

## Speaker offers a primer on organizing to fight racism

By Micki Carter  
Triad Editor

“Social change is most effective if it flows from the people who are most affected by it,” Sienna Fontaine, legal director of Make the Road New York, told Mid-Peninsula Branch of AAUW on Feb. 13.

“We encourage our members to recognize their shared oppression and rewrite the rules of the game. We provide the space and the tools for them to make that happen.”



**Sienna Fontaine**

Fontaine, who graduated from Hillside High School and UC Berkeley, is the daughter of Mid-Pen member Kathy Mountain’s fellow Mercy High School teacher. She introduced Fontaine as a “problem solver and natural leader who uses the law to overcome injustice.”

Offering a primer on effective community organizing, Fontaine emphasized the need to “build power to fight systems of oppression.”

Make the Road New York was created in the late 1990s to respond to changes in the way the state handled immigration and welfare. It took its name from the poet Antonio Machado, who wrote: “Searcher, there is no road. We make the road by walking.”

The earliest Make the Road project was focused on providing language access at  
**See MAKE THE ROAD, Page 7**



© Bruce Hargreaves

Photographer Bruce Hargreaves, husband of Mid-Pen member Stephanie Katz, took this photo of a female hooded merganser in Redwood Shores. More photos and Katz’s story appear on Page 5.

## Climate Reality leaders to talk to Mid-Pen about taking action

By Kathleen Morrow

Mary and Walter Englert, Climate Reality leaders trained through the Climate Reality Project, will co present, An Overview of Climate Change: Contributors, Impacts, and Solutions at Hand, on Saturday, March 27, at 11 a.m. via Zoom.

The Climate Reality Project is a non-profit organization founded by former Vice President Al Gore in 2011. Its primary goal is to train individuals to spread awareness of the climate crisis while inspiring action for climate solutions in communities throughout the world.

The three-day long trainings, given free of charge, educate the volunteer presenters in climate science, the impacts of climate change on daily life for people around the

world, solutions to the climate crisis currently at hand, and links between environmental issues and social justice.

Our March 27 presentation will be led by the Englerts, who attended the March 2019 Climate Reality training in Atlanta.

Climate change can seem to be an overwhelming problem that can produce a sense of hopelessness and powerlessness. We are all, via various media sources, exposed to different bits of information about climate change. Mary and Walter hope to connect many of these dots and encourage you to take action at the individual, community, and legislative level.

Both Mary and Walter, who live in Portland, Ore., were raised in the Bay Area, Mary  
**See CLIMATE, Page 6**

## From the president

# We stay in touch by offering Happy Valentine's Day calls

Many thanks to all of you who contacted your "Next Name Neighbor" member from our directory to wish a Very Happy Valentine's Day! This successful and very fun activity was the brainchild of Carole Farina. We are so lucky to have such a creative person leading us. (See Page 4)

You have all done a great job in keeping in contact with each other through this pandemic. You have strengthened the bonds that we value so much in our branch!

On a further from home note, we will all be voting on the proposed changes to the AAUW Bylaws beginning this spring. The proposed changes will be voted on from



Cathy Chowenhill

April 7 through May 17.

To understand what is being suggested, here are two important links. The changes affect our Bylaws regarding open membership and there are also proposed changes to our Public Policy.

1. This Open Membership [Toolkit](#) explains why the board is making the strong recommendation to drop the education requirement.

2. This National Election [page](#) has links to the exact changes to be made in the Bylaws and in our Public Policy.

Speaking of voting go [here](#) and click on Vote Now. Two of our members (Victoria Kline Cosley and Patricia Holvick) have entries in the AAUW Art Contest that you can vote for, if you like. (See Page 6)

If you don't remember your AAUW member number, it is on the label of your paper directory.

See you on March 27 for our Climate Realities general meeting at 11 a.m. (via Zoom, of course!)

## Who? What? When?

**Co-Presidents:** Cathy Chowenhill (cathychowenhill@comcast.net) and Carole Farina (cfarina@alumni.stanford.edu)

**Membership:** Vicci Mueller (591-5444)

**Distribution:** Ellen Van Creveld (591-0814)

**Electronic distribution:** Cathy Chowenhill

**Triad editor:** Micki Carter (mickicarter@gmail.com)

**Sunshine Lady:** Marge Haruff is our Sunshine Lady. Please contact Marge at mharuff@aol.com or 592-9900 if you know anyone who would appreciate a card from Mid-Pen Branch.

**Know of a prospective member?** Please contact Vicci Mueller (viccim@aol.com).

**Board Meeting:** Tuesday, March 2, at 11 a.m. via Zoom.

**Triad Deadline for April** will be March 15. Please send articles in Word format and photos (separately, not embedded in Word) as large-format JPEGs to Micki Carter (mickicarter@gmail.com).

