

# AAUW

## THE INSIGHTER

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THE NEXT NEWSLETTER SHOULD ARRIVE BY THE 1<sup>ST</sup> OF OCTOBER. IF YOU HEAR OF A MEMBER THAT HAS NOT RECEIVED ONE, PLEASE CALL DENA TRAINA AT 209.777.5227

“BLOOM  
WHERE YOU  
ARE  
PLANTED”

### WEBSITE

Through this time when the Coronavirus is keeping us apart, it is even more important for our website to be a place where we can connect. Please visit our website <https://merced-ca.aauw.net/> regularly for information about Zoom programs and activities.

# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



## DEAR FELLOW AAUW MEMBERS,

I hope you are all continuing to stay safe and sane as the pandemic rages on. Although my heart goes out to everyone as we continue with life's challenges, I feel a special sense of empathy for teachers, students, and parents. As a retired elementary school teacher, August was always an exciting time—the anticipation of a new group of students brought me joy—as well as some jitters. I doubt that distance learning is anyone's first choice—and yet, here we are.

I was so hoping we could resume our annual September brunch and greet our friends in person. Although this is not currently feasible, please trust that your board is striving to keep our organization vital. We are trying to be creative and think outside the proverbial box. Stay tuned for details of upcoming events.

If you have not yet paid your dues, I urge you to do so. AAUW is an important group which is currently advocating for voting rights for all—a vital issue in our country. Directories will be mailed to all paid members in the next few weeks. We hope to include information about upcoming programs.

I hope you all continue to “Bloom where you are planted” and focus on the joy in your lives. I love the saying, “Have a grateful heart, not a greedy heart”.

I am grateful for each and every one of you!

Respectfully submitted,

Ruth Wax



## MEET YOUR OFFICERS

PRESIDENT

RUTH WAX

VICE-PRESIDENT AND PRESIDENT ELECT

JANE LAWRENCE

PROGRAM VICE-PRESIDENTS

ASHLEY MCCOMB THANADABOUTH

SUSAN CHAPPELL

ANN AHMADI

MEMBERSHIP VICE-PRESIDENT

ANITA PARKER

TREASURER

PHAEDRA HOFMANN

SECRETARY

LINDA LUCAS

EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION/LEGAL  
ADVOCACY FOUNDATION

PAULINE CUCHNA

PAST PRESIDENT

DENA TRAINA

APPOINTED OFFICES

SCIENCE CAMP

JOANNA BROWNING

WEBSITE

KATHLEEN HULL

NEWSLETTER

DENA TRAINA

SUSAN WALSH

“You should never view your challenges as a disadvantage. Instead, it’s important for you to understand that your experience facing and overcoming adversity is actually one of your biggest advantages.”

*Michelle Obama, Former First Lady of the United States*



WITH OVER 7,300 COVID CASES IN MERCED COUNTY AND ALMOST 100 DEATHS,  
LET'S MEET OUR PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICIAL FOR A CONVERSATION ON COVID

Special Zoom Program with Dr. Kristynn Sullivan, Epidemiologist for Merced County Department of Public Health

**September 9, 2020 at 5:00 pm.**

Topic: AAUW HEALTH FORUM

Time: Sep 9, 2020 05:00 PM Pacific Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89238443655?pwd=cjRHNvJ6UDB4SHIDMG5XWkVvWXdCdz09>

Meeting ID: 892 3844 3655

Passcode: 824977

One tap mobile

+16699009128,,89238443655#,,,,,0#,,824977# US (San Jose)

+13462487799,,89238443655#,,,,,0#,,824977# US (Houston)

Dial by your location

+1 669 900 9128 US (San Jose)

+1 346 248 7799 US (Houston)

+1 253 215 8782 US (Tacoma)

+1 301 715 8592 US (Germantown)

+1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)

+1 646 558 8656 US (New York)

Meeting ID: 892 3844 3655

Passcode: 824977

Find your local number: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/kpE004U1V>

For those of you that do not want to deal with a computer video-conference, please feel free to call in. Just dial the number above and it will ask you for a meeting ID and passcode (both listed above).



