



Santa Cruz County Branch, American Association of University Women

October 2023

The Beacon

*Saturday, October 21st:
Local Scholarship Recipients
Sushmita Poudel, Coco De Boer & Wendy Bragg
will be discussing their educational journeys.*



Sushmita is studying Ecology and Evolutionary Biology at UCSC and is researching the effects of climate change on different ecotypes of blue oaks across California.



Coco was at Cabrillo College studying political science and transferred to UCLA this fall. She plans to attend law school next and hopefully work for human rights/ social justice.



Wendy is studying Ecology and Evolutionary Biology at UCSC and is researching the impacts of coastal-adjacent fires on the endangered black abalone.

Where: Capitola Library, 2005 Wharf Rd, Capitola

When: Saturday, October 21st, 10 a.m. to Noon

[RSVP Here](#)

We will also hold a brief Branch meeting where branch members will vote to approve the minutes of the Annual Meeting

Board Meetings

Board meetings are held at 3pm, on the first Tuesday of each month. If you wish to be on the agenda, please contact the President in advance. All members are welcome to attend!

Officers and Committees: 2023-2024**President**

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President's Message

[Americans Are Losing Faith in the Value of College](#) according to a recent New York Times article by Paul Tough. The following information is surprising, and disheartening but also provides opportunities for AAUW to make a difference. As you read, think about at what point in a woman's life could we provide information and support that could make a difference.

Confidence in Higher Education

2009 - 74% of American young adults considered a college education to be crucial

2023 - 41% of young adults now emphasize the importance of a college degree

2023 - 45% of students believe an HS diploma is all you need today to "ensure financial security."

What percent of students are actually going straight to college?

2016 70%

2022 62%

Wealth Advantage: College graduates today are earning more wages than their less educated counterparts but not accumulating any more wealth than students who are High School graduates. The study found that older white college graduates achieved significantly higher wealth levels compared to their high school-educated counterparts, younger white college graduates from the 1980s had only a slight wealth advantage over their high school peers from the same decade.

Race Matters: The gap is more pronounced for Latino and Black families. Those headed by individuals born after 1980 failed to accumulate significant additional resources compared to families led by high school graduates. The gap started to appear for Black college graduates starting in the 1960s and those born later when the wealth advantage vanished.

Why is this happening? The college wealth gap is influenced by tuition costs, graduation rates, and choice of major. Borrowing for college without graduating is financially challenging, making graduates fare worse than those who never attended college, flipping the expected wage premium. A student's major matters. A business or STEM degree can expect a 3x to 4x wealth gain, even if paying \$50,000 a year in tuition and college expenses. Graduates with arts, humanities, or social sciences degrees are much less likely to see a wealth gain as a result of their degree.

AAUW can help women navigate these changing times by sharing information about education expenses, and expected wages. We can support efforts to remove barriers that prevent them from completing school and we can address racism head on.

I look forward to working with you to empower women in these and other ways.

Doreen O'Donovan (she/her/hers)
[AAUW Santa Cruz County](#) President
(303) 931-4680
Schedule a meeting with me [here](#)



Program News

One of the priorities identified at our Strategic Planning meeting was providing **financial literacy training to local early-career women**. Barbara Pearson has generously volunteered to put that training together and there is a committee that is helping with planning. If anyone else would like to participate, especially **if you know of a group of women we could speak to, please let Barbara know.**
barbara@montereybayhomes.us

Brain Health & Dementia Awareness - What Every Family Needs to Know

AAUW Morgan Hill has invited us to a moderated panel discussion to explore the causes, risk factors, and challenges for people with dementia and their caregivers. Learn how to reduce the risk of dementia with a "healthy brain" lifestyle, and resources you can turn to for support if dementia becomes a reality for your family. This is a public event.

When: October 24, 7-8:30 pm

Where: Attend in person at the Morgan Hill Library OR attend online via ZOOM.

RSVP: Registration required: [Link for more information and to reserve your seat](#)



November Meeting

Chancellor Cindy LaRive will be discussing recent AAUW research which found that the University of California Santa Cruz was ranked No. 1 in the nation among top research universities for racial and gender diversity in leadership. Additionally, she has personally mentored 30 doctoral and master's students, and she has been active in encouraging the participation and success of women and other underrepresented groups in the STEM fields. You can read more about her [biography here](#).

