

March Program Explores Aging Issues in California By Kim Rutledge

Aging is changing in California. Our state's over-60 population is projected to diversify and grow faster than any other age group. By 2030, 10.8 million Californians will be an older adult, making up one-quarter of the state's population. This aging population will be ethnically diverse and dominated by women.



In June 2019, Governor Gavin Newsom issued an executive order calling for the creation of a Master Plan for Aging. The executive order affirmed the priority of the health and well-being of older Californians and the need for policies that promote healthy aging. It also called for a “blueprint” for state government, local government, the private sector and philanthropy to prepare the state for the coming demographic changes and continue California's leadership in aging, disability and equity. The Master Plan covers five bold goals: housing for all ages and stages; health reimaged; inclusion and equity; caregiving that works; and affordable aging.

On Wednesday, March 24 at 7 p.m., AAUW Sacramento will host a panel discussion on the Master Plan for Aging and its five bold goals and 23 strategies to build a California for All Ages by 2030. The panel will focus on women's issues and equity considerations in the Master Plan. We will be joined on Zoom by the following experts who helped shape the Master Plan. To register for the March program, go to the Eventbrite link [here](#).

Amanda Lawrence, MPH, is the project director of the Master Plan for Aging at the California Department of Aging (CDA). Immediately prior to joining CDA, Lawrence served as strategist and program consultant on several projects at the California Department of Public Health, including the launch of the Department's Healthy Aging Initiative. Following graduation from the University of Wisconsin-Madison, a passion for health and social justice led her to earn a Master of Public Health degree and to work for international, community-based and healthcare nonprofits promoting health and equity, including the planning and implementation of community organizing efforts with and for older adults in Nicaragua.

Edie Yau is the director of diversity, equity and inclusion for the Alzheimer's Association, Northern California and Northern Nevada Chapter. She provides leadership and strategic direction in equity and inclusion in the pursuit of a world without Alzheimer's and all other dementia. She is responsible for developing culturally relevant programs to effectively reach underserved communities. Yau serves on the Executive Council for AARP California and is a member of the Master Plan for Aging Equity Advisory Committee. She has been in the field of aging for more than 20 years and has an MA in gerontology.

Ellen Schmeding is the chair of the California Commission on Aging and currently serves as the chief operating officer for St. Paul's Senior Services. Prior to joining St. Paul's in 2017,

Schmeding worked with the County of San Diego for 30 years, most recently as the director of Aging & Independence Services (the Area Agency on Aging for San Diego County) as well as serving as the Public Administrator, Public Guardian and Public Conservator for San Diego County.

Kiara Harris is co-founder of Sistahs Aging with Grace & Elegance (<https://sagesistahs.org>). Founded in 2012, the mission is to empower and support African-American women with tools and resources they need to implement a plan of action that enhances their quality of life from midlife and throughout their senior years. Harris began her justice and equity work in 2015 at Sacramento City College in the Department of Student Equity and Success. Harris also served as a member of the Equity Work Group for the California Master Plan on Aging. She has more than 30 years of professional experience in executive-level communications and public policy-related positions. Harris owned H&H Ecoprises, an environmental and public health marketing and communications consulting firm in Oakland, CA for more than 10 years. She has a master's degree in public administration from Cal State East Bay and a bachelor's degree in mass media communication from Hampton University, a historically black college in Hampton, Virginia.

To register on Eventbrite for the March program, click [here](#). We look forward to a fruitful discussion about this important project.

President's Message on Upcoming National Dues Increase and Upcoming National Election By Angela Scarlett

Dearest Members,

I hope this note finds everyone well. Branch business is going forward. Programs are developing meetings that fit our mission and engage our members, including a panel discussion on the California's Master Plan for Aging on Wednesday, March 24, at 7 p.m. Tech Trek is working with our state program to pilot virtual Tech Trek. The Scholarships committee has rolled out electronic applications, and Speech Trek will have conducted its first online contest by the time you read this.

I don't know about you, but I have always centered my attention on branch life. As president, I have found this focus can be to my detriment. Both National and California AAUW organizations send out many communications to which we should pay attention.



