

# AAUW

## THE INSIGHTER

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### WEBSITE

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



### YOSEMITE TRIP

YOSEMITE TICKETS have been purchased. We will be leaving:

- From the Amtrak station
- On Saturday, March 29th – 8:05 am (HOWEVER, I recommend meeting up there at 7:45am)

If you still want to join us, you will need to show up early with cash in hand to purchase a ticket. There are only 6 spots available. I cannot pre-purchase any more tickets.

Becky Tietjen, President

“If we do not lift up women and families, everyone will fall short.”

Kamala Harris

# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Joyful February Greetings Merced AAUW!

Once again, a warm welcome our new members!

Lee Anne Hobbs \* Mary Brooks \* Lora Burnett \* Susan Coston \*

Cathy Hofmann \*Phaedra Hofmann \* Annie Delgado

Here is something I want you to carefully consider. All of you recently received an email entitled:  
Dena & AAUW Dues Change and Governance Proposals

You will find that AAUW is proposing to increase membership dues by \$5 for each of the next 5 years. That means that our national AAUW (NOT including our LOCAL dues) would increase as follows:

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

Here are my concerns:

1. Impact on our older members (and our membership)
2. Impact our LOCAL branch should we want (or need) to raise dues
3. Impact on donations (for Science Camp & Scholarships)

I encourage you to think about this proposal, visit the email listed above, and register your thoughts.

1. Find this email:

Dena & AAUW Dues Change and Governance Proposals

2. Scroll down to:

- “Click Here to review and comment on the proposed changes to membership dues”
- Then scroll down to COMMENT NOW

Thank you!!



## JANUARY PROGRAM

January's program by Dr. Julia Alvarez, was quite informative and addressed the shortage of physicians and health care professionals in the Central Valley.

Dr. Alvarez is Merced-born and raised. She earned her BS, Masters, AND PhD at UC Merced. She explained the timeline for students of the medical education cohort who committed to the program (as high school seniors!) and are completing pre-med classes at UC Merced. Post BS and clinical practice will be overseen in the Fresno area by UC San Francisco through which these students will ultimately earn their MD. Most impressive is all the support these students are given throughout their studies with the hope that these newly minted doctors will eventually choose to carry out their life's work right here in the Valley. It was a hopeful discussion and another reason to be very proud when saying "I'm from Merced".

Regarding the night's event, our President felt the need to



briefly explain the next activity. "I'm known to occasionally (okay – frequently) misspeaking with a mic in hand (e.g. referring to Nicole Sliveira as a district superintendent rather than THE District Attorney). Lest you think I made (yet another) faux pas when I mentioned that Kevin Costner is a band leader (rather than a mega star/director/producer) – I did not! He founded the " Kevin Costner & the Modern West" band." If you're thinking that this anecdote has no place in a discussion of Medical Education in the Valley,

you'd be right. BUT it was part of our warm-up Table Talk where Jennifer Foster related the hilarious story of when she became the recipient of (one of) Kevin Costner's (golf) balls. You just had to be there.

A special thanks to MCOE for allowing us to use the Mondo Building for this presentation.



# FEBRUARY PROGRAM

Speaking of fun events –

JOIN US for our next event on

**FEBRUARY 18<sup>th</sup> (6:00 pm) GRACEY ROOM at the LIBRARY.**

Our own (& beloved) Kathy Hansen will present:

- Her travels to Norway and the Arctic Circle
- Tips for better travel photography
- A snack (not a meal!) of Norwegian waffles

### ***More Science Camp Memories***

The Science Camp is down to its last two sessions. The presenters have been fabulous.

A couple of quotes regarding what they learned about soil/archaeology .

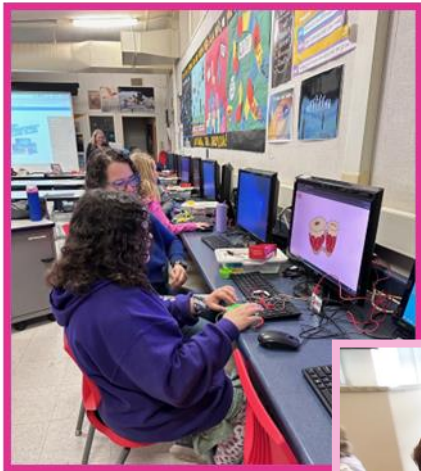
“I learned that I had a worm in my soil.”