Where: Capitola Library, 2005 Wharf Rd, Capitola

When: November 18th, 10 a.m. to Noon

Gov Trek Program

[Gov Trek](#) is a virtual program organized by AAUW California. It is designed to elevate the next generation to pursue careers in public service and elected office. High school junior and senior girls meet over five two-hour sessions where they will engage in interactive and inspiring activities with exposure to women legislators, career options, and the inner workings of a political campaign. The program will culminate in a group competition to create a realistic campaign simulation.

Last year's session started with a video address from fellow Californian Speaker Emerita Nancy Pelosi and many other politicians and campaign managers participated. Last year's event can be seen on the [state website](#).

The good news is the state puts this event on without local branch help (unless you want to help) except for recruiting students. Students will meet for 6 consecutive Saturday morning sessions from February 3 to March 9th. The final competition will be on March 16.

There is a branch information session on October 16th where we can learn more. If you would like to attend and report back to the group on what you learned that would be very helpful. Please let me know if you would like the meeting information.

Upcoming IBC Event-February 24, 2024



AAUW Santa Cruz County and Monterey County
Interbranch Council present:
California Women Are Essential
Holly Martinez, Executive Director
California Commission
on the Status of Women & Girls



DATE: Saturday, February 24, 2024

TIME: 11:00 AM – 1:00 PM

(Registration starts at 11:00 AM followed by lunch and speaker presentation)

LOCATION: Seascape Golf Club Banquet/Monarch Room, 610 Clubhouse Drive, Aptos 95003

Open to members, their invited guests, potential members and the general public.

REGISTRATION AND COST:

- \$35 for members (early bird rate)
 - \$40 for non-members
- \$40 for registrations postmarked after **January 19, 2024**

DEADLINE FOR REGISTRATION IS FEBRUARY 14, 2024

All registrations must be pre-paid and are non-refundable.

You may pay by one of two ways:

By check payable to **AAUW-Monterey Peninsula Branch**. Complete the printable registration form [HERE](#) and mail your check and the registration form to Post Office Box 1786, Monterey, CA 93942.

Questions? Contact Joanne Webster at jwebster2717@gmail.com.

OR

You may register and pay with a credit card by using Eventbrite by clicking here:

[Interbranch Council 2024 Luncheon](#)

Note that a nominal fee will be added to the cost of registration for using Eventbrite.

For questions re **Eventbrite**, contact Mary Ripma at maryaustinripma@gmail.com.

Public Policy News

Advancing Gender Equity is Advancing Environmental Sustainability (and vice versa)

By Missy Maceyko, Co-Chair, CA State Public Policy Committee

After a year of wild weather in California, many of us may be thinking more about climate, environment, and sustainability. How does our concern with the weather relate to AAUW California's [Public Policy Priorities](#)? Advancing gender equity is directly related to environmental sustainability. The inverse is also true.

[The United Nations sustainable development goals](#), adopted in 2015, seek to push all countries to act to protect the planet, ensure widespread prosperity, and promote peace. Achieving gender equality, goal number five, is a crucial element in this overall strategy.



We know that [having greater gender diversity in leadership](#) improves organizations. One of AAUW California's public policy focus areas is increasing women in leadership positions. However, advancing this goal can also have positive climate impacts. [The UN has found that having greater gender diversity in climate discussions leads to improved outcomes](#) on climate-focused policies and projects. This is just one case in which we can see how sustainable development goal 5, promoting greater gender equality, alongside advancing AAUW California's public policy priorities, can be important for achieving sustainable development goal 13, creating more impactful climate action.

Data also shows us that (un)sustainable production and consumption patterns, which harm the environment, [tend to be gendered](#), with "green" choices being widely feminized. While this is a global trend, we see this in popular portrayals of more planet-friendly consumption choices in the United States, as well, such as veganism, [which tends to be marked as more "feminine"](#) and less "masculine." This example shows us that sustainable development goal 5, promoting greater gender equality, alongside AAUW California's overall public policy mission of advancing equity for women and girls, is also important for achieving sustainable development goal 12, which focuses on creating more planet-friendly and responsible production and consumption patterns.