1. National dues will be increasing \$3 this fiscal year, 2021-22. While this puts our overall dues just over \$100, it is a mild increase, to be sure. In July 2020, AAUW started sending out emails warning that National would likely be increasing dues over several years. As of this writing, National has two more increases of \$5 scheduled for the ensuing two years. By the fiscal year 2023-24, your national dues will be \$72. All but \$3 of your annual dues remain tax-deductible.
2. The National AAUW Election opens on April 7 and ends on May 17. As many of you already know, eliminating the degree requirement is on the docket again. It is notable that the last time the national board of directors introduced this proposed amendment was in 2009. Other AAUW members have submitted this proposal in subsequent years. I understand that our members feel frustrated and question why this keeps coming up, but the reason has evolved as times have changed. As membership dwindles, AAUW is also losing access to funding and grants from organizations that now see our degree requirement as being counter to our stated mission of supporting equity for all women and girls. Such funding helps fuel our mission-based work, including studies we have done on pay equity.

I know this is a precious topic to many, but irrespective of anyone's voting preferences, I strongly urge all members to review the national election page [here](https://www.aauw.org/resources/member/governance-tools/national-election/) (<https://www.aauw.org/resources/member/governance-tools/national-election/>). There is a town hall video near the bottom of the page on dues increases and degree requirements. Please consider watching this. You can also see the election timeline (including requesting a paper ballot by April 16). The number of members who vote in AAUW national elections hovers around 8,000 members. That number is far too small of a percentage to determine our national governance and mission.

While I will try to be more mindful of bringing state and national news to our organization, I would love to find a member or two willing to work in the California and National "beats" by reviewing websites, newsletters and email updates, and then summarizing the most important information our branch members need to know. Liz Jordan, our current financial director, tries to stay abreast of issues, but she is also on our nominating committee, and we want more members engaged and involved at all levels of AAUW.

As always, feel free to reach out to me via email or phone. My contact information is in our directory.

Thank you for your dedication and involvement.

Warmly,
Angela Scarlett
AAUW Sacramento Branch President

Novelist Jillian Cantor to speak at April Authors Event By Cathy Locke

Mark your calendars for Saturday, April 10, for Sacramento AAUW's annual "Authors Luncheon" – minus the luncheon in this pandemic year. Jillian Cantor, the best-selling author of

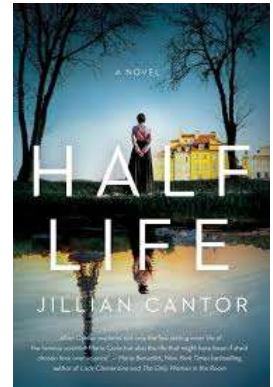


11 novels for teens and adults, will speak to us via Zoom from her home in Arizona. **The virtual event will be held from 12:30 p.m. to 2 p.m.** and will include a Q & A session with the author.

Cantor is known for her works of historical fiction, including "The Lost Letter" and "In Another Time". Her latest novel, "Half Life", is scheduled for release March 23 by Harper Perennial. In "Half Life", Cantor juxtaposes the real life of physicist Marie Curie with the life Curie might have lived had she chosen to marry her first love and remain in her native Poland. The novel explores how an alternative path might have affected Curie's life and the history of

science.

This year's Authors Event is free of charge and members are encouraged to invite guests. Click [here](#) to register on Eventbrite. Photo of Jillian Cantor courtesy of Galen Evans.



Call for Candidates – 2021-2022 Board Needs YOU! By Liz Jordan

Without members willing to say yes, we can't have a local branch of AAUW. We need you; in return, you grow in knowledge, skills and friendship by agreeing to serve on the board of directors.

The AAUW Sacramento Nominating Committee is looking for members to join the fun!

- Serving on the board to keep your favorite gender equity organization going is a lot like your favorite interest group – you have fun; you learn new things; you make lots of new friends.

Secretary – One-year volunteer to complete a current two-year term. A good way to learn more about AAUW. An elected position.