“More archaeology. Very interesting!”

And now some pictures of the girls and their moms having fun.



have



Computer Science 1



Physics 1



Math 1



## SECTIONS

**Adopt-a-Highway:** Co-Chair – Kem Shrum 209-489-8130 [kkshrum@yahoo.com](mailto:kkshrum@yahoo.com) and Dee Near 209-756-6086 [neard@comcast.net](mailto: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](mailto: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 [nanceeb92@gmail.com](mailto:nanceeb92@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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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](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. 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 [samzilla@sbcglobal.net](mailto:samzilla@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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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](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. Refreshments provided. This section meets all year.

**Lunch Bunch:** Chair – Connie Brons 209-385-3837 [conniebrons@yahoo.com](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto:sierratrekker@comcast.net) or [one4cats@att.net](mailto: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](mailto: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](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. Come share the story of your wine and share tasting with the group. New members welcomed.



## SECTION NEWS

### Game Night

The Game Night Section is up and running. Everyone is having a great time! Did you know there is a Merced Monopoly?



### Art Connoisseurs

The art connoisseurs had a fun day in Sacramento! The weather was gorgeous that day and a big thanks to Dee, Caroline and Kathleen for driving.

The Crocker Art Museum was wonderful! The group enjoyed a short docent tour, then had a wonderful lunch. After lunch they continued into other exhibits that they had missed before lunch. The collection of paintings of California were breathtaking, and the Ramer Photography Collection, was very thought provoking. There was also a beautiful ceramics collection. Their next excursion will be on Sunday March 2<sup>nd</sup> to the SFMOMA. There is a planning meeting at Nancy Barber's house Friday February 7<sup>th</sup> at 6 pm.



## MEMBER NEWS

### Additional Member to Add to Your Directory

Soto Becerra, Dr. Patricia (402) 980-7310  
Address: 1011 Colorado Dr, Merced, CA 95340  
[patricia.soto.b@gmail.com](mailto:patricia.soto.b@gmail.com)

### A Special Lady

#### Olivia King

Olivia King has been a longtime member of AAUW. Even though she is living in Fresno, she is still a member of our group and gets our newsletter. To jog our memories, on May 12, 2016, at the Spring Brunch (moved meeting to garage too windy outside), Olivia King became a lifetime member of AAUW in Linda Lucas' garage! I am sure you will recognize a few of our longtime members in this picture. In this picture, she is holding the mic thanking us!



Well, it is our turn to hold the mic and thank Olivia. She has added our scholarship program to her trust. Maude's desire to have our section distribute scholarships will continue with Olivia's help. Thank you, Olivia,

**“No country can ever truly flourish if it stifles the potential of its women and deprives itself of the contributions of half of its citizens”**

Michelle Obama



### Charmen's Chat

Charmen Goehring, President, AAUW California

#### SO MANY WAYS TO SHOW LOVE AND APPRECIATION THIS MONTH!

February. The month of hearts, flowers, chocolate, and all things love. One way you can love others this month is to donate a gift card to an AAUW member who lost their home during the Los Angeles fires or had major smoke damage. A committee has been created to manage the collection and distribution of gift cards. After the Paradise fire in 2018, we collectively raised over \$150,000, which helped more than 30 members get their lives back on track. You can read more about the current effort [HERE](#).

If you have been a member of AAUW for a while, you know who Lilly Ledbetter is. Lilly, who recently passed away, is featured in a new movie titled simply, *LILLY*. Sacramento member Erica Dias discovered a wonderful fundraising opportunity for branches. Groups can host a screening of *LILLY* before its release in April (the goal is to raise support for the movie and encourage ticket sales when it comes out). To finalize the process, anyone interested in hosting a screening can fill out this [request form](#). This helps them gather the necessary details to coordinate the event. For nonprofit organizations, they are offering the film for a one-time licensing fee of \$500. That fee differs for educational institutions and corporations. The contact is:

Kathleen Rodgers  
Co-founder, Co-CEO  
GSD Group LLC  
(615) 504-3899  
[www.gsdgroup.com](http://www.gsdgroup.com)

February is also Black History Month and a wonderful time to show some love to our Black sisters and community. Search Yelp for Black-owned restaurants and businesses, visit a historically Black theater or concert venue, read a Black newspaper, or check out a Black church. You can also try this Black History Month Challenge (see next page).

