



# Vantage

## Save the Wood, Clean the Air!

Sharifa Batts, Program Vice President

We are looking forward to a different but timely topic for the February meeting. Eric Witten will be our speaker and present on his journey and charitable work in Kenya. He will explain his experience and his success working in Kenya and living with the Maasai people for 6 1/2 months during the lock down for COVID. He is an engineer and is using his skills to drill water wells for the Maasai people in Kenya. He will also speak about sending girls like Karen (see photo) to school, saving the forests, and reducing carbon dioxide. Karen gathers wood to use for cooking.



Eric Witten has a B.S. in Engineering from UCLA and has 40 years of experience in Engineering and Project Management in the upstream oil industry. Eric is also a Long Beach City Commissioner serving on the Board of Examiners, Appeals and Condemnation. He is an Engineering Advisor to the La Habra Heights Fire Department and Building and Safety Department on oilfield safety and oilfield projects.



Eric has worked on projects in more than 15 countries around the world. He is a small business owner and has operated his own engineering company based in Long Beach for the past 18 years. He holds 4 patents on mechanical equipment and is an Eagle Scout.

Friends are invited to attend; please reserve for the in-person or Zoom meeting.

RSVP at: [aaulongbeach.reservations@gmail.com](mailto:aaulongbeach.reservations@gmail.com)

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

### 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.



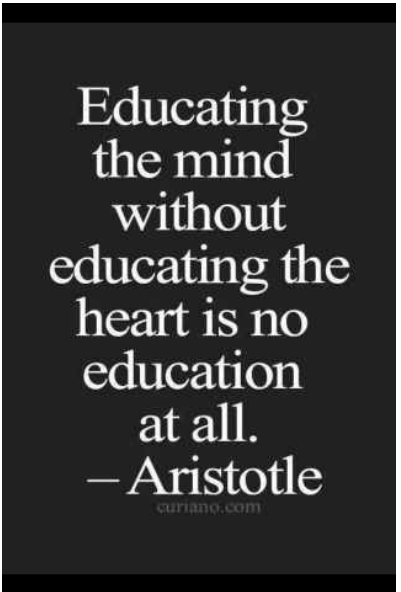
# From the Co-Presidents by Carolyn Eggleston and Amy La, Co-Presidents

We hope that you have all recovered from the holiday activities and events and that you have been able to return to more normal days. Getting back to our regular schedules can be a comfort. The start of the new year has left us wounded by the death of our friend and colleague, Mary Lamo. She was a bright star, with a passion for helping our community. We miss you, Mary.

January's program at the Branch meeting focused on TechTrek and was informative and uplifting. We apologize again for the Zoom link error for the meeting and program. The transcript can be found on our website (<https://longbeach-ca.aauw.net/news/branch-events/>), so please have a look if you were unable to connect. The program is really very interesting. AAUW activities for this month center around our important branch activity, the STEM Conference. Frances Rozner and Carol Clanton have been leading the planning for this singular event. Their multiple committees and teams have been doing yeoman's work for months to prepare for February 23<sup>rd</sup>. Despite some difficulties, it looks to be an excellent and thought-provoking day. They have assembled a broad and diverse roster of speakers. The community is recognizing the year of hard work through increased donations. Please consider volunteering for preparation tasks, and/or the day of the conference. We need lots of good helpers to make this happen. We are hoping for a sunny day, unlike last year's rain! Contact either Frances or Carol and they can connect you with the proper committee chair.

Join us in celebrating Black History month by learning more about the historical figures who have made such a difference in our Country. We owe a great deal to the African American community, and we need to learn more. Even for those of you who have studied this history, there is more to learn. We particularly need to be rigorous in sharing this rich history since some states are actively deleting it.

You will be receiving information about the Author's Event planned for March 30th from 12:00 to 3:00. We hope to see you there!



