

Upcoming AAUW Events!

- 6/22 Morning Book Group ZOOM
- 10/10 Virtual Breakfast
- *Stay tuned for more!*

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Oak Twig Summer 2020

Volume 54 No. 7

President's Perspective – Betty Stapleford



Betty Stapleford, AAUW President

We know that things since at least March have been pretty strange for all of us with the COVID19 pandemic taking up so much of the bandwidth in the news and our lives. It's hard to even remember what we talked about before that.

So what can we do? Certainly, we must take care of ourselves and stay healthy. Self-care is critical during all times but particularly now. And we need to reach out to our friends and family to see that they are OK. That is one of the reasons that we have a group of our leaders who are keeping in contact with members and are holding as many of our meetings and gatherings on Zoom as possible so that more people can participate and minimize social isolation.

And we have become aware that all people in our community do not have equal protection against the effects of this pandemic. Women and men don't all have adequate health care or enough food. Their job losses are not protected by unemployment insurance or a federal government check. In addition, those who have been required to keep working often do not have childcare. And, whether they are working or not, their children may not have the tools they need to continue their education online.

But, as if the pandemic were not enough, there are also the recent deaths of two black men at the hands of law enforcement officers, the second of which has brought about violent reaction in cities across our country. There have even been gatherings and marches of support in our own community for black women and men. It is hard to believe in a country where we say we believe in freedom for all that such a hideous miscarriage of justice could happen once again.

I leave it up to you to decide what you will do to address these issues. But I believe that our mission as members of AAUW is to make our country a better place for all people in whatever way we can. There is a lot to do.

Blessings and Virtual Hugs, Betty



Mark Your Calendars for a VIRTUAL FALL BREAKFAST Saturday Oct. 10



This year the Annual AAUW Fall Membership Breakfast will be a virtual event.
We want our members to stay connected and informed.
Please plan on joining us.

When: Sat. Oct. 10th, 2020

9:00am –11:00am
via Zoom

Presentations will include:

- Keynote Speaker TBA
- AAUW Branch News
- Message from our co-Presidents
- How to become more involved through our Interest Groups: Women in History, Hiking, Book Clubs, Public Policy, and Tech Trek

and a Live Event ~ A Chance to Win a Wonderful Gift Basket!

Donations will go to Adelante Comunidad Conejo

AAUW-TO Outreach~ *Latino Youth Leadership*



This has been a great year for our reimagined, branch-sponsored Latino group at Thousand Oaks High School from the fall of 2019 to March of 2020, when schools were closed due to the pandemic. We had elected officers for the first time, and they planned and executed meetings with our support. Activities included student presentations, guest speakers, fieldtrips, icebreakers, craft projects, celebrations, and Zoom meetings (minus our usual great refreshments). And students reapplied for membership next year and elected new officers so that we can start strong.

Our branch also honored two graduating seniors with scholarships to help them with their continued education. They are Vallerie Aguilar, who will be attending UC Irvine, and Joseline Alvarez, who will be attending Moorpark College. Congratulations, students!



AAUW-TO Outreach~~

More Exciting Latino Leadership News!



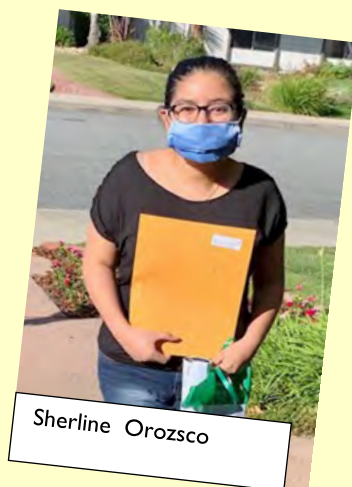
Our AAUW TO Branch sponsored Latino Youth Leadership Group at Thousand Oaks High School had a fun end of year “Zoom Party” complete with yummy food, speakers, a photo montage and a quiz game! Thank you to AAUW members who helped step up and assist with this task: Shoshana Brower, Susan Fagan, Peggy Buckles, Sally Hibbitts, Anne LaFianza, Sandra Martinez, Betty Stapleford, Nancy Taylor Walker, and volunteer Maria Ornelas. These members created and contributed to 32 gift bags filled with a Target gift card, candy, fruit, art supplies, thoughtful quotations, and the best brownies in town! Then these bags were all personally delivered to the students at their homes, so they could enjoy them at their “Zoom Party” the same day. The students also received certificates of participation.



Jessica Herrera



Vallerie Aguilar



Sherline Orozco



Zoom Meeting with about 37 people present including many in other screens

AAUW-TO Outreach~~

Adelante Food Bank Support

Local Emergency Food Pantry Needs Support of AAUW Members

Several AAUW Branch members have been actively supporting the work of Adelante Comunidad Conejo since it's creation over two years ago. It is a local group started by AAUW member and TOHS teacher, Sandra Martínez along with the support of Betsy Connolly and Sally Hibbitts. Adelante helps to include Conejo Valley Latino voices into important community conversations regarding our schools, city services and recreational opportunities. The group advocates for those not yet ready to speak on their own behalf.