#### TIPS FOR AVOIDING EMAIL SCAMS THAT APPEAR TO COME FROM FRIENDS OR FAMILY

Email scams don't always pretend to be large corporations; sometimes they impersonate people you know – family, friends, or even colleagues. These scams can be especially dangerous because they are working to exploit established trust.



Here are four tips to recognizing and avoiding email scams.

1. Be suspicious of unusual requests. If a friend or family member suddenly emails you asking for money, gift cards, or sensitive information, be skeptical.
2. Look at the writing style. Proceed with caution if you encounter unusual wording, spelling or grammatical errors, or phrasing that just doesn't "sound like" the person.
3. Stay calm. Scammers frequently rely on urgent language to drive immediate action. Do not rush to respond to the request until you determine its validity.
4. Look carefully at the sender's email address. Many email systems just show you the sender's display name, which is easy to manipulate. The email address itself must be inspected. In most systems you can hover your mouse over the sender's name to reveal their email address. Check the email address carefully. Frequently, the email address is entirely wrong and easy to dismiss as fraudulent. In more sophisticated scams, the email address may be only slightly different.

If you have identified the email address as incorrect, then delete the message (optionally, report as spam).

However, if after reviewing an email message, you still have some doubts, how do you proceed?

First, it is very important to NOT reply to the message and do NOT click on any links or attachments.

Then, reach out to the purported sender directly, such as by a phone call or text, to validate whether the message is authentic.

With a bit of knowledge and careful attention, it is possible to avoid many email scams.

#BECAUSEOFTHEMWE CAN

# BHM CHALLENGE

- AFFIRM A BLACK CHILD
- DONATE TO AN HBCU OF YOUR CHOICE
- FIND A PERSON IN BLACK HISTORY THAT YOU SHARE A BIRTHDAY WITH
- SHARE A PHOTO OF AN ANCESTOR
- RESEARCH BAYARD RUSTIN
- WATCH THE "THEY'VE GOTTA HAVE US" DOCUMENTARY
- TAKE A VIRTUAL TOUR OF THE NMAAHC
- BUY & READ A BOOK BY A BLACK AUTHOR
- RESEARCH BARBARA JORDAN
- FIND AN EVERY DAY ITEM CREATED BY A BLACK INVENTOR
- INTERVIEW AN ELDER
- RECREATE AN ICONIC BLACK PHOTO
- RESEARCH FLEET WALKER
- SUPPORT A BLACK BUSINESS
- DOWNLOAD 3 BLACK-OWNED APPS
- COOK A FAMILY RECIPE
- RESEARCH ELLA BAKER
- CALL YOUR STATE REPRESENTATIVE & TELL THEM TO AUTHORIZE THE VOTING RIGHTS ACT
- HELP SOMEONE REGISTER TO VOTE
- RESEARCH BROCK PETERS
- LEARN ABOUT HISTORIC BLACK LANDMARKS IN YOUR CITY
- DONATE TO A BLACK CHARITY/FOOD BANK
- RESEARCH PEG LEG BATES RESORT
- LEARN THE FULL VERSION OF LIFT EV'RY VOICE AND SING
- DONATE SUPPLIES TO A BLACK TEACHER
- OPEN UP AN ACCOUNT WITH A BLACK OWNED BANK
- RESEARCH IDA B. WELLS
- PLAN A VIRTUAL CELEBRATION WITH YOUR FAMILY ON THE 28TH

BECAUSE  
OF THEM  
WE CAN

28 DAYS, 28 WAYS TO CELEBRATE

“Women in politics are more honest and forthright. We are not in it for the ego gratification.”

Hanon Ashrawi