



# Vantage

## Reading For All

Sharifa Batts, Program VP

AAUW Long Beach presents an engaging and timely discussion with Leslie Criswell on **book banning**—a growing issue that affects education, intellectual freedom, and democracy. Across the country, schools and libraries are facing increasing challenges as books, particularly those centering on race, gender, and diverse perspectives, are being removed from shelves.

**Our discussion will explore:**

- The history and resurgence of book banning in the U.S.
- How censorship disproportionately impacts marginalized communities
- The role of educators, parents, and advocates in defending the right to read
- Action steps to protect free expression and inclusive learning spaces



Whether you're a lifelong reader, an educator, or a concerned community member, this meeting will provide valuable insights into how we can stand up for the freedom to read. **Let's come together to ensure that knowledge remains accessible to all!**

Leslie Criswell is a retired trial attorney who spent 35 years trying civil jury cases. She volunteered as an L.A. Superior Court mediator and Small Claims Court judge for several years and is an active member of the American Board of Trial Advocates. After retiring from her law practice, Leslie taught Law as an elective at Narbonne High School for seven years and was able to weave mock trial experiences into the curriculum. She is a coach and judge in competitive high school, college, and law school mock trial programs here in Southern California. Leslie is a member of the Palos Verdes and Beach Cities AAUW branches and has been a dorm mom at several Tech Trek summer camps in the last few years. Her adult children live nearby, and she became the proud grandmother of a beautiful baby girl in January.

Guests are welcome to attend this program that starts at 11:00 AM on Saturday, April 5th. Meet at 9:30 AM to socialize, 10 AM for the business meeting, followed by the program.

Venue: Long Beach City College, 4900 E. Conant St (Clark & Conant). Follow signs to building O2, Room 208.

RSVP to Charlotte Joseph 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

## April: Honoring Strength and Awareness

April marks two significant awareness campaigns that resonate deeply with our mission of empowering women: **Sexual Assault Awareness Month** and **Stress Awareness Month**. Both initiatives are crucial in highlighting the challenges women face and fostering a culture of empowerment, safety, and self-care.

Sexual Assault Awareness Month is a time to amplify voices, advocate for survivors, and educate communities about prevention. As an organization dedicated to advancing women, we stand firm in supporting survivors and advocating for safe spaces. This month, we encourage conversations that break the silence and reduce stigma.

### How You Can Support:

- **Educate Yourself & Others:** Discuss and learn about consent, healthy boundaries, and support systems.
- **Raise Awareness:** Share resources and advocate for policies that protect and empower women.
- **Support Survivors:** Listen, believe, and provide compassionate support.

Stress Awareness Month reminds us of the importance of mental well-being and physical health. Women, particularly in leadership and advancement roles, often face unique pressures that can impact their health. Managing stress is not just about coping—it's about thriving.

### Tips for Managing Stress:

- **Prioritize Self-Care:** Take time for activities that nurture your mind and body.
- **Build Support Networks:** Connect with folks who encourage and uplift you.
- **Seek Resources:** Don't hesitate to reach out to health professionals for guidance.

This month and every month, we remain dedicated to fostering safe, empowering environments where women can lead, grow, and succeed. Together, let's champion awareness, promote safety, and advocate for well-being. We truly appreciate your ongoing commitment to our branch!

### Reminder and Request:

**The April branch meeting will be held in-person only on April 5th.** We are unable to offer this meeting via Zoom as LBCC will be on spring break and no technicians will be available. Please attend for our branch election!

**Don't forget to submit your C I L A [nomination](#) by April 30<sup>th</sup>!**

**Past Named Gift Honorees:** Please let us know if you have been rewarded in the past so that we can update our record keeping. The AAUW CA [website](#) only shows recent data. We're especially interested in members who have been awarded prior to 2017. Thank you for your support.

### Named Gift Honorees 2024

Valerie Armstrong, Carol Clanton

## Calendar Dates to Note

April 5	Branch Meeting
April 15	Tax Day!
April 16—21	Easter Week
April 26	Author Luncheon
May 3	Spring Event

## Contact Us

aauwlongbeach@gmail.com

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

www.facebook.com / aauwlongbeachca

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



## Public Policy

from AAUW CA Public Policy Committee

### Implementation of Project 2025

**Our core values are under attack. Take action now.**

As Co-Directors Amy Hom and (Long Beach branch member) Missy Maceyko outlined in a [webinar](#) in October 2024, the objectives of Project 2025 directly counter the Public Policy Priorities of AAUW California.