Advancing gender equity is directly related to environmental sustainability, and vice versa. In advancing AAUW California's public policy goals, and expanding the rights of all women and girls, we can help create the conditions for greater justice and inclusion, economic parity, and environmental viability, all at the same time.

Membership News

Interest Groups Update

At our strategic planning session, we discussed the possibility of starting some new interest groups. Other Bay Area AAUW branches have Morning Mingle, Coffee and Convo, Wine and Whine, and hiking with no cute name. They get together and chat with no agenda. There is no time like the present, so let's give it a try. In October you are invited to **join Doreen for Coffee and Convo on Friday, October 6th at 10 a.m. at Loft Coffee in the Twin Lakes Church Parking lot** next to the Aptos Cabrillo College Campus - 2701 Cabrillo College Dr, Aptos. In the future, we can try some other activities and see what peaks our members' interests. Please let me know if you would like to organize an activity. It could be one-time or ongoing.

Membership Renewal

Thanks to all who have renewed for the coming year and a request to those of you still waiting to pay your dues....please go online to AAUW.org, click on Membership and follow the directions (create a new password) and sign up for National, State and Local dues. The total this year is \$108. If you have trouble using the online link contact Jeanne Jorgensen, jeannejorgensen@hotmail.com or 831-477-7025. You can also send a check to our treasurer, Darby Kremers, at 2030 N. Pacific Avenue, #117, Santa Cruz CA 95060.

The second meeting of the year is coming up soon, Oct. 21 (see pg. 1). We look forward to seeing many of you at the meeting. Bring a guest!

Link to Membership Directory

The online membership directory is updated in real time. Click the link below and bookmark it. Contact Debra for the password or if you need assistance: dwallace@karonproperties.com

Click HERE and Bookmark it ---->[AAUW SCC Directory](#)

Online Membership Application

Do you have friends, relatives, coworkers or neighbors who would be interested in joining us? Here is a link to our membership page, which contains an online application:

Click HERE ---->[AAUW SCC Membership Application](#)

We are Social!

Follow our AAUW SCC Social Media accounts. A shout out to Doreen for her tenacious efforts and social media enthusiasm!



Tech Trek News

By the time you read this, our Tech Trek 25th Anniversary Celebration will be over. I hope you came and enjoyed getting together with friends you may not have seen since the picnic in May.

We alerted members about the event through our flyers (thank you Lorraine and Debra for creating and sending them out.)

We sent notices to the Sentinel (twice), the Pajaronian, and the Aptos/Capitola Times. The only one who printed our announcement was the Times. In fact, the Times will be publishing a future article about our speaker Cristina Arambula. with pictures in October. Don't miss it!

AAUW should have a big presence in the Community. Our new President, Doreen uses Social Media to post news and pictures, so you will see the Tech Trek Celebration there.

If any of you have ideas about how or where we should be spreading AAUW and Tech Trek news, please let us know.

We were very happy to host our four Virtual Tech Trek girls and their parents at the luncheon. They are: Mia Sanchez and Amira Parsons, Aptos Jr High and Mariela Cruz Vega, Rolling Hills and Kamila Ruiz, Shoreline Middle Schools.

I am sure you attendees will have enjoyed hearing the girls speak about the Tech Trek Virtual program and what they learned and enjoyed.

It was amazing listening to Cristina Arambula who went to Stanford 2006 Tech Trek Residential Camp. Cristina not only gained STEM knowledge, friendships lasting through the years, but goals that have served her well through adult challenges and many successes.

It has been a magical 25 years for Tech Trek. The TECH TREK STEM program on college campuses has spread to 22 states and is still going strong.

We will begin our new Tech Trek year next month as we contact teachers to once again nominate 7th grade girls county wide for our Residential Camp next summer.

Thank you all for your continuing interest in Tech Trek. Without the ongoing support from members we would not be able to offer TechTrek STEM opportunities to county 7th grade girls.

Please remember Tech Trek in your end of year donations or Required Minimum Distribution. You may send your Tech Trek donation through PayPal to AAUW Santa Cruz LS&P online. Please indicate Tech Trek as your donation choice.

You may also send a check addressing it to AAUW SCC LS&P, including Tech Trek in the notes section of the check. If sending a donation by check, please mail to Darby Kremers, 2030 N. Pacific Ave. Unit 117, Santa Cruz, CA 95060-7603

A big thank you to all.