## SECTIONS

Sections continue to be a vital part of our organization. Many of our sections are meeting via video-conferencing and can accept more members now because there are no constraints on the number of people that can fit in one's home, so consider signing up for more groups! We would love to see you. Write or call Becky Tietjen to join a section at (559) 909-1520 or [frautietjen@yahoo.com](mailto:frautietjen@yahoo.com)

**Adopt-a-Highway:** Chair - Colleen Eisberg 725-9082 [eisberg@sbcglobal.net](mailto:eisberg@sbcglobal.net)

Become a part of the group of volunteers who clean up the AAUW stretch of Hwy. 140 on the way to Mariposa. The group goes out early on a Saturday morning four times a year. Watch your newsletter or email for times and dates.

**Almost Gourmet:** Chair - Karen Wallace 722-5289 [the.wallaces@comcast.com](mailto:the.wallaces@comcast.com)

Couples gather for four dinners a year. This group is closed.

**Book Section 1:** Chair - Linda Douglas 769-2616 [imdouglas@hotmail.com](mailto:imdouglas@hotmail.com)

Meets the first Monday of the month at 2:00 p.m. from October through May at a member's home. Members read a fiction or non-fiction book of their choice and different reviewers share a favorite book each month. Once a year we do a group read. This group is closed.

**Book Section 2:** Chair - Needed

Currently there are no openings in the other book sections. This is your opportunity to start a new section! Meeting time and day of the month - to be determined. We will help you get this group up and running.

**Book Section 3:** Chair - Sharon Wainwright [sharonlwa@comcast.net](mailto:sharonlwa@comcast.net)

Members meet the first Tuesday of the month at 9:30 a.m. all year at a member's home and enjoy brunch or snacks. We select a book to read and one person leads the discussion. All are encouraged to read the book and participate in the discussion. This group is closed. **Currently meeting via ZOOM.**

**Book Section 4 (Evening Book Group):** Chair Dee Near 723-9007 [neard@comcast.net](mailto:neard@comcast.net)

Meets the fourth Thursday of the month at 7:00 p.m. at a member's home. This group has been meeting for 20 years. Everyone reads the same book and discusses it. A wide variety of genres are read. All are welcome. This section meets August through May. **Since we are meeting via ZOOM, everyone is welcome.**

**Bridge Couples:** Chair - Carol Hamm 383-4705 [cjhamm@comcast.net](mailto:cjhamm@comcast.net)

Meets the second Friday of the month at 7:00 p.m. Subs are welcome. This section meets from October through May. Regulars and subs are welcome. **Suspended pending a vaccine/participant comfort level. New members are welcome once we resume.**

**Bridge Singles:** Chair - Julia Larson 722-2628

Meets the third Monday of the month at 1:00 p.m. The group rotates between members' homes. Dessert is offered. Subs are welcome. This section meets October through May.

**Bunko:** Chair - Needs a new chair!

Meets the fourth Monday of the month at 6:30 p.m. There is a lot of lively interaction for the 12 members of this group. Subs are welcome. This section meets September through May with no meeting in December.

**Chocoholics:** Chair - Diana Alexander 388-9690 [dianaalex51@sbcglobal.com](mailto:dianaalex51@sbcglobal.com)

Meets the third Wednesday of the month at members' homes at 7:00p.m. from October through May. Members should be prepared to either host or co-host one meeting per year. They prepare a special chocolate dish for the event.

**Dining for Women:** Chair - Jane Guerra 723-0384 [nickandjane@guerra.net](mailto:nickandjane@guerra.net)

Meets the first Monday of the month at 6:00p.m. at a member's home for a potluck dinner. Money is donated in the amount that would have been spent on a restaurant dinner to the organization featured each month. The mission is to empower women and girls living in extreme poverty by funding programs that foster good health, education, and economic self-sufficiency. Members become educated to various needs of women living in poverty around the world and participate in collective giving to make a positive difference. This group meets September through June. Members are asked to host or co-host one dinner.

**Knitting and Crocheting:** Chair - Dena Traina 777-5227 [traina.dena@gmail.com](mailto:traina.dena@gmail.com)

Meets the second Wednesday of the month at a member's home between 6:00-8:00 p.m. Beginners and experienced knitters/crocheters are welcome. BYOB. This section meets all year. **We are currently meeting via ZOOM. New members are welcome.**

**Lunch Bunch:** Chair - Connie Brons 385-3837 [conniebrons@yahoo.com](mailto:conniebrons@yahoo.com)

Meets the fourth Thursday of the month at 1:00 p.m. at various restaurants. Members are notified by email as to the location. Be sure to RSVP by contacting Connie to ensure a reservation. This section meets all year round. **Suspended due to Covid. New members are welcome when we resume.**

**Quasi-Epicures:** Chair - Holly Zacharias 722-4428 [hwzacharias@gmail.com](mailto:hwzacharias@gmail.com)

Members are notified by email to dine out at a local restaurant and see a play at Playhouse Merced on Saturday evenings. This section meets October through May or June. This year there is a waiting list due to limited openings.

