



# Vantage

## Celebrate the Holidays

*Sharifa Batts, Program Vice President*

Join fellow AAUW members and guests in kicking off the Holiday Season with a gathering on Saturday, December 7 from 10 am—12 pm.

Juliet Wurr has graciously offered to host this annual event this year and we thank her! To make the brunch catering easier, members are asked to contribute \$15 to cover purchased food and drink. In addition, past presidents will sign up to serve the coffee and wassail (an old historic warm drink customarily served during this season). Try some, you'll like it! In addition to the traditional fare, we intend to serve foods that are vegetarian and vegan friendly. Contact Sharifa Batts to volunteer for 20-minute hosting intervals. Volunteers will also be needed to set up and clean up.

Guests are welcome to attend this event and it can



be a fun way to introduce people to AAUW. Looking forward to seeing you and meeting some potential new members.

RSVP to Charlotte Joseph by November 30 (see link below)

Send in your \$15 via

Zelle or Pay Pal to [aauwlongbeach@gmail.com](mailto:aauwlongbeach@gmail.com) or pay at the door.

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

## Navigating the Holidays: Embracing Difficult Conversations and Practicing Self-Care

As the holiday season approaches, many of us look forward to moments of joy, family gatherings, and celebrations. However, it is also a time when emotions can run high, and challenging conversations may arise. Whether it is differing opinions, sensitive topics like the post-election (please refer to our previous message via email), or simply the stress of the season, it is easy to feel overwhelmed.

**Navigating Difficult Conversations:** This year let us approach these moments with a spirit of understanding and empathy. Here are a few reminders:

- **Practice Active Listening:** Often, we focus on responding rather than truly hearing. Listen with the intention to understand, even when the topic is tough.
- **Set Boundaries:** It is absolutely okay to gently steer conversations away from sensitive subjects or excuse yourself when a discussion becomes too much.
- **Seek Common Ground:** When discussions become tense, find shared values or experiences that can reconnect you to the person you are speaking with.

**Prioritizing Self-Care:** With all the gatherings, gift-buying, and responsibilities, it is easy to put your own needs last. This holiday season, remember that self-care is not selfish—it is essential. Here are some tips:

- **Take Breaks:** Step outside for fresh air, take a short walk, or find a quiet place to breathe when you need a moment to recharge.
- **Maintain Your Routine:** Even in the busy season, try to keep up with activities that bring you joy and peace—whether it is exercise, meditation, or simply reading a book.
- **Give Yourself Grace:** The holidays can be complex and emotionally charged. It is okay to feel a range of emotions and to give yourself permission to experience them fully.

Let us support each other in finding balance and cultivating peace during this season.

We are here as a community to uplift and remind one another that we are not alone.

Wishing you a season filled with kindness, compassion, and moments of quiet joy.

We hope to see you at the Holiday Gathering on December 7<sup>th</sup>!

In solidarity and care, Carolyn and Amy



## Calendar Dates to Note

Nov. 28	Thanksgiving Day
Dec. 7	Holiday Event
Dec 21	Winter Begins
Dec 25	Christmas Day
Dec 26	Chanukah / Kwanzaa
Jan 1	New Years Day

## Contact Us

aauwlongbeach@gmail.com

[longbeach-ca.aauw.net/](https://longbeach-ca.aauw.net/)

www.facebook.com / aauwlongbeachca

**For Vantage Editor: Rebecca Low**  
rlow1@hotmail.com

Have you visited the  
AAUW Long Beach website lately!?

We have a new updated and upgraded website!  
Take a look and find information about membership, policies, programs and the mission of AAUW.

<https://longbeach-ca.aauw.net/>

# Public Policy

from the AAUW—CA Newsletter and Tobi Balma

Did you know that AAUW CA has many Public Policies issues that they care about? These include Economic Security, Human Trafficking, Reproductive Health, Social Justice Reform, Student Debt, Title IX, Voter Education, Student Access to Diverse Materials and the Equal Rights Amendment. You can learn more about them [HERE](#).

The AAUW California Public Policy Program establishes policy directives that will guide our members, inform our legislative priorities, serve our mission to advance equity for women and girls through advocacy, and are consistent with our values of achieving fair and equitable opportunities for our diverse society. Toward that end, AAUW California advocates policies that promote, enhance and ensure Economic Security for All Women, Equal Access to Quality Public Education for All Students, Social and Racial Justice for All Members of Society, and Social and Racial Justice for All Members of Society. Learn more about the AAUW CA Public Policy Priorities [HERE](#).

Interested in **How Project 2025 May Impact AAUW Public Policy Priorities?** Watch this presentation [HERE](#) from the AAUW CA Online Branch.

Interested in learning about **AAUW Priorities in Light of the Election Results?** The AAUW Silicon Valley Branch will host a Zoom webinar on December 4<sup>th</sup> at 4 PM featuring Meghan Kissell, AAUW Senior Director of Policy and Member Advocacy. Meghan will speak about post-election priorities for AAUW particularly as relates to social justice issues, including reproductive rights, childcare, secure food and housing, voting rights, and more. Register [HERE](#) (registration is limited).