### Calendar Dates to Note

- Feb. 3            Branch Meeting
- Feb. 14        Valentines Day
- Feb. 23        STEM at Sato HS
- Feb. 29        Leap Year!
- Mar. 2         Branch Meeting

### Contact Us

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[longbeach-ca.aauw.net/](https://longbeach-ca.aauw.net/)  
 www.facebook.com / aauwlongbeachca  
**For Vantage Editor: Rebecca Low**  
**rlow1@hotmail.com**

From the Long Beach Public Library Newsletter:

It is with a heavy heart that we share the news of the passing of Director Emerita Mary Lamo-Putnam, who served as a valued member of our Board and a five-time Chair of our Grape Expectations gala. We have lost a dedicated advocate and dear friend, and we extend our deepest condolences to Mary's family and loved ones. You can learn more about Mary's involvement with the Library Foundation here: [Champion of Literacy, Mary Lamo-Putnam](#).

# SAVE THE DATE in support of Scholarships



## A Luncheon To Die For

Support AAUW Long Beach Branch Scholarships and  
Meet Award Winning Author and Screenwriter Iris Yamashita

All proceeds pay for scholarships for Long Beach City College and California State University Long Beach. Invest in the future of promising young women.

**Date:** Saturday, March 30, 2024.

**Time:** Check-in and Silent Auction starts at 12:00 p.m. Boxed Lunch is provided at the table. Presentation by Iris Yamashita begins at 1:00 p.m.

**Place:** Long Beach City College Carson Campus room T 1200. Complimentary parking is available in the parking structure on Clark Avenue.

**Cost:** \$75 per person. All funds support the event and scholarships.

**RSVP:** An RSVP is required by March 23 if you plan to attend.

## Featuring Iris Yamashita



Iris Yamashita is a talented screenwriter known for her work in the film industry. Born in the United States, she is of Japanese descent. Yamashita gained widespread recognition for her screenplay for the critically acclaimed film *Letters from Iwo Jima*, directed by Clint Eastwood. The movie, released in 2006, provided a unique perspective on the Battle of Iwo Jima during World War II, presenting the story from the Japanese point of view. Yamashita's skillful storytelling and ability to capture the human experience in the midst of war contributed to the film's success and earned her praise within the industry.

*City Under One Roof* is her debut mystery novel, set in a tiny Alaskan town where all the residents live in a single high-rise building. *Village in the Dark* is the follow-up to the Cara Kennedy series and is set to release in February 2024.

[www.irisyamashita.com](http://www.irisyamashita.com)

## A Luncheon To Die For

Complete and return this form to Sharon Westafer, 6222 E Marina View Dr, Long Beach, CA 90803 by March 23.

If you have questions, please call (562) 493-4749 or email [sharwest1@hotmail.com](mailto:sharwest1@hotmail.com).

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Guest: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

(Please add any additional guests on the back of the form.)

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

I do not plan to attend, but here is a donation.

I would like opportunity tickets. Donation requested, not required. (  1 for \$5 ) (  3 for \$10 ) (  10 for \$20 )

Make check payable to AAUW-Long Beach and mail with this form.

Pay via Zelle to [aauwlongbeach@gmail.com](mailto:aauwlongbeach@gmail.com).

Total amount paid: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ **SORRY, NO REFUNDS ARE AVAILABLE.**

[www.aauw-longbeach.org](http://www.aauw-longbeach.org)



# AAUW Fund

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

Exciting and important news to celebrate!

AAUW National has proudly announced that Charity Navigator has awarded the AAUW Fund a four-star rating. This four-star rating is a prestigious recognition that reflects AAUW's steadfast commitment to fiscal responsibility and organizational effectiveness. We can be proud that we are members of an organization that has such a commitment to transparency and accountability and that our donations are well-used to promote equity and opportunities for women and girls.



Check out our Charity Navigator Four-Star Status on our website [Home Page](#).