**Sierra Trekkers:** Chair - Judy Smith 777-5345 [sierratrekker@comcast.net](mailto:sierratrekker@comcast.net)

Meetings are held on the third Thursday of the month all at 7:00 p.m. at various members' homes (except in December). The September planning meeting maps out the tentative dates for hikes during the year. Hikes usually occur once per month. The emphasis is on hiking - - some easy, some moderate & occasionally a more strenuous trail. Weather permitting, a snowshoe hike in the winter months can be planned. The group occasionally travels for overnight /weekend adventures. One longer trip is scheduled each a year to one of our national parks.

**Theater Goers:** Chair - Robyn Farnsworth 382-0548 [yaya4three@gmail.com](mailto:yaya4three@gmail.com)

Members will see 5-6 plays during the year on Sunday afternoons. This section meets August through May.

**Wine and Cheese:** Chair - Colleen Eisberg 725-9082 [eisberg@sbcglobal.net](mailto:eisberg@sbcglobal.net)

Meets the last Friday of the month at 7:00 p.m. at various members' homes. The hostess and co-hostess determine the theme and prepare a selection of cheese and hors d'oeuvres. Spouses are welcome. This section meets September through May with no meeting in November or December.



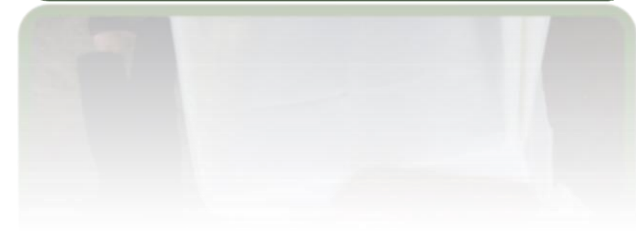
## MEMBER NEWS

**Nancy Holmes** has neuroendocrine tumors and is having 4 PRRT treatments (a form of radiotherapy) at Stanford two months apart to stop/slow their growth. We send positive thoughts of healing to her.

**Sandy Clemons**, a recent president of our chapter, had surgery for a brain tumor and is currently undergoing chemotherapy and radiation treatments. We send her our very best wishes for a speedy and complete recovery.

**Donna Goggin** has resigned from our group due to health problems related to her recent stroke. Donna was a very active member in our chapter for many years, serving as president and holding other board positions. She was the very capable leader of Book Section 3 for a very long time and will be enormously missed by her fellow readers.

**Anita Chisholm** turned 90 on July 20. Because of COVID-19, she had a FaceTime party with her family in Florida and Prague, Czech Republic.



## SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

AAUW Merced Branch is proud to announce the two scholarship recipients for the 2020-21 academic year. Both women are transferring from Merced College to four-year institutions. They each will receive \$1,000.

### **KANDRA GERSTENBERG**

Kandra plans to attend CSU and has been accepted into the Forestry Program. She hopes to be a forester or an environmental scientist.

Kandra worked as a lifeguard with CA State Parks. She participated in the women's aquatic program at Merced College and played water polo goalie in the last two seasons.

She has maintained a 3.64 GPA at Merced College where she acquired many strong leadership skills that will only enhance her success in the vocation of her choice.

### **ARACELI RIVERA**

Araceli plans to attend CSU Stanislaus majoring in Mathematics and Psychology with a career objective of a Single Subject Teacher in Mathematics.

She graduated as the Valedictorian in her high school and at CSU Stanislaus has the opportunity to join the honors program. She also earned a Teammate Award in Girls' Varsity Soccer.

Through her work as a tutor, she realized how much she enjoyed the process of teaching. Araceli believes that teachers should form interpersonal, yet professional, relationships with their students to ensure their success in class, while also learning life skills.

She has maintained a 3.73 GPA while in college.

“We cannot all  
succeed when  
half of us are  
held back.”