## BackTalk

Email your thoughts to the editor at [mickicarter@gmail.com](mailto:mickicarter@gmail.com) with **BackTalk** in the subject line.

# I thought I understood why sea level is rising

By Wilma Hoffmann

If sea ice melts, it does not affect the amount of water in the ocean. It has just changed form, and Archimedes Principle explains it.

However, as sea ice melts, less sunlight is reflected back away from the earth, so the overall ocean temperature rises, and as the temperature rises, the volume of the ocean increases, as do most things when heated. Non-scientifically speaking, the molecules start bouncing around faster.

So, models of sea level rise have been based on these two phenomena, ocean volume increase, due to rising water temperature, and increased melt of all surface ice running down rivers and into the sea, due

to air temperature increases.

New research has revealed that for glaciers whose tongues end up in the ocean as in the Greenland fjords, the warmer water beneath the very cold surface water is in fact undercutting those glaciers and causing them to recede and melt much faster than previously thought.

From the [Washington Post](#): "Earth is now losing 1.2 trillion tons of ice each year. And it's going to get worse.

"It's like cutting the feet off the glacier rather than melting the whole body," said Eric Rignot, a glacier researcher at NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory and the University of California at Irvine. "You melt the feet and the body falls down, as opposed to

melting the whole body."

The conservative estimate from this article is that current estimates are off by a factor of at least two, likely much more because the effects of warmer water undercutting ice (the speed of which varies by the underlying topography) has not been accounted for in current models.

The above linked Washington Post article references all the relevant research studies. If you cannot open the link, contact me at [wilmahoffmann@icloud.com](mailto:wilmahoffmann@icloud.com) for a copy.

The following [article](#) "How Is Worldwide Sea Level Rise Driven by Melting Arctic Ice?" from Scientific American is a good explanation of what is going on without accounting for the new research.

# Mid-Pen donates \$3,680 to AAUW funds in '20

By Carolyn Miller, Fund Chair.

Congratulations to all our members. National has just notified me that in our last year, 2020, our branch contributed \$3,680!

Here is a list of some of the things our monies have done:

1. Legal Action Fund: \$70,000 went to supporting five active cases.
2. Two-minute activists sent 62,400 letters to elected officials calling attention to AAUW priorities.
3. The AAUW Action Fund provided head-to-head voter guides on candidates positions in key federal races for 20 elections.
4. More than 250 recipients received \$3.9 million in AAUW in fellowships and grants 2020-21 academic year.
5. AAUW is one of the world's leading supporters of graduate women's education. Since 1888, it has award more than \$115 million in fellowships, grants and awards to 13,000 recipients from 145 countries.

Please hold your head up high. We have done well.



On Jan. 19 Mid-Peninsula Branch of AAUW lost a beloved long-time member, Lala Richards, a 1949 graduate. Lala used to be very active in our branch and was nominated as a gift honoree in 1996. The last few years Lala lived at Woodside Plaza. Prior to that, she lived on Eaton in San Carlos and had the most interesting and unforgettable huge doll house which she decorated differently for each season and all holidays. That was her hobby. Until the end she was also an avid and unbeatable bridge player. The board has made a \$25 donation in her memory to the AAUW Most Needed Fund.



Yvonne Zhang will be the speaker at Mid-Pen's Funds general meeting at 11 a.m. Saturday, April 24. She is an artist and filmmaker based in Los Angeles. Her films focus on the inner lives of women and girls, exploring the ways in which race and migration shape identity, belonging and power. Her goal is to create modern myths and folktales for immigrants, often combining live action and animation.

## What is a Legacy Gift?

A planned gift of any amount to AAUW National in your estate plan allows you to choose from many forms: bequests, life insurance, charitable gift annuities, real estate and more.

Among the varied benefits to you are reducing estate or capital gains tax, providing income for life, or providing a gift after your lifetime. Your legacy gift will support the future of women and girls.

For more information or to download a brochure, click [here](#).

This year are you joining the AAUW Legacy Circle? If so, please let us know by contacting Fund Chair Carolyn Miller.

## New email address

Joanne Payne has changed her email address to [pogocat13@gmail.com](mailto:pogocat13@gmail.com).

## Women in Science

The California Academy of Science is hosting free lectures on Night School at 7 p.m.. [Here](#) is one on Women in Science to celebrate International Women's Day on March 8. It will be shown on Facebook and YouTube.