**With federal policy pronouncements and changes continuing to take place at a head-spinning pace**, it is clear that changes are underway to make Project 2025 become reality (track implementation [HERE](#)). To respond to the attack on the people and issues we care about and to fulfill the mission of our organization, “to advance equity for women and girls through advocacy, education, and research,” we will continue to compile resources to help you take action to fight back. This is a critical moment, as the changes that are being implemented may have long-lasting impacts, locally and globally.

Even as we are asking you to act, **we want to remind you that your well-being is important**. With an uptick in policies and enforcement actions that run counter to our core values, you may be feeling overwhelmed, exhausted, fearful, or anxious. Action is important, but **self-care is also a political act**. Be gentle with yourself and acknowledge your efforts.

**We also encourage you to [check out this guide](#) on how to read the news more strategically to still be able to follow events while preventing burnout and protecting your mental health.**

You should also consider staying connected with AAUW members and with those outside of AAUW who are engaged in efforts to push back. To this end, here are some examples of individuals, groups, and organizations that are pushing back in different ways:

- direct refusal to comply via mass resignation
- showing up in person not only to protest but also to support
- showing love for beleaguered federal workers at USAID
- initiating and sustaining legal challenges.

Please check out the AAUW CA monthly [Public Policy Newsletter](#).



## Connie Inskeep Leadership Award

from Ginnie Baxter, Chair

We will be honoring the Connie Inskeep Leadership Award winner at our June branch meeting and we need your help to identify a worthy nominee. Please submit your nomination by the April 30, 2025 deadline. There are several ways to send your nomination. Use this [Google Form](#) or email directly to Tobi. Members may also mail their nomination to Tobi Balma (whose address is in our directory).

Connie served as President, or Co-President of the Branch three times. She was an outstanding leader who demonstrated her love for AAUW by serving in leadership positions at the Branch, Interbranch Council and State levels. Her dedication and commitment to AAUW were inspirational to all who knew her. Any of the 3 criteria listed below, either solely, or in combination is acceptable to justify your nomination:

- Demonstrates leadership in the Branch that is consistent with the mission of AAUW, i.e., advancing gender equity for women and girls through research, education and advocacy.
- Demonstrates leadership at the Los Angeles Interbranch Council (LACIC)
- Demonstrates leadership at the AAUW California or National level

Prior recipients of this award (in order received) are: JoAnn Kuroda, Joyce Clark, Jean Aldrich, Judith Kaho, Fay Denny, Deloris Mayuga, Daphne Ching-Jackson, Betty Ann Rauch, Joan Gustafson, Barbara Gleason, Ellen Mathis, Norma Grady, Elaine Babbush, Julie Mills, Sharon Westafer, Helen Sebring, Patricia Ferrer, Linda Patten, Linda Silver, Frances Rozner, Darlene Daclan, Dianne Bradfield, Cacilia Kim, Mary Lamo, Flo Pickett, Tobi Balma, Denise Montoya and Ginny Baxter




## AAUW Scholarship Fundraising


**Support AAUW Long Beach Branch Scholarships and  
Meet Debut Author Diane Marie Brown**

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

**Date:** Saturday, April 26, 2025.  
**Time:** Check-in and Silent Auction starts at 11:00 a.m. Buffet Lunch includes sandwich, salad, dessert, and beverage and is served at 12:00 p.m. Presentation by Diane Marie Brown 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:** \$80 per person. All funds support the event and scholarships.  
**RSVP:** An RSVP is required by April 19 if you plan to attend.



### Featuring Diane Marie Brown



Diane Marie Brown is a professor at Orange Coast College in Costa Mesa, California and a public health professional for the Long Beach Health Department. She has a BA and MPH from UCLA and a degree in fiction from USC's Master of Professional Writing Program. Her work has appeared in Bomb Magazine, Hear Our Voices, Scary Mommy, Women Writers, the Audible Blog, and the Daily Bruin. She grew up in Stockton and now lives in Long Beach, California, with her husband, their four daughters, and their dog, Brownie. Her debut novel, *Black Candle Women*, is a Read With Jenna book club selection.

