



Welcome to the Sphere Newsletter, the monthly e-blast sent to every member of the San Diego organization for a quick read of things to know and do in AAUW!



A Cup of Tea and Thee

It's tea time! For this month's program, AAUW-San Diego Branch will host a tea party on Saturday, February 24, 3-4:30 p.m., at Serra Mesa/Kearny Mesa Library.

Come for a variety of teas and sandwiches, and, of course, camaraderie with fellow branch members.

Lynne Batchelor will give a presentation on tea. Attendees can also look forward to hearing a dynamic speaker.

Look for a flyer with more details coming soon to your email inbox.

Study and Advice Advance Gender Justice

AAUW San Diego County Interbranch Council members and guests gathered at a luncheon at the Handlery Hotel in Mission Valley in late January to learn about the San Diego County Commission on the Status of Women and Girls presented by Parisa Ijadi-Maghsoodi, Esq. Ijadi-Maghsoodi shared that she was honored to be elected as chair of the commission by the San Diego City Council in early 2022.

The San Diego County Commission on the Status of Women and Girls was organized in 1975 but had been dormant since 2001. San Diego Mayor Todd Gloria revived the commission in 2022 when he announced the names of women who would serve on the commission.

Ijadi-Maghsoodi explained that the commission was mandated to study and advise the San Diego County Board of Supervisors on areas of concern to women's lives in San Diego County. Areas of study and advice include domestic violence, homelessness, human trafficking, child care needs, medical and health services, elder care and fraud, criminal justice legal services, sexual discrimination and bias in employment, credit and loan policies in housing, San Diego County programs and policies affecting women, and legislative issues to promote women's equal rights.

How can the commission study and advise the San Diego County Board of Supervisors on all these issues affecting women and girls? Ijadi-Maghsoodi shared that she uses her poverty and civil rights attorney skills and knowledge as well as her leadership skills acquired as chair of the commission's UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) for the past five years. She served as lead in drafting San Diego County's recently passed CEDAW ordinance.

Want to make a difference in your district? You can attend or watch for the commission's agenda for the upcoming meeting location. You can comment in person or online at an upcoming meeting. To answer many of your questions about how you can make a difference, go to <http://sandiegocounty.primegov.com/>

—*Donna Lilly,*
Co-President,
AAUW San Diego



Gov Trek 2024 swings into action

The second annual leadership program for girls in their junior and senior year of high school is underway. Nearly sixty girls from California with diverse backgrounds have enrolled in the Gov Trek program to explore careers in public service and elected office.

Inspiring words from Shirley N. Weber, Ph.D., welcomed future leaders from all over California, as the Gov Trek Session 1 commenced on Saturday, February 3. Secretary Weber is only the fifth constitutional officer who is African American serving California in its 170-year history and the state's first African American Secretary of State.

View Secretary Weber's video at:

<https://youtu.be/V3MQLKGAsHA?si=EPVpS9zbo9lQAJS3>

#GovTrek2024 #AAUW #AAUWCA #education #advocacy #youthleadership
#publicservice #careers

Get Ready for Lobby Days Coming Up In April

Please join us for Lobby Days 2024! The event is scheduled for Tuesday, **April 2**, and Wednesday, **April 3**, and will be a wonderful opportunity to meet with state legislators and advocate for our priority bills. Meetings will be held via Zoom as well as in person in Sacramento. A training webinar will be held on March 25 to equip you with everything you need for a successful meeting.

In order to participate, you must complete the sign-up form and attend the mandatory training. Links to the survey and to register for the training session can be found below. We hope that you will join us in this act of advocacy to promote our legislative priorities and advance our values.

Please complete the sign-up form by **February 15**, so that we can learn your preferences and make plans for a successful, impactful AAUW California Lobby Days. Your voices are needed to bring about the changes AAUW is committed to.

You MUST complete the signup form in order to participate.

[Click HERE to sign up for Lobby Days.](#)

A mandatory webinar training session will be held via Zoom on **March 25 (7-9 p.m.)**. Participants will receive training materials prior to the webinar.

You MUST attend the webinar in order to participate.

Please register for the webinar below.

[Click HERE to register for the training webinar.](#)

Please contact publicpolicy@aauw-ca.org if you have any questions.
Thank you for helping share AAUW's voice on the issues you care about.