Best, Kris



If interested in purchasing a Local Scholarship mug with our specially designed logo on it for yourself or as a gift, they are \$12/ea. Click [HERE](#) to purchase or contact Doreen O'Donovan (303) 931-4680.

End Human Trafficking Committee News

News of trafficking seems to repeat itself often. Several months ago Chewy Pet Company was reported to be using migrant children as young as 13 in their packing. The New YorkTimes investigator writes that Tyson and Perdue Farms are under Federal scrutiny regarding the use of dangerous chemicals in packing companies. An eighth grader suffered a mangled arm in a conveyor belt prompting this investigation. It was discovered that other companies throughout the country are also employing underage children. Please recall that the practice of unsafe conditions in slaughterhouses was the subject of outrage in the late thirties. It is sad that the public enjoys the products of unsafe practices for these children and employs convenient amnesia to mask the atrocities. The federal agency Agriculture Department knew of the hiring but did not think it was their job to report it.

A 27 year old in Texas received a life sentence for soliciting minors, some as young as 13 over the internet. He was able to recruit victims while in prison to share with other perpetrators through online activities. The internet has become a playground for predators.

We continue to have monthly meetings , 201 Prospect Hts, 831-239-2184

12: PM , first Saturday of month, Oct. 7. All are welcome, please come if you are interested in creating awareness of this criminal element in our society.

-Martha Mangan, End Human Trafficking Chair

Local Scholarships
Tech Trek
End Human Trafficking

Donate



AAUW Fund News

This year, there are 24 fellows and grant winners in California. Topics include Women's History, Medical Sociology, Gender, Race and Ethnicity, and others. The Fellowships and Grants are supported by Endowment Funds created in the past and administered by the National office.

For many years, October was the month that AAUW California had luncheons in the Bay Area and Southern California to introduce the fellows and grant recipients. In the last three years, these events have been webinars. This has given interested members the opportunity to hear from more of the speakers about their studies and projects. This year, AAUW California reports that there will be a new format for these video presentations. Details will be announced later this month.

Your current donations to the Greatest Needs Fund are being used to support communications and actions regarding critical issues affecting women, always directed at the AAUW Mission: To advance gender equity for women and girls through research, education and advocacy.

Lynn Cummins, AAUW Fund vice president



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2	3 3pm Board meeting	4	5	6 10am Coffee & Convo, see pg. 6	7 12:30pm End Human Trafficking Committee meeting
8	9	10	11	12 11:30am Lunch Bunch	13	14
15	16	17 7pm Tuesday pm Books	18	19	20	21 Local Scholarship recipient talk, see pg. 1
22	23	24 Morgan Hill Branch Brain Health program, see pg. 4	25	26 Thursday Books, section 1 & 2	27	28
29	30	31 Halloween				

- Friday, October 6, 10am: Coffee & Convo, Loft Coffee, Twin Lakes Church parking lot
- Saturday, October 21, 10am Local Scholarship recipient talk, Capitola Library, click [HERE](#) to register.
- Tuesday, October 24, 7pm Morgan Hill Branch's Brain Health Seminar (in person & Zoom); click [HERE](#) to register.
- Saturday, November 18, 10am: Speaker, UCSC Chancellor Cindy LaRive, Capitola Library
- Saturday, February 24, 11am: Interbranch Council Event,, Seascape Golf Club, click [HERE](#) to register.

Hospitality : Please let our Sunshine Director Audrey Strayer know if you hear of anyone who needs a kind thought or some cheering up due to recent surgery, losses, etc. email: molliej6@cruzio.com, phone: 475-9073

Other announcements to share? The next Beacon deadline is Oct. 23rd. Please send entries to dwallace@karonproperties.com.

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

Diversity:

In principle and in practice. AAUW values and seeks a diverse membership. There shall be no barriers to full participation on the basis of gender, race, creed, age, sexual orientation, national origin, disability, or class.

AAUW Santa Cruz County Branch Interest Groups

All work and no play? To counteract that we have a variety of interest groups for our members. If you'd like to join a group or attend one to see if it interests you, please contact the leaders listed below. We'd love to see you. If you're interested in starting a new Interest Group, we welcome your ideas. Contact Jeanne Jorgensen, jeannejorgensen@hotmail.com.