*In Loving  
Memory*



# Member Spotlight

by Co-Membership VPs Karen Gustafson, and Lamis Hashem

## A Tribute to Mary Lamo *Compiled by Karen Gustafson with member input*

As visitors approached the front door to Mary Lamos' home, they might have noticed a framed print in the living room window, facing the street. In calligraphy, the print said "In a world where you can choose to be anything, choose to be kind." Mary Lamo lived by that sentiment. She was a kind, caring, and supportive person with a slew of talents that she shared so generously with others. Mary passed away on January 11, 2024.



Mary wore many hats at AAUW Long Beach. She joined in 2014 and quickly became a very active member. She was a Co-Program VP; Co-Coordinator for the Work Smart workshops that we hosted in multiple locations; Co-Chair of the STEM Career Conferences; Co-Chair of the *Energizing Potential* Study; Membership Treasurer and Co-Chair of the Yearbook publication. She received the branch's Connie Inskeep Award in 2020 and the AAUW Named Gift Honoree in 2021.

Mary was the quintessential volunteer, always asking how she could help, usually helping steadfastly from behind the scenes, especially for any task that involved IT skills. She was in her element creating helpful Excel spreadsheets, and great with Powerpoint, too. Her spreadsheets were masterpieces. She created custom spreadsheets for a variety of projects, including multiple tools for the STEM Conference, from school registration to workshop assignments for the girls, to all the project elements and fund raising. The *Energizing Potential* study, which tracked some of our STEM students to their later academic choices, showed that our STEM conference does impact students over the long term. The statistics-based finding was an important validation of our work, and also persuasive to our conference donors. Mary also created a tool for our branch Nominating Committee, tracking past leadership to enable recruiting efforts. These tools will continue to be used to benefit our branch.



She knew how to lead volunteers and how to strategize. If you had Mary on your project, it was sure to succeed. She was a fierce advocate for girls in STEM, for women in the world, and for all-around justice.

What she accomplished with our branch is astounding. At the same time, she was a board member with the Junior League Sustainers, a board member of the Long Beach Public Library Foundation,



President of her neighborhood association, a volunteer with Food Finders, always participated in the MemorialCare Team Spirit 5K walk and assisted the Signal Hill police department with community events. And she managed to find the "happy" in every day. If you wish to make a donation in Mary's honor, her family suggests the Ros1+lung cancer organization, at [www.theros1ders.org](http://www.theros1ders.org)

## Participation in Lobby Day and Upcoming Presidential Primary Election

Greetings AAUW Members,

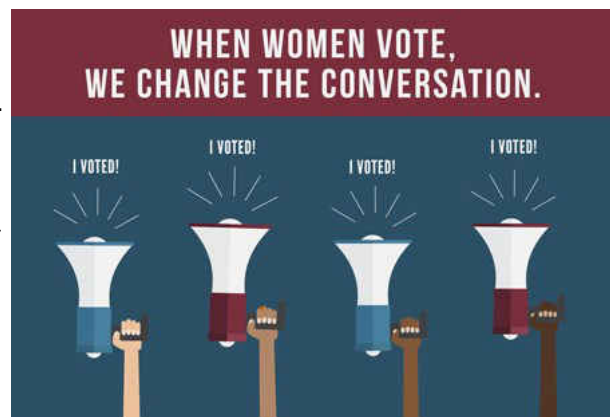
The State of California Public Policy Team will host their annual Lobby Day on April 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2024. The state cordially invites you to participate in the upcoming Lobby Day. More information about California's AAUW legislative bills will be published soon. Should there be any updates or changes in public policy, I will inform you via email. Please let me know if you can attend and lobby on our branch's behalf.

I want to remind you that the Presidential Primary Election is scheduled for March 5th, 2024. The deadline for voter registration is February 20th, 2024. For those interested in local debates and more information, I would like you to stay informed through available resources in your area. The League of Women's Voters has lots of information about the upcoming election on its website. [www.lwv.org](http://www.lwv.org)

I urge all AAUW members to promote participation in the upcoming election in our community actively. There are small ways you can create change in the community. Help get people registered to vote or take someone to the voting polls with you.