The Adelante COVID Emergency Response Food Bank is giving each qualified family food supplies for one week. Many of the families have lost jobs or lack transportation, often are house-bound, elderly, or at health risk, but all are in great need. At the last AAUW Board Meeting it was agreed to ask for food supplies from the membership for this community effort. All non-perishables are needed, but especially from this list. For more information, please contact Sally Hibbitts.



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Adelante Grocery List

Eggs
Milk (shelf stable and fresh)
Tortillas (Corn)
Pinto beans (canned and dried)
Black beans (canned and dried)
Peruano Beans
Tuna
Ritz crackers
Saltines
Garden of Eatin' Crackers
Maseca (Masa Harina)
Ramen
Jello (shelf stable)
Tomato sauce
Peanut butter
Nutella
Mayonnaise
Toilet paper
Rice (enriched long Grain)
Bread
Cereal
Pancake mix
Syrup
Pasta
Pasta sauce
Fruit cups
Toiletries
Paper towels
Laundry soap
Dishwashing soap
Shout or Spray and wash
Bounce sheets or softener



Volunteers loading up Food Supplies every day.



Backyard fruits and veggies needed too!

AAUW TO Outreach~ Tech Trek *Cancelled!*

California Tech Trek in a Year Like No Other

Alice Hill & Susan Negrete
AAUW CA Tech Trek Co-Coordinators
techtrek@aauw-ca.org

There is no doubt that 2020 has been the most disappointing year that the California Tech Trek Program has ever faced. We have enjoyed an extremely successful and growth-oriented 20-plus years, with welcoming campus affiliates, creative camp designs, and dedicated staff and volunteers. However, right in the middle of 2020 camp preparations, the national coronavirus pandemic resulted in the cancellation of all seven camps that were scheduled throughout the state.

Selected seventh-grade girls were disappointed to learn that there would be no camp experience in their future, and our branch members were terribly upset to notify girls and parents that our 2020 season would not happen. Camp leaders were saddened to accept the necessary decisions – but it hurt.

While everyone understood that the cancellation decision was out of our hands due to government health mandates and campus requirements, that recognition did not ease our pain. The safety and well-being of our campers and volunteers have always been our priority. There was no argument with the decision, just more awareness that this pandemic changed everything.

The California Tech Trek leadership team's response has been: pivot, plan and persevere! This time will be used to stay nimble, retool our processes, be strategic, refresh and enhance our game, and prepare for a powerful Tech Trek future. We will be working with the camp leaders and thinking about 2021.

A key priority will be communicating with our branches to share ideas and resources for ways to honor the 2020 selected students. As always, they represent the California Tech Trek Program! Continue to watch for our communications and don't hesitate to contact us with the important news of how your branch is honoring the selected students: techtrek@aauw-ca.org. We are grateful to the AAUW membership for your dedication and support of Tech Trek!

LOCAL NOTE: As previously indicated, the students who applied for our Thousand Oaks Tech Trek program held at UCSB, have all been notified that the 2020 camp has unfortunately been cancelled. A decision as to how we will honor them hasn't been made yet as we are still waiting for health and safety clearances. We will use the guidance of the CVUSD as it reopens and how to safely provide for youth activities.

AAUW News & Business

Meet Your AAUW Board for 2020-21!

Co-Presidents –Peggy Buckles & Betty Stapleford
V.P. - Diane Birchman
Secretary - Sharon Dyer
Treasurer – Dorothy Hatfield
Funds Chair and Parliamentarian – Jeanette Hosek
Outreach / Public Policy – Anne LaFianza
Tech Trek – Sally Hibbitts
Website – Paula Nathan
Membership – Eloda Linehan
At-Large members: Vera King, Bev Khoshnevisan, Bonnie Shubb

*Congratulations and
thank you for your
service to the branch!*

Joys and concerns

Congratulations go out to **Dr. Lisa Evans Powell** who earned her Doctorate of Social Work from USC in May. She specializes in issues involving seniors.

Congratulations again to **Sandra Martinez**, Conejo Valley Teacher of the Year! See the Spring 2020 Oak Twig for more information.

Our condolences go to **Anne LaFianza** on the death of her father. Our condolences also go out to **Laura Ziff** who lost her father-in-law to COVID-19. Please keep the LaFianza and Ziff families in your thoughts.

Mary Anne Van Zuyle is compiling news from members. We'd like to celebrate milestones with you and offer solace in times of trouble. Please send in your news and the news from friends so we can all stay connected!



