSULB.

All AAUW members are invited to join the planning committee. Volunteers are needed for silent auction items and opportunity prizes. Contact Ginny Baxter for more details.

NEW! Please RSVP by email to Reservations Chair Charlotte Joseph to let us know if you will attend in person or opt for the Zoom version.

Use this email address from now on!
aauwlongbeach.reservations@gmail.com

Deadline to RSVP is January 28th.
You will receive an email reminder and details about the location before the meeting.

Important COVID-19 Reminder

In-person meetings may be held with respect for local guidelines. Please follow your own health and Covid prevention practices.

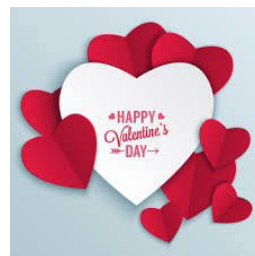
AAUW BRANCH MEETING

Saturday, February 4, 2023

9:30 am	Meet and Mingle
10:00—10:45 am	Branch Meeting
11:00—12:00 pm	Program

**Place: Long Beach City College
Building O2, Room 208
4900 E. Conant St. LB 90808**

Building O2 is on Clark, on the southwest corner of Conant, behind and to the west of Rosie the Riveter Park. Entering Conant from Clark, turn left into the 1st driveway. Bldg O2 is the 2nd building on the right .



AAUW Long Beach Branch

Send address changes for AAUW Vantage
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Long Beach, CA 90815

PLEASE
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