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

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### A Luncheon To Die For


Complete and return this form to Sharon Westafer, 6222 E Marina View Dr, Long Beach, CA 90803 by April 19.  
 If you have questions, please call (562) 493-4749 or email [sharwest1@hotmail.com](mailto:sharwest1@hotmail.com).

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

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

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

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



Please indicate sandwich preferences with a number. One per attendee. Turkey: \_\_\_\_ Vegetarian: \_\_\_\_

## Scholarship Support

from JoAnn Kuroda

### SILENT AUCTION ITEMS NEEDED FOR AUTHOR'S DAY

The **Author's Day** Committee is working hard to present a wonderful event on **April 26**. We ask members to help bring items for the Silent Auction. Suggested items are: Experiences, gift cards, theme baskets, food baskets (e.g. Mexican, Italian, Chinese), wine, candles, champagne, concert or museum tickets. How about donating an item that you like? We accept cash and can then purchase items for added attraction to existing baskets. Please bring your donations to the April 5 branch meeting and give them to Jeane Caveness or you can call JoAnn Kuroda at 562-429-6923 and she will be happy to pick up the item. The deadline to contribute donations is April 8.



## Branch Nominating

from Jane Hansen, Nominating Chair

### 2025-2026 Proposed Slate of Elected Officers from the Nominations Committee

The election of our branch officers for 2025-2026 will take place on Saturday, April 5<sup>th</sup> during our regular branch meeting. This year, it is important that members attend the meeting in person, because there will not be a Zoom option. April 5<sup>th</sup> falls during the spring break at LBCC and we will not have an employee to run the Zoom system. A quorum of 15% of the membership is required for elections.

A slate of candidates is listed below for the elected offices. Nominations will also be accepted from the floor during the meeting on April 5<sup>th</sup>, but those nominees must have agreed in advance to be nominated.

Nominations Committee: Jane Hansen (chair) Faye Alperin, Jeane Caveness, Carol Clanton, Karen Gustafson, Denise Montoya (advisor).

#### Elected Officer Nominees and Continuing Officers:

Co-Presidents:	Jane Hansen and Barbara Hall
President-Elect/VP:	open
Co-Program VP:	Erin Murphy and Celia Mejia
Co-Membership VPs:	Faye Alperin and MaryAnn Takemoto
AAUW Fund VP:	Ginny Baxter
Investment VP:	Patricia Ferrer
Co-Treasurers (current 2- year term):	Darlene Daclan and Tammy Kane
Co-Secretaries:	Cacilia Kim and Linda Westman

Elected Officers will be installed at our June branch meeting.

## Branch and Board Business

by Linda Westman, Secretary

The following motion was passed during the February 17, 2025 EC Meeting:

### Motion by Frances Rozner to Approve Up To \$150 Expenditure for Archival Materials

"I move that the Executive Committee approve an expenditure of up to \$150 from the Reserve Fund to cover the cost of archival materials so that the branch's immediate past historical items plus several years in advance, may be adequately preserved at the Long Beach Historical Society.

In explanation: (1) from Gaylord Archival, 25 buffered 3<sup>rd</sup> cut manila folders, (2) from Gaylord Archival, 50 polyester document sleeves (for the flattened Yearbooks), and (3) through Amazon, 20 USB flash drives (4-16 GB) on which will be electronically stored the annual Vantages, the Board and EC minutes and any other documents deemed appropriate per year for historical retrieval. Frances Rozner is donating boxes of new #2 pencils for labeling the folders and the Historical Society will donate the buffered pockets to hold a flash drive in each folder. Policy & Procedure #5. Budget.b.iii. allows for up to a \$500 ask per project of the EC or Board, with a maximum of \$1000 annually, without Branch approval."

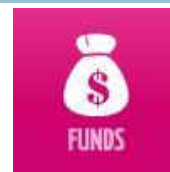
Seconded by Linda Westman      Motion passed by unanimous vote



Calling all theater lovers! We are planning a night out at International City Theater on **Thursday evening, August 28th.**

The play by Wendy Graff is called *Masala Dabba* and is an exploration of family memories of food and cooking, culture and identity. If you are interested in reserving a ticket(s), please contact Mary Ann Takemoto at [martakemoto@gmail.com](mailto:martakemoto@gmail.com). Tickets are \$35 each and your reservation will be confirmed when cash, check of Zelle payment is received. You can bring cash or check to the April or May meetings.