Your engagement and leadership are vital to our collective advocacy efforts. I look forward to your active involvement.

There will be no public policy meeting this month.



**From:** Shannon Wolfe <[aauwgovernance@aauw.org](mailto:aauwgovernance@aauw.org)> (National AAUW)

**Subject:** Member, it's time for YOUR voice to be heard.

The AAUW 2024 National Election Comment Period is now OPEN.

Dear Member,

As a member of AAUW, your voice and your vote count. This spring AAUW members will be asked to vote on amendments to the national bylaws recommended by the AAUW Board of Directors and AAUW Governance Committee to open membership. In accordance with AAUW's bylaws, every AAUW member has the right to comment on this proposed change to the bylaws - and to recommend any other bylaws changes - before they are put to the membership for a vote.

Comments can be submitted until Friday, January 26 at 5:00 pm ET.

Review and comment on the proposal to open membership.

Key Dates for 2024 Vote

- January 26 | Comment period ends at 5:00 pm ET
- April 3 | Voting opens (online voting is encouraged)
- May 15 | Online voting ends at 12:00 pm ET and results announced online

We encourage your participation and look forward to hearing your thoughts.

# 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](mailto:theHashemFamily@gmail.com)



**Cultural Adventures & International Cuisine Group** plans trips to museums and other points of interest several times a year. It is usually a mid-week tour with lunch scheduled. We also plan meals at different ethnic restaurants, usually dinner with an easy drive. Join a group that checks out museums, other interesting locations, and special restaurants.



Contact for Adventures: JoAnn Kuroda at 562- 429-6973 / [sojoinlb@aol.com](mailto:sojoinlb@aol.com)  
Contact for International Cuisine: Faye Alperin at 562-659-0051/ [fayealperin@gmail.com](mailto:fayealperin@gmail.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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto:riorita111@verizon.net)



**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 February book selection is *Spare* by Prince Harry. 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](mailto:riorita111@verizon.net)



**The Residential Rentals group** started in 2009 with 3rd Wednesday 10 am gatherings. It continues as a discussion group on topics relating to residential rentals – things of interest/importance/concerns. We keep each other informed. The group has averaged 10 members over the years. It continues the 3rd Wednesdays in odd months; most often meeting at the dining room table in our homes or ZOOM. To be on the email list contact **Joan Gustafson** [jwg221@aol.com](mailto:jwg221@aol.com) or **Ellen Mathis** [epmathis@verizon.net](mailto: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

## AUTHOR'S DAY SATURDAY, MARCH 30, 2024

Mark your calendar for the Author's Day Event featuring mystery writer, Iris Yamashita. Iris was an Academy Award-nomination for the movie "Letters from Iwo Jima", directed by Actor Clint Eastwood. Come learn how this American-Japanese author started out studying engineering and ended up being a gifted murder mystery author. Her book "City Under One Roof" is unusual and captivating.



**NEW! Please RSVP** by email to Reservations Chair Charlotte Joseph to let us know how you will attend. Use this email address !

[aauwlongbeach.reservations@gmail.com](mailto:aauwlongbeach.reservations@gmail.com)

**Deadline to RSVP is January 25.**

You will receive an email reminder and details before the meeting.

A Zoom link will be mailed to you if needed.

Need some resources to share with others that highlight the AAUW mission and goals?

<https://www.aauw.org/resources/policy/advocacy-toolkit/>

## AAUW BRANCH MEETING

**Saturday, February 3, 2024**

**9:30 am Social Time**

**10:00-11:00 Business Meeting**

**11:00-12:00 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 .

**Guests / Potential Members are Welcome**



AAUW Long Beach Branch

Send address changes for AAUW Vantage to P O Box 15023, Long Beach, CA 90815

PLEASE PLACE STAMP HERE