In order to attract new members and make AAUW's goals more visible to the community, our Membership meetings and luncheons are open to the public. Come join us and bring a friend! You'll find an amazing group of women who offer you friendship and intellectual stimulation.

Book Groups

Our book groups have become extremely popular. Numbers in the groups fluctuate, and if you're interested contact the leaders to see if there's an opening at your preferred time. A new group is not difficult to establish, that's how we ended up with three!

The Tuesday night Book Group The Tuesday night group will meet on October 17, 2023 at 7pm to discuss *DINNER AT THE HOMESICK RESTAURANT* by Anne Tyler. The discussion will be led by Carol DeLauder and we will meet at Marilee Werfhorst's home. Call 831-234-5481 for directions. All are encouraged to join this lively group. For more information contact Georgann Lane georgannlane@comcast.net or 831-338-2638.

Thursday Afternoon Books, Section One, Leader Geri Williams, email: gerisjs@aol.com We are seeking new members. Meeting in-person, the fourth Thursday of the month from 1-2 PM. Contact Geri for details.

The Thursday Afternoon Books, Section Two Join us on the fourth Thursday of every month. Contact leader Phyllis Taylor at 831-332-3870 for details.

Reader's Theater

Our Readers Theater interest group will generally be meeting on the third Wednesday of the month, from 1-3 p.m. If you would like to join or for further info, contact Barbara Lewis, chairperson of this interest group, by telephone at 335-7816 or by email at bobbi44@gmail.com.

Bridge

If you are interested in bridge, contact Jeanne Jorgensen, 477-7025. We currently have one group that meets on the 2nd Monday of the month and are always looking to add people to the sub list. Are you interested in getting a regular group together? Or maybe you'd like to do a regular online game. Call 477-7025 or email: jeannejorgensen@hotmail.com

Lunch Bunch

Lunch Bunch meets the 2nd Thursday of each month at various area eateries. If you would like to join this lively bunch for other lunches, contact leader, Andrea Losee andrealosee25@gmail.com!

End Human Trafficking Committee

We are meeting in person on the 1st Saturday of month at 12:30 pm. Contact Martha Mangan, mmanganesesc7@gmail.com, 831-239-2184 for more information.

Great Decisions

Great Decisions, friendly Foreign Policy group, meets the second and fourth Fridays at 10 am. For 2023, we're happy to again be planning to meet in the homes of our members. Our group is lively, thoughtful and diverse. This is an easy, interesting way to stay current in our ever-changing world.

Everyone is welcome. Contact graceger123@gmail.com or vickiebirdsall@yahoo.com

New Group?

Do you have an idea for a new group? If so, please contact **Doreen O'Donovan**,

(303) 931-4680, doreen.odonovan@gmail.com

Help Us to Help Others

Our philanthropic projects benefit women of all ages, both here at home and across the nation.

Make a donation to remember a family member, friend or colleague, or to honor a birthday, anniversary, graduation or other special occasion.

AAUW Fund

Make checks payable to AAUW and send to

Lynn Cummins
P.O. Box 556

Freedom, CA 95019

You may mail your check or contribute online on the AAUW Website (at aauw.org click on Donate)

Local Scholarships

Make checks payable to

AAUW Santa Cruz Branch
SCC-LS&P, with SCC LS on the memo line and send to

Darby Kremers

2030 N. Pacific Ave., #117

Santa Cruz, CA 95060

Tech Trek

(Girls Science Scholarships)

Make checks payable to AAUW Santa Cruz Branch SCC-LS&P, with Santa Cruz County Tech Trek on the memo line and send to

Darby Kremers

2030 N. Pacific Ave., #117

Santa Cruz, CA 95060

End Human Trafficking

Make checks payable to AAUW Santa Cruz Branch SCC-LS&P, with SCC EHT on the memo line and send to

Martha Mangan

201 Prospect Hts. Dr.

Santa Cruz, CA 95065

In Memory of/In Honor of _____

Send announcement to _____

Street _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Donate to Local Scholarships, Tech Trek and End Human Trafficking ONLINE:

Local Scholarships

Tech Trek

End Human Trafficking



Donating directly to our programs just became a whole lot easier! Click the 'donate' button above to make a donation by credit card or PayPal. Please note that Amazon has discontinued their AmazonSmile program.