- Secretary's most important job is note-taking during the monthly board meetings (plenty of help is offered and template exists for the secretary to use.)
- Write up the minutes and correct as input suggests.
- Word processing skills are important, but we aren't looking for perfection – just help!!
- To know what actions/decisions the Sacramento board is working on.
- Updates website calendar monthly.

Membership Treasurer- position helps new members join and current members renew membership and donate. No term defined. Not elected

- Works with the Membership Director to process new members and renewals.
- Works with the Finance Director to deposit dues and donations and maintain a data base of donations made to local and national outreach and funds.
- Creates, publishes and distributes the Branch Directory

Membership Director –Two-year term, elected position.

- To try your hand at recruitment and maintenance of our membership.
- You can bring a friend as co-director to help plan new-member events and attend monthly board meetings.

President-Elect – a one-year, elected term; shadows the President before taking on two-year term of President. This position helps the next President to learn the scope of the job.

- Angela Scarlett, Molly Dugan and other Past Presidents have proven *you can do this job while employed, too!*
- President leads board meetings, keeps an eye on state and national developments and actions.
- Responds to members' needs and questions.

Nominating Committee – two members needed

- Calls members to serve in elected positions.
- Meets infrequently November through February

We are an organization of volunteers. Please volunteer to keep our 101-year-old branch moving into the next 100 years.

Contact any of us: Molly Dugan, Elizabeth Jordan, Linda Sparks, Donna Holmes, or Hedda Smithson. Contact email addresses and phone numbers can be found in the Branch Directory.

Upcoming Member Vote by Charmen Goehring-Fox

[NOTE: Another view on this issue immediately follows Charmen's article.]

Many of you may be aware that we have a national AAUW election coming up April 17-May 7 that includes a bylaw proposal to eliminate the degree requirement as a condition of membership. For the sake of transparency, let me say that I am 100 percent in favor of elimination. There are many pros and cons, and lots of feelings around the proposal. Let's talk about some facts first.

***This is just the second time** since 2009 that the National AAUW Board has put the proposal to a vote. The appearances on the ballot between 2009 and 2018 were suggested by a member, which is one of our rights of membership.

***This is not about getting more members** -- when we voted to allow those with two-year degrees or when we voted to allow men, there was not a surge of two-year degreed or male members. It is not expected to create a flood of new members now.

***Only about 15 percent of AAUW's budget is funded by our dues.** The rest comes from other sources such as corporations and other organizations. It is becoming increasingly difficult to compete with other organizations for these funds as we are seen as "exclusive" at a time when everyone is working to become more inclusive. Our mission will be jeopardized by lack of funds if we can't get donors to see AAUW as a worthwhile investment.

***Younger women**, those under 50, have been telling AAUW for years that they **see the degree requirement as exclusive** and they do not want to be part of an organization that holds on to this.

***AAUW is not considering changing the name.** Many people now think we are university professors which, obviously, is not accurate. Many companies and organizations have changed membership makeup over the years and yet, kept their well-established name- think GEICO, YMCA.

***Our degree requirement has changed over time.** In the beginning, only those with a degree from a specific list of schools could join AAUW. In 1949, the members voted to open membership to women with a degree from any accredited four-year college or university. In 1985, we voted to allow men and in 2005, those with a two-year or equivalent degree were voted in.

Among the **pros of eliminating the degree requirement:**



- We will be able to “walk our talk” of equity for ALL women.
- We will be able to welcome equity-minded people who have amazing skillsets but no degree.
- We will be seen as more inclusive and open to our communities.
- We may attract younger women and women of color (many of whom have historically not had the same education opportunities as white women).

Some of the **cons of eliminating the degree requirement:**

- We lose our exclusive appeal and are less distinguishable from other women’s organizations.
- We might be seen as less focused on encouraging women to achieve degrees (though we will still be the largest provider of grants and fellowships).
- We may attract to our branches women who are different from us.