Quote from Cynthia Donner
Photo by Carol A. Hand

AAUW News & Business

AAUW THOUSAND OAKS BRANCH CONTRIBUTION TO AAUW FUNDS

AAUW Funds fiscal year is July 1, 2019 through June 30, 2020. The yearly branch contribution shows donations from individual members as well as contributions from the branch. AAUW tracks contributions through the branch number (CA 0139). Our total branch contribution from July 1, 2019-June 30, 2020 from members and events was over \$5000.00. The branch has collected monies for AAUW Funds through the following activities:

- Sale of Named Gift Honoree Pins,
- Sale of Women's History items (Profile of Women scripts, pins)
- Sale of Suffrage Art cards, stickers, etc.
- Sale of Suffrage Cartoon notes, branch art cards,
- Suffrage Tea (March 13) profit
- Sale of Poinsettias

Individual branch members who made direct contributions to AAUW Funds as listed by AAUW are: Lora Novak, Colleen Briner-Schmidt, Armecia Medlock, Sheila Sullivan, Jeanette Hosek, Sally Hibbitts, Jeanne Rose, Carolyn Kopp, Gina Muscatel, Melanie Ashen, Nancy Klein, Lilly Sugino, Betty Stapleford, Rose Cooley, Eleanor Rasnow, Lydia Stedman, Carol Keavney, Michelle Hooper, Dorothy Hatfield, Linda Pochter, Mariam Assifi, Robbin Close, Bev Khoshevisan, and Sharon Spielman.

If you make an individual contribution to AAUW Funds, you must list our branch number (CA 0139) with your donation, so the branch is credited with the donation. Donations received by June 30, 2020 will be credited to this year's branch contribution. The AAUW program names and fund numbers are:

- 9110 – AAUW Greatest Needs Fund—new and emerging challenges/opportunities
- 4449 – Economic Security Fund – pay equity training, salary negotiation, etc.
- 4452 – Leadership Fund - closing the gender gap, increasing number of women in leadership roles in education and non-profit organizations
- 4451 – Governance and Sustainability Fund ensures the strength, relevance and viability of AAUW in the future.

Thousand Oaks branch endowments established many years ago (Thousand Oaks 30th Anniversary Endowment **(#1889)**, Marilyn Carpenter **(#1219)**, Ann Bratmon **(# 1212)** continue to award scholarships to deserving women doing advanced academic work. You can find information about the current recipients by visiting the **AAUW.org website and using the endowment numbers for your search.**

As the AAUW Funds director, I thank all of the branch members who bought poinsettia plants, attended the Suffrage Tea, bought items from our web store or made direct contributions to AAUW.

Jeanette Hosek, AAUW Funds
May 2020

AAUW SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS

PUBLIC POLICY

Title IX Rollbacks: Has The #MeToo Backlash Begun?

Kimberly Churches, CEO AAUW executive@aauw.org

The #MeToo Movement was supposed to be a watershed moment.

No longer would we sweep accusations of sexual assault under the rug. No longer would we blame assault survivors for how short their skirt may be. Or if they had been drinking. Or if they might have flirted. We would stop making excuses for an assailant for being generally a good guy whose future could be ruined. And we'd worry less about how assault statistics could blemish a school's reputation and more about how sexual trauma could affect a woman's life. But here we go again: The U.S. Department of Education has rolled back Title IX protections against campus sexual harassment and assault. The new rules turn back the clock, reversing policies that were put in place to make it easier for survivors of sexual misconduct to come forward. These rules stack the deck against survivors, making it too onerous, even traumatic, for many to come forward. Even with protections in place, it's never been easy for sexual assault survivors to speak out: 89 percent of colleges reported zero rapes and 79 percent of middle and high schools reported zero cases of sexual harassment, according to a study by AAUW. Yet the Bureau of Justice Statistics finds that one in five women experience sexual assault or violence while in college. Obviously, these numbers don't align. Forces of institutional self-protection, along with the hurdles and burdens preventing survivors from pursuing justice, already get in the way. For a time, it seemed that Title IX could offer welcome recourse for survivors. Created nearly a half century ago to ensure all students had access to an education free of gender discrimination, Title IX governs not only athletics (with which it's often associated) but actually all things gender equity on campus. Guidelines to Title IX, adopted in 2011, made it clear that colleges needed to utilize the law to battle campus sexual misconduct —or risk losing federal funding.

A Troubling Return To The Past

Now, those guidelines have been overturned and replaced with rules that sound archaic. There is no other way to interpret them other than they are intended to deter survivors from reporting issues, including:

- Allowing universities to hold trial-style hearings where the survivor of sexual harassment or assault could be subjected to live cross-examinations by representatives of the accused.
- Changing the definition of sexual assault and violence on campus from "unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature" to conduct that is "severe, pervasive and objectively offensive that it denies a person access to the school's program or activity."
- Letting universities choose the standard of proof to use – either "preponderance of the evidence" or a higher bar of "clear and convincing evidence."