## AAUW Cultural Adventures Outing



We will visit the new **Cheech Marin Center** at the Riverside Art Museum on **Wednesday December 4, 2024**.

The address is: [3581 Mission Inn Ave. Riverside, CA 92501](#).

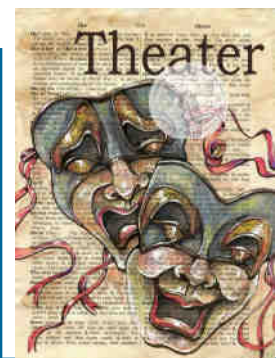
The museum opens at 10 am.

Admission is \$15.95 for adults and \$10.95 for seniors. We are planning on leaving between 8:30 and 9:00 and carpool to the museum. Metered and lot parking is available along Mission Inn Ave. Enjoy lunch on your own afterwards at the Mission Inn (walking distance). Select what type of meal you would like from either Casual Comfort dining or Mexican cuisine. And indicate if you would be able to drive.

Please make reservations with Elaine Heber at: 619-609-8266 or [elainebethheber@yahoo.com](mailto:elainebethheber@yahoo.com)

## Theater Event

We have purchased a group of tickets to see "The Spirit of Harriet Tubman: Featuring Leslie McCurdy" at the Cerritos Performing Arts Center on Tuesday, **January 28, 2025** at 6:30 PM. Tickets are \$10.00. Tubman was the historic Underground Railroad "conductor" who risked her own life leading slaves to freedom. If you are interested in attending, please contact Mary Ann at [martakemoto@gmail.com](mailto:martakemoto@gmail.com).



## Membership Counts

by Mary Ann Takemoto, Faye Alperin, Membership Co-VPs.

Do you have a friend or neighbor who may be interested in learning more about AAUW? Our holiday gathering is coming up in December and would be a great time to invite potential members. New members who join at the holiday event will receive 50% off their national dues.

All of our members can serve as ambassadors for the branch and help to spread the word about AAUW. In fact, our members are our best source of recruitment for the branch. We appreciate your help in recruiting future branch members.



## Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI)

by Tobi Balma

DEI is very important to AAUW. It appears to be under threat in the upcoming administration.

AAUW CA has a 2024-2027 Strategic Plan. While this is a state strategic plan, it is important to the maintenance and growth of our branch that we incorporate the goals of the state plan in our programming, meetings, interest groups and projects, including an action component. We want a diverse membership that is equitable and where members feel included.

We are doing a good job, but we can always do better! We need to consider all modalities/areas of diversity, including but not limited to age, generation, ability, faith, sexual and gender identity, language, as well as race/ethnicity.

The state DEI Vision is to build an empathetic, supportive, and inclusive environment for the present and sustainable future of AAUW California and its branches. The state DEI Mission is to increase the growth, diversity, and relevance of branch membership, activities, outreach, and collaboration with others.

Adapted from the [AAUW CA 2023-2027 Strategic Plan](#)



## Board Business

by Cacilia Kim

The following motion was passed at the November 18, 2024 Executive Committee Meeting:

Motion – Valerie Armstrong, Tech Trek Committee Chair

“By the direction of the Tech Trek Committee/Special Project, I move that the Board approve the Tech Trek Committee’s request to send up to 12 campers to Tech Trek STEM Camp in June/July of 2025.”

Passed by unanimous vote

# Tech Trek Update

from Valerie Armstrong, Tech Trek Branch Coordinator

The search for Tech Trek campers has begun! Fourteen Title I middle schools have been invited to nominate students for Tech Trek STEM camp, a week-long residential camp for seventh grade girls. Potential campers must be nominated by their math or science teacher, complete an application/essay, and have an interview with our branch's Tech Trek committee. This summer, Tech Trek will be held at Whittier College June 15 – 22 and at UC Santa Barbara July 13 – 20, 2025.

Tech Trek California recommends that branches focus on middle schools that have at least 40% of their student population in the Title I program. Title I is based on the number of students that qualify for the free or reduced lunch program. The middle schools that have been invited to participate this year are Bancroft, Franklin, Hamilton, Hoover, Hughes, Jefferson, Lindbergh, Lindsey, Muir, Nelson, Powell, Robinson, Stephens, and Washington. Ten of these schools have over 70% of their students participating in the lunch program.

Informational emails and letters have been sent to LBUSD STEM teachers, the school principal, the LBUSD Middle School Program Director, and the LBUSD Superintendent. Nominations are due December 6, 2024. All nominees will receive a link to the application and parent consent forms, which are due February 28, 2025. Interviews will be conducted in mid-March and students will be notified of their selection by April 1, 2025.

This year, the Tech Trek committee hopes to send 10-12 campers. We would like to extend our gratitude to the STEM Conference Committee for their generous donation of \$2,395. The cost per camper is \$1,200, paid for by donations from our generous members and sponsors. If you have any questions or suggestions regarding Tech Trek, please feel free to contact me at [valeriebeth@verizon.net](mailto:valeriebeth@verizon.net) or visit the Tech Trek California website: <https://www.aauw-ca.org/tech-trek/>

"Tech Trek made me aware of all the possibilities in career choices. I realized how much of the world is dependent upon researchers and engineers."