I urge you to consider this matter, talk with others, seek out information. Check out the AAUW Townhall Webinar, Dues and Education Requirement (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bhkHHqKwT3w&feature=youtu.be>) This has been a year of reckoning in our country and it is time to bring AAUW along too. As Frieda Schurch, 50- year member and major AAUW donor, said on the floor of the 2005 AAUW Convention, “What are we about? Equity for women or showing off our degrees?” It is time again to answer that question.

Another View on the Upcoming Vote by Vicki Nicholson

When I proudly joined the Fremont Branch in 1974, I was eager to meet and have conversations with educated, intelligent women who also supported education and equity. I was not



disappointed. Since the degree was the "value factor" for joining, I am giving voice to members who want to retain the degree requirement. I respect current members who admit that, though they formerly supported its retention, they now are willing to eliminate it.

To some extent AAUW has achieved its goal of promoting college education for women and girls because our sisters have secured more degrees than men for some time. However, we are aware that we cannot relax our push for pay equity, equitable health care, more equitable representation of minority communities as leaders, among other issues. We certainly welcome all partners who join us in these efforts.

If the degree requirement is completely eliminated, AAUW will no longer be distinctive -- just American Association of Women. And if there is no corresponding name change, then the AAUW label would be misleading or, worse, a form of false advertising.

I am most angered by the fact that the membership HAS spoken on this question and it has been rejected at least twice in recent years. I resent National attempting to railroad through the degree requirement elimination AGAIN. National should wait at least five years before putting the change to a vote once again. Since I am a paid life member, I cannot disassociate myself from the national organization but, if degree elimination is passed, I would have to re-evaluate local branch ties.

AAUW MEMBERSHIP MATTERS By Bonnie Penix and Jan Stuter

March is Women's History Month. Did you know that the concept of specifically celebrating women's history began in California? The actual celebration of [Women's History Month](#) grew out of a weeklong celebration of women's contributions to culture, history and society, organized by the school district of Sonoma, [California](#), in 1978.



Bonnie Penix

Presentations were given at dozens of schools, hundreds of students participated in a "Real Woman" essay contest and a parade was held in downtown Santa Rosa.

A few years later, the idea had caught on within communities, school districts and organizations across the country. In 1980, President [Jimmy Carter](#) issued the first presidential proclamation declaring the week of March 8 as National [Women's History Week](#). The U.S. Congress followed suit the next year, passing a resolution establishing a national celebration. Six years later, in 1987, the National Women's History Project successfully petitioned Congress to expand the event to the entire month of March.

Women's History Month highlights women's contributions to US history, culture and contemporary society. Women are recognized for their achievements in science, government, literature, art, sports, community and medicine. Some names you might recognize are Marie Curie, Rachel Carson, Ruth Bader Ginsburg, Eleanor Roosevelt, Jane Addams, Carrie Chapman Catt, Mae Jemison and Wilma Mankiller. Honoring the accomplishments of these women has a positive impact on the development of self-respect and encourages new opportunities for girls and women. As we celebrate 140 years of AAUW's existence, we will continue to speak out for gender equity in all aspects of our society, and to promote opportunities for women and girls of all backgrounds.

We invite YOU to:

- Invite your friends, relatives, co-workers and neighbors to join AAUW and help advance our endeavors.
- Invite them to attend one of our public meetings where they can join at a reduced rate.
- Invite them to join an organization of accomplished women.

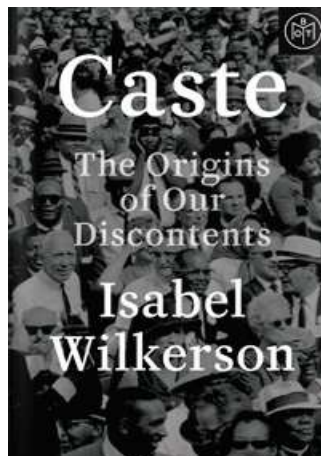
We don't all have to have names as famous as those above. Each of us has value in her own right and something to offer. What we mostly need to have is a commitment to helping grow strong, successful women as we move forward in history — to continue to create and tell “her-story.” To quote Carrie Chapman Catt: *"To the wrongs that need resistance, To the right that needs assistance, To the future in the distance, Give yourselves."*



Janice Stuter

If you have ideas for member recruitment and/or retention, please be sure to share them with us. Thank you!