When these rules were proposed last spring, they drew much criticism from educators, gender advocates, survivors and others. In fact, more than 125,000 people and groups weighed in during the public comment period, most of them opposing the rollback. Still, the Administration is moving forward; so the question now is how can we ensure that survivors retain the protections they need?

What We Need To Do

Our goals should be clear: First to prevent sexual harassment and assault, and when it does occur, to have fair and just systems in place – for both the accused and survivors. Prevention starts with changing campus culture. This means modernizing all policies and practices on campuses that perpetuate bias and diminish anyone based on gender. We need to foster more equitable and respectful environments in all regards; by leveling playing fields we'll shift power differentials and discourage tolerance for unacceptable behavior. We must all be upstanders, not bystanders, speaking up when individuals are behaving inappropriately, when people are being unduly pressured or when someone needs support and encouragement for reporting harassment or assault. Campus administrators can – and should — choose to continue following more modern and acceptable practices that treat survivors appropriately, with understanding and respect. Many colleges and universities said they plan to maintain current practices, such as keeping the unwelcome conduct standard, not only because it is the right thing to do, but also because it will reduce their potential legal risks. And we must double down on our efforts to reverse the rule change and to advocate for new legal protections that represent best fair policies and practices. The momentum unleashed by the #MeToo movement cannot be contained. We have learned the lessons: We will not pause. We will not be silenced. We will not tolerate pushback against this.

Originally published on February 27, 2020, the text has been updated to reflect that the final rule, then a proposal, has now been adopted.

AAUW SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS

MONDAY BOOK GROUP

The daytime book group will meet on Zoom on Monday, June 22 at 10:00 A. M. To discuss *The Honey Bus* by Meredith May. **Laura Ziff** will be our reviewer. On July 22 we will meet to discuss *Where the Crawdads Sing* by Delia Owens. **Wendy Hoffman** will be the reviewer and she has volunteered to host the meeting in her spacious backyard. We may also do it on Zoom at the same time for those who prefer not to meet in person. We are in the process of compiling a book list for the coming year focusing on older books and or classics which may be more easily obtained if libraries do not open for a while. Contact **Joan Udani** for information.

TBA.....

The **Thursday Evening Book Group** and the **Unity Book Group** do not yet have plans to meet over the summer. If you would like more information, stay tuned to the AAUW-TO E-blasts or contact **Sally Hibbitts** or **Shoshana Brower** (Unity Book Group) or **Sharon Dyer** (Evening Book Group).

The **Hiking Group** is also on hiatus until further notice. Contact **Melanie Ashen** for information.

Scholarships!

AAUW Thousand Oaks is pleased to announce the selection of two recipients of the AAUW Moorpark College Scholarship Awards. **Marie Curtis** and **Nicole Misicka** will each be receiving a \$500.00 scholarship award. They are deserving and accomplished women who are both enrolled in the nursing program at Moorpark College. We thank them for their work in the medical field!

IBC (Interbranch Council) is pleased to announce the selection of two high school and two college scholarship recipients. Each recipient will be receiving a 500.00 award.

- **Millennia Gamez**, from Royal High School, Simi Valley, is planning on attending California Lutheran University in the fall.
- **Sabrina Chisholm**, from Royal High School, Simi Valley, is planning on attending Moorpark College in the fall.

Congratulation students! We wish you every success with your educational and career goals!

Wear Your AAUW-TO Badge!



Order your permanent AAUW Name Badge!

Contact **Crystal Evans** at Conejo Awards to order YOUR permanent AAUW-TO badge to wear to all sponsored events.

Please have the the following information to process your name badge:

- Your name as you want it to appear on your name badge,
- Your branch (the Thousand Oaks Branch,)
- Your Title as you want listed, such as Member, Board Member, Life Member, etc.

The cost for a name badge with a magnet back is only \$15.02!

All ordering, payment. and pick up is done through:

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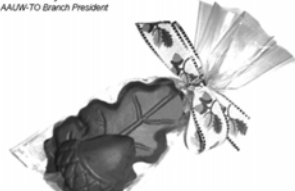


Friday, May 29, 2020 — 8:00 pm
Saturday, May 30, 2020 — 2:30 pm

Gloria Hilliard, Director
Christine DeKlotz, Accompanist

"As a Chocolatier
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chocolate novelties and
advancing women's
rights."
Sharon Dyer
AAUW-TO Branch President

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818-489-4447

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CONTACT INFORMATION

AAUW policy is to maintain member privacy by not publishing contact information online. Accordingly, this page will be deleted on the web version of the newsletter.

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STAY WELL AND...