Proposed Bylaws Change Voting Opens April 3

This spring, AAUW members will be asked to vote on an amendment to the national bylaws recommended by the AAUW Board of Directors and AAUW Governance Committee that would open membership to any individual who supports AAUW's important mission of advancing equity for women and girls.

Voting opens on April 3 (Online voting is encouraged.) Voting closes on May 15, 9:00 a.m. PT and results will be announced online.

Overview and Reasons for the Proposed Amendment

The AAUW Board of Directors and Governance Committee recommend approval of the following bylaw amendment to eliminate the degree requirement for membership in AAUW. This change will align our membership practices with our purpose of advancing equity for women and girls and enable us to include members with the diverse backgrounds and perspectives needed to achieve our purpose in today's world.

We remain committed to higher education as a pathway to eliminate barriers that hold women back and to enhance their leadership opportunities at all levels. We admire the effort of the inspiring women who have led the way in earning their degrees. We recognize, however, that in today's world higher education degrees are one of several paths needed to advance equity for women and girls. Professional certifications, on the job training, career technical experience and life experience all are alternative paths to obtaining education and the skills needed to become leaders and advocates for ending discrimination against women.

When AAUW began its work, higher education and professional careers were denied to most women. That is no longer the case. More than 50 percent of college degrees are currently being awarded to women, and women are now attaining powerful positions in business and government. Yet discrimination against women continues. Eliminating the degree requirement enables us to expand our voice and our reach, our ability to fulfill our purpose, and will open more opportunities to address the needs of all women. AAUW's name, which continues to have significant brand recognition for AAUW as a women's rights organization, will remain the same if the amendment is adopted.

The board recognizes that some members have strong views on the proposed change in the requirement for membership and encourages respectful debate on this important issue.

The board firmly believes that the proposed amendment is in the best interests of AAUW and its future relevance and sustainability as an inclusive and forward-thinking organization committed to advancing equity for women and girls. The board urges a vote in favor of the amendment.

Amendment Summary

THE PROPOSED REVISION OF ARTICLE III WOULD:

- Replace the Individual Members paragraph of the Membership Qualification provision (currently Article III Section 2 a) with new language indicating the sole requirement for membership is support of AAUW's purpose.
- Delete the provision on Student Associates (currently Section 3) since students would be allowed to join as full members of AAUW thus eliminating the need for a Student Associate provision.
- Renumber Section 4 Dues as Section 3 and delete the reference to "categories of membership" in this section to permit the board to set different dues for student members as previously allowed when Student Associates were listed as a separate category rather than included as part of the Individual Membership category.
- Make no changes to Article III Section 1 or Sections 5 and 6 on Life Membership and Membership Decisions, except that Section 5 Membership Decisions, and Section 6 Affiliates would be renumbered as Sections 4 and 5, respectively, with no other change.

Member Spotlight - Ariatna Pelayo



Ariatna Pelayo, advocate for Gov Trek

Student Puts in Work for Future in Public Service

Ariatna Pelayo, a political science major, minoring in sustainability, at California State University San Marcos, who will graduate this spring, became involved in AAUW's Gov Trek leadership program when she was searching for an internship to fulfill a requirement for a senior course. She was informed by one of her professors that a former student, Tomasa Santoyo, had interned for the program, and she had a wonderful experience. Through Sandi Gabe, AAUW California president, Ariatna connected with AAUW California Gov Trek Director and San Diego branch member Shauna (Oenning) Ruyle.

"I have had a wonderful time working with Shauna and the rest of the committee members for Gov Trek," Ariatna said. "Being a part of Gov Trek has given me the opportunity to engage with leaders all throughout California. I've had the privilege of working with wonderful women who value the presence of young women in positions of

public service,” she said. “Gov Trek has allowed me to be more vocal about my opinions and it has given me the ability to be more confident in the skills I can bring to a professional setting.”

She added, “When I first heard about AAUW and the Gov Trek program, I always thought to myself of how much I would have loved to have this opportunity when I was in high school.”

Ariatna contributed to Gov Trek this year by performing the behind-the-scenes work to get the program up and rolling for this year’s content. She oversaw facilitating the web content on the AAUW Gov Trek website. “I essentially created a whole new website layout by adding pictures, videos, and placing the information available in a more structured way,” she said. “I also oversaw reaching out to potential speakers for the 2024 Gov Trek Program. I made sure to email and confirm speakers for this year’s program and relaying information to them.”