—Former attendee



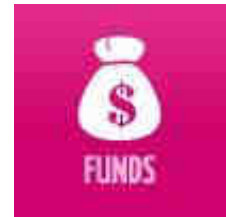
## Reimagining Study Group Announcement

As most of you know, this group has come together to investigate what the next significant Branch program, project or event will be in 2026 - 2027. Please contact Leila Menzies by email, ([LeilaMenzies@aol.com](mailto:LeilaMenzies@aol.com)), if you would like to participate in this study group. We could use creative thinkers, planners, and a minutes taker. Newer members are especially invited to engage in this ad hoc study group. Dive in - it's never too soon to participate.

Calendared planning dates include: 1) December '24 - watch for a survey in your email; 2) January '25 - consider volunteering to participate in Focus Group meetings; 3) between February to March we'll be completing the program development.

Please contact Study Group Co-Chairs Erin Murphy ([ErinMurphy@lbcc.edu](mailto:ErinMurphy@lbcc.edu)) or Denise Montoya ([dgmontoya44@gmail.com](mailto:dgmontoya44@gmail.com)) with any questions. We value your participation!"

## THANK YOU DONORS!



Thank you so much to our members who contributed generously to our November Fund Drive! Our current donation total for the year at press time is **\$5,039**.

HOWEVER, it is never too late to donate to The Greatest Needs Fund (#9110); Eleanor Roosevelt Fund (9170), Leadership Fund (4452); Governance & Sustainability Fund (4451); Education & Training Fund (4450); Economic Security Fund (4449); and the Legal Advocacy Fund (3999). Send a check made out to AAUW to Ginny Baxter with the Fund number in the notation section. Her address is in the directory, or contact Ginny directly. Also consider donating from your IRA's Required Minimum Distribution.

This month we are highlighting **The Legal Advocacy Fund**. Unfair pay, pregnancy discrimination, sexual harassment, sexual assault and violations of Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 can affect both women and men.

AAUW's Legal Advocacy Fund addresses these barriers by informing people of their rights and using the legal system to seek justice and change. LAF was created in 1981 by AAUW members and has provided millions of dollars to balance the scales of justice for people working toward gender equity through the legal system.

We support brave plaintiffs seeking legal redress for equal pay, Title IX, Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and tenure denial violations. We allocate \$100,000 annually to help fund landmark cases, such as *Wal-Mart v. Dukes* and *Cioca v. Rumsfeld*, as well as cases with the potential to set future precedents like *Rizo v. Fresno County Office of Education*.

These are a few of the current cases. (More information can be found [HERE](#).)

### **John Doe v. Jane Doe**

Jane was a college student who reported sexual misconduct by a fellow student to her school. The college conducted a formal Title IX investigation process and hearing, and ultimately found the Respondent responsible for sexual misconduct in violation of its Title IX policy, and removed him from the college. The Respondent brought a defamation suit against Jane, which is still pending in court. Case Adopted January 2023



### **Louk v. Visible College**

Mara Louk was a senior at Visible Music College, a private Christian school, when a fellow Visible student forcibly raped and strangled her. Visible refused to investigate Mara's report of the assault, and instead disciplined Mara for allegedly having premarital sex with a prior boyfriend. Mara filed a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education, and the Department is now investigating Visible for retaliation and other violations of the Clery Act and Title IX. Case adopted January 2023.



# 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.

This group is currently meeting with Cultural Adventures and the IC groups.



**Great Decisions Groups** are self-moderated groups that meet to discuss issues of world importance, guided by the Great Decisions book published by the Foreign Policy Association. The Great Decisions book highlights nine thought-provoking foreign policy challenges facing America. The program provides materials that help people reach informed decisions on the issues and participate on the foreign policy process and world affairs. One group meets Friday afternoons and another meets Wednesday evenings at 6:30pm. Each person pays for their own copy of the book. Contact your group leader or **Rita Powell** to join a group or for more information.



**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 November book selection is *Pale Morning Light with Violet Swan* by Reed. We share this information so even if you aren't able to join us, you have reading suggestions. At this time, we have room for more! 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. This group currently on hiatus.



**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** - meets the 3rd Saturday of the month at 2:00 PM . We will read a variety of genres. We have room for more members! Contact **Carol Llewellyn** 562-430-4380

So much has been added to the AAUW-LB Website! Take a look !

Home Page for monthly Meetings and link to Daphne honor story

<https://longbeach-ca.aauw.net/> and other news <https://longbeach-ca.aauw.net/news-2/>

2024-2025 Meetings: <https://longbeach-ca.aauw.net/2024-2025-branch-meetings/>

Website Menu changed with separate menu item for Interest Groups

<https://longbeach-ca.aauw.net/interest-group-activities/>

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

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

**Deadline to RSVP is November 30**

You will receive an email reminder and details before the event.  
Zoom link will be sent prior to the meeting date.

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, Dec. 7, 2024

**9:30 am** set up

**10:00-12:00** Holiday Celebration

**Place: Juliet Wurr home**

See the AAUW directory LB 90815

**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

