

AAUW

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WEBSITE

Please visit our website <https://merced-ca.aauw.net/> regularly for information about programs and activities.



YOSEMITE TRIP

A special reminder for our trip to Yosemite. Bring \$25 if you are over 62 years of age and \$45 if you are under to our next meeting on Tuesday January 21 (cash or check) at the Mondo Building. The bus will leave about 8 am and return about 8 pm (rough times). If we do not fill the bus, we may be opening it up to guests so stay tuned for that.

“I believe that the rights of women and girls is the unfinished business of the 21st century.”

Hilary Clinton

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

During the holiday season, I hope you made some wonderful memories with family and friends and enjoyed the rains, clear air and mountain vistas. I also hope that you found time to rest, read, and reflect.

Speaking of reflecting and in preparation for our March 29th Yosemite trip, I began reading Guardians of the Valley by Dean King about John Muir (and his associates) who fought to protect and save Yosemite (and Hetch Hetchy) among other national treasures.

I have spent parts of every summer of my life in the Sierras. Because of that, I have developed a healthy respect for (some would say- fear of) the following: (1) early season snowmelt that turns placid creeks into roaring, raging, and deadly *freight trains*. (2) sloping granite outcroppings – especially when lightly-covered by gravel or water. Funny thing about granite – it doesn't care how much it hurts you! (3) bears (though thankfully not the grizzlies of Muir's time) -oh! – and timber-line rattlers – especially newborn ones that will deliver their entire lethal dose at once - just because they can.

All that said, I found reading the first third of Guardians of the Valley to be challenging. John Muir's adventures covering the entire Sierra Nevada range (north to south and top to bottom) break EVERY rule in MY book. I expected adventure; I didn't expect thrill-seeking to the extreme level. It is mind-boggling that Muir survived his exploits! BUT they were necessary to provide deep understanding and -more importantly- the will to fight to save (what was left of) many of our most treasured natural resources. Please read the book! You will recognize many place names and family names. It's about OUR backyard after all!

Our first event of this new year is one you don't want to miss! Dr. Julia Alvarez, a faculty member in the UC Merced Department of Medical Education (and Valley native), will be our presenter. She will discuss the evolution of medical education right here in Merced. I know that we are all excited about this opportunity for students (and us)! Please join us!

Medical Education in the Valley

Tuesday, January 21st, 2025

5:30 pm

Mondo building (MCOE Downtown Professional Development Center)

Also - If you're out near the UC, take a spin through the campus. There is an amazing amount of construction going on. The medical building that will support the medical education program is under way!

And so, dear AAUW members, we begin a new year. Let's do this together!



DECEMBER TEA

We want to thank Sharon Spinardi for opening her house for us to enjoy our December tea. Everyone had a delightful time and some pictures for you to enjoy.





JANUARY PROGRAM

Medical education at UC Merced is expanding at a rapid pace as part of the campus' long-term goal to address the shortage of physicians and health care professionals in the Central Valley.

This fall, the university welcomed the second cohort of students in the B.S.-to-M.D. pathway. Formally known as the San Joaquin Valley PRIME Plus Program (SVJ PRIME+), the partnership among UC Merced, UC San Francisco and UCSF Fresno offers students a path from undergraduate studies to medical school, with access to guidance, peer support and training focused on meeting the challenges faced by this very specialized group during their academic journey.

Like the inaugural cohort of B.S.-to-M.D. pathway students who entered UC Merced in the 2023-24 academic year, the second cohort comprises 15 students, doubling the number of students in the program. All the scholars were recruited from the Valley and share an ambition to become medical leaders, practitioners and advocates for the region.

Come listen to Dr. Julia Alvarez give an update on the UC Merced's BS to MD pathway.

Dr. Julia Alvarez, a faculty member in the UC Merced Department of Medical Education, was born and raised in our San Joaquin Valley and went on to receive her Bachelor of Science, Masters degree, and Doctorate at UC Merced. She will share the most recent activities and photos for the medical education program.



Medical Education in the Valley

Tuesday, January 21st, 2025

5:30 pm

Mondo building (MCOE Downtown Professional Development Center on the corner of Canal and Main St)





SECTIONS

Adopt-a-Highway: Co-Chair – Kem Shrum 209-489-8130 kkshrum@yahoo.com and Dee Near 209-756-6086 neard@comcast.net

Become a part of the group of volunteers who clean up AAUW's 2 mile stretch on Hwy.140 just past Planada on the way to Mariposa. The group usually goes out early morning every couple months or so - about 4-6 times a year. The chair will send an email to let the group know date and time. Equipment is provided. We enjoy the great outdoors, chatting, exercise (walking a mile or two), and providing a service. Email Kem if interested.

Almost Gourmet: Chair – Karen Wallace 209-617-1709 the.wallaces@comcast.com

This group meets 4 times per year (with spouse, partner, or guest included). This section is currently closed.

Art Connoisseurs: Chair – Nancy Barber 209-201-9009 nanceebee92@gmail.com

Do you love wandering around Art Museums? Are you a lover of art? Interested members should contact Nancy. We will meet quarterly to plan our excursions.

Book Section 1: Chair – Kathy Berkeley 209-581-1599 bekeleykathy@gmail.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.

Book Section 2: Chair Judy Smith 209-777-5345 sierratrekker@comcast.net

Do you love a good mystery? This group is for you! Meets the second Thursday of each month at 3:00 p.m. Call or text Judy Smith.

Book Section 3: Chair – Sharon Wainwright sharonlwa@comcast.net

Members meet the first Tuesday of the month at 9:30 a.m. and rotate between members' homes. We select a book to read, to be read by all, for each meeting, and a volunteer guides us through the discussions. Due to a large membership, this section is closed, but you are welcome to sign up on our waiting list.