Ariatna believes that it’s crucial for more women to be involved in the public service and political spheres. Looking forward to her future career, Ariatna said, “A field that has been an interest of mine and I hope to pursue is working with a congressional member or local politician. I would love to stay in San Diego because I love this city.” Ariatna also hopes to pursue a master’s degree to help her qualify for advanced professional roles.

Ariatna was born in the Bay Area but raised in the Central Valley. She moved to San Diego when she was eleven years old, almost ten years ago. “My parents love this county, and they knew we’d love it, too, so they decided to move us all down to Southern California,” she said. “It was a drastic change from living in the Central Valley. There’s never a day where I don’t consider myself blessed to live in such a beautiful county.”

She joined AAUW last summer prior to interning for Gov Trek. “I read up on the organization and I loved everything they stood for, so it was a no-brainer to join.” Women’s issues that are most important to her include reproductive health. “I am a firm believer in providing women the proper resources for them to receive adequate reproductive health,” she said.

Ariatna's mother was born in the United States and lived in Mexico most of her life; her father immigrated to America from Mexico when he was seventeen. As the second oldest in a family of four children with young parents, Ariatna became a caretaker of her younger siblings and had to "grow up fast and navigate the world." She considered that role both a blessing and a curse, but, she said, "If it weren't for my parents' ambitions to create a better life for their family and for my interest in continuing my education I wouldn't be where I'm at today. I'm grateful I have a strong, tight-knit family that celebrates my successes and cheers me on my journey."

Describing herself as a quick learner, Ariatna said she is always willing to put in the work when she doesn't understand something. "I'm a very resourceful person and whatever task is given to me, I will get it done right away." She also refers to herself as shy. "But, despite my shyness, I've always put myself in situations where I'm required to get out of my comfort zone. Even if I might hate it at first, it always turns out rewarding to discover and attempt new opportunities."

Member Spotlight is a monthly feature in The Sphere. If you have a suggestion of a San Diego chapter member to feature in coming months, please email Patricia Watts at pw4justice@yahoo.com

Branch events

Check out the calendar of events in future issues of The Sphere to see what is coming up. Our most recent event was the Red Sock Holiday Luncheon and Fundraiser at The Bay Club on December 2.

THE SPHERE SUBMISSIONS

The deadline for submissions to The Sphere is the 15th of the previous month. Please email submissions to Patricia Watts: pw4justice@yahoo.com

Officers 2022-23

Listed below are the officers for 2022-2023. As you can see, we have a number of openings. If you know anyone who would like to help our wonderful branch, just let one of our Co-Presidents know.

Officers

Co-Presidents	Jane Niemeier, Donna Lilly, Anne Hoiberg
Membership	Vacant
Finance	Sherry Eberling
Public Policy	Shauna Ruyle
Secretary	Lynne Batchelor

Chairs

Sphere Newsletter	Patricia Watts
College & University	Donna Lilly
Scholarships	Lillian Payn
Tech Trek	Nanette Allen
Communications	
Historian	
Tech Outreach	

INTERESTED IN BECOMING A SAN DIEGO BRANCH MEMBER?

Become a member at an in-person event and your national dues are cut in half!

The total will be \$74 for a new member if he/she joins at any in-person meeting. Total dues for 2022-2023 are normally \$110. (Dues: national--\$69 tax deductible + \$3 for the action fund/state--\$20/and branch \$18).

AAUW is a community of more than 170,000 people standing strong for gender equity. Your membership makes our powerful voice even louder on critical issues affecting women and girls.

AAUW MISSION AND VALUES

OUR VALUES

Intersectional. Inclusive.

Intergenerational. Empowering.

Though we are nonpartisan, we are not values-neutral: We fight to remove the barriers and biases that stand in the way of gender equity. We train women to negotiate for pay and benefits and to pursue leadership roles. And we advocate for federal, state, and local laws and policies to ensure equity and end discrimination.

OUR MISSION

Gender Equity & Economic Security

We've led the fight for fair pay and economic opportunity for women — and the battle continues: Women still get just 83 cents for every dollar paid to a man, and men continue to dominate the top roles and highest-paying professions.



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