Malala Yousafzai

#### HOW TO BE A BETTER ALLY TO WOMEN ON ZOOM



Picture this: It's pre-pandemic and you're sitting in a work meeting. You've diligently prepared your notes and you're excited to present your ideas. Instead, you spend the entire meeting trying — and failing — to get a word in.

Fast forward to the coronavirus pandemic. Instead of staring at your coworkers from across a conference room table, you're at home speaking to them via video. But it's still the same story: When you attempt to talk, you're cut off multiple times. Each time this happens you smile awkwardly. The discussion continues and you wonder if anyone heard you.

Want to know ways to address this issue and support other women in this situation? Read the complete article on the National AAUW website [HERE](#).



## AROUND THE STATE

### FROM DIANNE'S DESK...

Dianne Owens, President, AAUW California,  
[statepresident@aauw-ca.org](mailto:statepresident@aauw-ca.org)

### THE TIMES, THEY ARE A-CHANGIN'

In case you have not noticed, a lot has changed in the last five months! And that includes AAUW California. My term as AAUW California President began July 1, 2020, and our first board meeting was held via Zoom July 18-19.

Like you, our branch leaders, we are adapting to this strange new normal. We developed our new SUCCESS plan (known formerly as the Strategic Plan) and planned over 20 webinars to be held through June 2021. Click [HERE](#) to see the topics and register to attend. We are planning a Lobby Day and our Annual Meeting in Sacramento, April 15 & 16, 2021 in hopes that we can meet in person by then.

### A VICTORY FOR EQUAL PAY!

AAUW Legal Advocacy Fund plaintiff Aileen Rizo's eight-year legal battle ended in July when the U.S. Supreme Court let a lower court decision— that employers cannot use salary history as a reason for paying men more than women—stand. AAUW stood by her and applauds that decision. Read these [strong words](#).

### CAREER BOOSTING MATERIAL

Want to nail your first job? Want more money in the one you have? If you or someone you know needs a little boost career-wise, check out the resources and FREE webinars sponsored by AAUW [HERE](#).

OUR SUPPORTERS

**HYPNOTHERAPY AND COUNSELING**  
For Positive Changes



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Merced, CA 95340  
conniebrons@yahoo.com

Dr. Constance J Brons, Ed.D., R.N.

Am. Bd. Hypnotherapy ABH #13670  
Am. Bd. for Certified Counselors #49343  
CA Bd. of Reg. Nursing #260306

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209 720-8175 cell  
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- Planting/Pruning/Fertilizing

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ruthjwax@gmail.com



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Custom Designing • Jewelry Repair  
We buy and sell Gold and Silver

**Nick Guerra**  
1828 Bellevue Rd.  
Atwater, CA 95301  
(209) 358-6022



**CASA**  
Court Appointed Special Advocates  
**FOR CHILDREN**

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**MERCED COUNTY**

Now, more than ever, Merced County foster children and teens need a CASA Advocate.

By dedicating 10-15 hours a month, you can help a child or teen who needs someone to care about them and to speak up for them in Court.

Socially-Distanced Classes starting soon.

Call for information: 209-722-2272



# American Association of University Women

## Merced Branch Membership 2020-2021

**Please complete and submit the entire form** (even if you are an honorary life member) and return with your dues. This is necessary to ensure that you are listed accurately with National, in the directory and on newsletter mailings. **Deadline was June 30 but please still join us and add the late fee to your membership dues.**

**Make your check payable to Merced AAUW and mail to:**

**Anita Parker, 2814 San Juan Court, Merced, CA 95340.**

Please note: Failure to renew will exclude you from section participation in 2020-2021.

Is your contact information listed correctly in the AAUW Directory? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

*Please note corrections below.*

\_\_\_ *My contact information is not in the Directory, please include as listed.*

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### MEMBER INFORMATION

Name:

Last Name, First Name

Middle Initial

Address:

Street

City

Zip

Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Work Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email:

### MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES

Regular Branch Member **\$88**

(Assoc. \$59 (\$56 which is tax deductible), State \$20, Branch \$9)

Honorary Life Member **\$0**

(No Fees)

Association Life Member **\$29**

(Assoc. \$0, State \$20, Branch \$9)

Scholarship Donation \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Science Camp donation \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Late Fee (after July 1) \$2

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Check # \_\_\_\_\_ Amount \$ \_\_\_\_\_