Book Section 4 (Evening Book Group): Chair Dee Near 209-756-6086 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. For summer 2024 the group read: Guardians of the Valley: John Muir and the friendship that saved Yosemite by Dean King and Husbands by Holly Gramazio.

Bridge Singles: Chair – Pauline Cuchna 209-658-6321 samnila@sbcglobal.net

Meets on the last Monday of the month at 1:00 p.m. The group rotates between members' homes. Table snacks are offered. Subs are welcome. This section meets September through May.

Bunko: Chair – Cheryl Burke – 209-726-8481 cdinesburke@gmail.com

Meets the fourth Monday of the month at 6:30 p.m. There is a lot of lively interaction for the members of this group. Since we have 12 members already, you are welcome to sign up for the substitute list. This section meets September through May with no meeting in December.

Chocoholics: Chair – Diana Alexander 209-658-1647 dianaalex51@gmail.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. Chocoholics will be limited to twenty members in order to accommodate everyone in our homes.



MORE SECTIONS

Game Night: -Chair – Dee Near (209)723-9007 neard@comcast.net

Who's up for some Fun & Games? Game Nights will meet on the second Monday of the month at 6:30 pm at a member's home. Let Dee know if you would like to join the fun!

Knitting and Crocheting: Chair – Dena Traina 209-777-5227 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. Refreshments provided. This section meets all year.

Lunch Bunch: Chair – Connie Brons 209-385-3837 conniebrons@yahoo.com

Meets the last 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.

Play Goers: Chair – Robyn Farnsworth 209-382-0548 yaya4three@gmail.com

Members will see 5-6 plays during the year on Sunday afternoons. This section meets September through May. New members are welcome

Sierra Trekkers: Co-Chairs – Judy Smith 209-777-5345 and Jennifer Foster 209-722-3649 sierratrekker@comcast.net or one4cats@att.net

Meetings will be held on the third Thursday of the month at 6:30 in members' homes (except for December). The September planning meeting maps out the tentative dates for hikes during the year. Hikes usually occur once per month and are usually easy to moderate trails with an occasional strenuous trail. The group occasionally travels for overnight /weekend adventures. One longer trip is scheduled each year to one of our State or National parks.

Together Women Rise: Chair – Jane Guerra 209-723-0384 jane@guerraville.com

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. New members welcomed.

Wine and Cheese: Chair – Colleen Eisberg 209- 725-9082 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. Come share the story of your wine and share tasting with the group. New members welcomed.



SECTION NEWS

Book Section 4

I don't think much needs to be said. Just look at the picture to see all of the wonderful books that this section has read!



Knitwits and Hookers (Is this the formal new name?! Looks like they just eat!)

The December meeting at the Traina household was a nice affair with food, friends and fun. Yes, there was a little knitting also.



MEMBER NEWS

Additional Members to Add to Your Directory

Brooks, Mary cell: 209 617 2199
2321 Lecco Way, Merced 95340 209 722 1656
brooks@elite.net

Burnett, Lora
2967 Whitegate Drive, Merced 95340
loraburnett@msn.com

Coston, Susan E. cell: 209 201 2652
1340 Juniper Ave, Atwater CA 95301
scoston@gmail.com

Delgado, Annie cell: 209 325 5767
1049 Wyoming Dr., Merced CA 95340 209 388 1819
Annmariedelgado1@gmail.com

Hofmann, Catherine D. cell: 209 631 9589
1214 Catalina Drive, Merced CA 95348
Chofmann101@gmail.com

Hofmann, Phaedra N. cell: 209 628 4535
1214 Catalina Drive, Merced CA 95348
phaedrahofmann@gmail.com

Hobbs, LeeAnne cell: 209 628 2820
1555 Santa Inez Court, Merced CA 95340
leeanehobbs@comcast.net

Science Camp Memories

Thanks to Kathleen Hull for taking on both the Soil Science and the Archaeology parts of the first session. And let's wish Jennifer well.





Free Webinars!

It's the post-holiday period. We think you are ready to do something besides culture penicillin from your moldy leftovers or pluck errant tree needles from your lasagna. We have two thought-provoking webinars for you to attend instead:



2024 Revisions to Title IX: How they Impact AAUW Values and Public Policy Priorities Learn about the changes from the Trump to the Biden administrations and what the future challenges might be.

- Presented by: Kathi Harper, Public Policy Committee member and chair of the School Board Project
- Thursday, January 9th (Yes is over but it was recorded!)
- 3 - 4 pm
- Register [HERE](#).

Reproductive Rights: Where Do We Go from Here? Mark the 52nd anniversary of Roe v. Wade. Join this Zoom presentation hosted by AAUW Silicon Valley Branch to explore shifts in American jurisprudence regarding women, the law, and the future of reproductive rights.

- Presented by: AAUW Silicon Valley, featuring Emily Bazelon, New York Times journalist, Yale Law professor and research fellow, Political Gabfest co-host, and author
- Wednesday, January 22nd
- 1 - 2 pm
- Register [HERE](#).



Proposed Dues Change & Rationale

The AAUW Board of Directors will consider an increase in AAUW individual member dues at their upcoming February 2025 meeting. The proposed increase is \$5 each year for the next 5 years, starting April 1, 2025.

The individual member dues rate is currently \$72. The proposed annual increase of \$5 would mean the following annual dues rates over the next 5 years:

2025	\$77
2026	\$82
2027	\$87
2028	\$92
2029	\$97

If this concerns you, please see your email from national and express your opinion.



“Life is a math equation. In order to gain the most, you have to know how to convert negatives into positives”

Anonymous