Amazing! It's April already, time to file your tax returns and be proud of your 2024 charitable contributions to AAUW. This month we are focusing on letting you know where your money has gone. National membership is about 41,000. Of this number, 9,000 are either Paid Life Members, or Honorary 50 Year members who do not pay yearly dues. Member Dues (\$2.3M) account for only 9% of AAUW's yearly revenue (one of the reasons AAUW National dues are increasing by \$2 starting April 1, 2025). Fortunately AAUW has investments and other revenue, but, what all of this means is that contributions to the Greatest Needs Fund is vital to help AAUW fulfill its Mission.



Thirty one inspiring Fellows and grant recipients are in California this year and are available to share nuggets of their fascinating studies or programs. Click [HERE](#) to see the list and many have included a video. (In total, \$6.3M went to 285 Fellows and Community Organizations.)

Thank you again to your contributions to the AAUW Fund.

## DEI Notes from Tobi Balma by permission of Pat Dudley, DEI Chair, Greater Whittier Branch

**DEI, what it is and what it isn't.** You have probably been inundated with headlines and news reports surrounding the demise of DEI. Keep in mind that DEI are just letters of the alphabet that have come to represent Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. In fact, the letter A is often attached to become DEIA with the A standing for Accessibility. The actual policies and programs making up DEIA date back to the 1960's when many policies, programs and safe guards were put in place to create equity for all regardless of race, gender, religion and disabilities and have continued to evolve to address specific societal sub-groups. Arm yourself with facts to inform your understanding and reactions to the current focus on DEI.



Find out more about DEI [HERE](#).

## Membership Matters!

from Faye Alperin, Membership VP

### AAUW MEMBERSHIP DUES RENEWAL PROCESS

It is time for members to begin renewing their dues for the 2025-2026 year. Most members' renewal date is June 30, 2025 and the deadline to be included in the yearbook is August 15, 2025. Members are encouraged to pay their dues using credit or debit cards, on the AAUW Long Beach website using the "Join or Renew" button. You may also pay **\$120** by check, mailing it to Dr. Ginny Baxter, P.O. Box 8313, Long Beach, CA 90808. Checks should be made payable to "AAUW Long Beach."

As of April 1, 2025 National dues will increase by \$2. Please refer to the email sent on March 10, 2025 to all members. National provides support with member training, advocacy and education.

National \$74 (fully tax deductible)

Branch \$26

State \$20



Members who have Lifetime status, still need to pay the Branch and State dues. You will receive an email from AAUW Long Beach with details. Information on student dues are on the website.

For assistance, contact Treasurer Darlene Daclan,

[darlene\\_daclan@yahoo.com](mailto:darlene_daclan@yahoo.com),

Co-Membership VPs Faye Alperin, [fayealperin@gmail.com](mailto:fayealperin@gmail.com) or

Mary Ann Takemoto, [martakemoto@gmail.com](mailto:martakemoto@gmail.com).

# 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 book selection for April is *It Goes So Fast* by Mary Louise Kelly. 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

## CULTURAL ADVENTURES

### BUS TOUR OF THE CITY OF LONG BEACH

FRIDAY, MAY 9, 2025

Join us as we travel through the City of Long Beach guided by our tour leader Gerrie Schipske. She will describe the history of the early suffragettes and how they paved the way so the women of our city would become civic leaders. We will conclude at the 2nd and PCH Shopping Mall where each will choose and pay for their own meal. The departure and return will be at the Target Parking Lot, 2290 Bellflower Blvd., Long Beach. RSVP: JoAnn Kuroda, 562-429-6923; [sojoinlb@aol.com](mailto:sojoinlb@aol.com) Price: \$25.00 per person  
Deadline: May 2, 2025 We will need a minimum of 25 people to operate the tour.



**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 March 27**

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, April 5, 2025**

**9:30 am Social Time to Mingle**

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

**11:00-12:00 Program**

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

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

NO ZOOM option for this meeting.

**Guests /Potential  
Members are Welcome to  
RSVP**



### AAUW Long Beach Branch

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

PLEASE  
PLACE  
STAMP  
HERE