Living Our Mission of Equity by Charmen Goehring-Fox



We invite you to join us in a monthly equity conversation looking at our own biases and what actions we can take to attract diversity to our branch and become better people in the process. We will be starting the book “Caste: The Origins of Our Discontents” by Isabel Wilkerson and discussing what we have read, along with exploring other issues related to race and equity. **We meet the second Wednesday of each month from 7 to 8pm on Zoom.**

The Zoom meeting code is 737 420 3780 or you can join us using this [link](#).

We will discuss Part 1 on March 10 at 7pm. If you have questions and to RSVP, please email Charmin at charminme@yahoo.com.

AAUW Fund March 2021 By Charmin Goehring-Fox

In lieu of the silent auction at the January IBC meeting, I am pleased to announce that **we will hold our own Spring Silent Auction in April for the AAUW Fund!** We will use an easy online platform called 32Auctions that will showcase our items, take your bids and update you when you have been outbid. Payment for items you won will be via check or online.



We are looking for items to be donated -- from gift cards to fun items you would like to rehome to services offered to vacation home weekends. Please send a picture of the item or items you would like to donate to Charmin along with an estimated value. You and the winning bidder will coordinate pick-up/delivery of items after the auction is over and the lots are paid.

I would also like to announce that the Sacramento branch has another new member of the Legacy Circle -- **Karen Burley!** She joins a group of more than 650 members nationwide who have committed to leaving AAUW a piece of their estate. One does not have to name an amount now nor do you need to have great wealth. Every amount shows your support and commitment to AAUW! There are many ways you can do this, and the process is very easy. By leaving a legacy gift, you help to ensure that AAUW is able to fight on behalf of women and girls for years to come. You can get more information at www.aauw.org or give Charmin Goehring a call!



14th Annual Speech Trek Contest Celebrates Its Winner By Ann Arneill

On Saturday, Feb. 20, 2021, the Speech Trek Committee held its first-ever virtual contest via Zoom with great success. A full audience listened to 12 students from six Elk Grove Unified School District high schools speak on the topic: **“Has social media helped or hindered the breaking down of barriers for women and girls?”**

First-place winner was Saher Haidari, a junior at Pleasant Grove High School, receiving \$500. **Second-place winner, Katelyn Evans**, a junior from Franklin High School, received \$300. **Third-place winner was Annmarie Fan**, a junior from Franklin High School, who received \$100. Also from Pleasant Grove High School, **Maren DeMille**, received **honorable mention** and was awarded \$75.



The Sacramento Branch's winning speaker is entered in the AAUW CA Speech Trek Semi-Finals. If Saher Haidari makes it into the top three, she will be invited to compete in the Finals for \$1,500. **Saher will also be presenting her speech at the May branch meeting**—something to look forward to because she is a very dynamic speaker.

Dr. Virginia Kidd, communications professor emeritus at CSUS, along with Mark Hoffman and Gary Pettigrew, both Toastmaster Club members, judged the event. Speech Trek Committee member Kathleen Deaver served as timekeeper for the contest. Thanks to Joe Kelett for technical assistance and branch member Karen Burley for her help.

Branch Birthdays, Book Groups

- Click [here](#) for Branch Birthdays for March
- Click [here](#) for Book Group books for March

Interest Groups

You can find out about the Interest Groups offered by the branch by looking at the banner on the home webpage (just under the branch photo) and clicking on "Activities". Click on "Interest Groups" and you will find a list of all Interest Groups, when they meet, and the group leader to contact for more information (email addresses and phone numbers can be found in the Branch Membership Directory and Handbook).

Some Interest Groups are taking a break during the pandemic, but a number are still meeting - virtually! According to the Interest Group Coordinator, Vicki Nicholson, here are the groups that are currently meeting:

- All Book Groups
- All 3 sections of Great Decisions
- Art & Architecture
- Film Fans
- Reader's Theater
- Travel

Feel free to contact a group leader to learn more about the Interest Group. They would love to have you join in!