## Asian Art docent to speak to SM Branch

Mid-Pen has been invited to join the San Mateo Branch when a docent from the Asian Art Museum speaks at 1 p.m. Wednesday April 14. Email [cathychowenhill@comcast.net](mailto:cathychowenhill@comcast.net) for the link if you'd like to attend.

## State annual meeting

Plan to attend (via Zoom) the AAUW California Annual Meeting at 9:30 a.m., Saturday, April 17, to hear AAUW Board Chair Julia Brown as she brings all the news from AAUW National and the latest about the proposed bylaws change. Registration is required. Click [here](#) to register

## Are you able to help?

The Mid-Pen Branch nominating committee is at work filling the slate of officers for the 2021-2022 year.

Chairman is Carolyn Seffens, assisted by Linda Howard as co-chair. Others on the committee are Diane Beu, Teddy Heinrich, and Carolyn Miller.

If you would like to suggest someone for an office, or if you want to serve, please contact anyone on the committee.

# Support the sections which are still meeting

## Climate Change

The section will meet March 8 at 3:30 p.m. via Zoom. (The second Monday of the month at 3:30 is our standard meeting.) At this meeting, we will be discussing the different ways that climate change is framed — as a physical phenomenon that can be measured by scientists but also as an idea that travels among popular culture, politics and economics to name a few of the areas it impacts. Depending on who is talking about climate change, the meaning varies. Feel free to join in the discussion after a short presentation by Sherry Booth on the various ways climate change is framed. Contact Sherry at boothsherry1@gmail.com to receive the Zoom link.

## Book Bunch


We meet by Zoom on the fourth Friday of the month (Feb. 26) at 12:30 p.m. Contact Cheri Sullivan to join (cheryl.sullivan@gmail.com or 217-840-6627). (Please note that we are no longer meeting on the second Friday of the month, but on the **fourth** Friday.) In February we will be discussing Mary Ammon, a 19th-century female paleontologist, by reading either *The Fossil Hunter* by Shelley Emling OR *Remarkable Creatures* by Tracy Chevalier. There's no need to read both books; just choose one of them. Our March book will be *Plainsong* by Kent Haruth, and our April book will be *News of the World* by Paulette Jiles. All are welcome!

## French Conversation

We'll meet via Zoom on Tuesday, March 9, at 2 p.m. We plan to read Chapters 6 and 7 in *Le retour du Jeune Prince* (pages 43-53). Bring your bonnes idées pour la conversation!

## Spanish Conversation


From November through April, Spanish Conversation will meet by Zoom on the first Monday of the month from 2:30-4:30 p.m. Leonor Urbain will send the link. After April the group will decide if this meet-up plan will change. If you are interested in further information, contact Leonor at Lurbain@comcast.net.



Please join me in saying, "Happy Valentine's Day" to your name neighbor.

- **Open** your Mid-Peninsula 2020-21 Directory, online at <https://mid-peninsula-ca.aauw.net/members/>
- **Find** your name
- **Call** the member listed below you. If last, call the first member.

If you do not hear from her by Feb 16, please check to see if she is safe and well. It only takes a few minutes but is a connection worth making.



*Carole and Cathy*

**A Valentine from the Mid-Peninsula Branch co-presidents.**

## Public Policy

The Zoom meeting date is Tuesday, Feb. 23 from 3-5 p.m. Topics for the meeting will be the recent impeachment and trial verdict of former President Trump. In addition, talking points, questions and concerns for the upcoming Lobby Day will be solicited from members and discussed so that we are prepared to talk to our legislators. Lobby Day is March 24; last day to register for webinar is Feb. 28. Look for the Zoom invitation for the meeting from ybergero@mac.com on the morning of Feb. 23. Please contact Yvonne Bergero (ybergero@mac.com) or phone 650 595-3648 with any comments or

to be added to our section. Please join in on the conversation.

## Hiking

The group continues to meet on Thursday mornings. There's renewed interest in spending time together! Members of the group suggest walks, hikes, routes and the time and place to meet, and then someone leads and does the emails for that week. Stephanie Katz is the contact (stk4@lehigh.edu).

## Climate Change



Male hooded merganser



Male bufflehead



Bufflehead male



Bufflehead male before a dive

## Two endearing duck species

By **Stephanie Katz**

Rubber ducky!

Stand-up hairstyle!

These two diving duck species seen in Redwood Shores are particularly endearing: buffleheads and hooded mergansers. Why the interest and enjoyment? They're eye-catching and easy to spot even without binoculars. Unlike some other ducks, the females are easy to identify.

Buffleheads, also called "buffaloheads" (referring to the large-headed appearance relative to their small size), are America's smallest diving ducks. They're somewhat chunky; the males are bright white and black, while the females are dark with a horizontal "Nike" cheek stripe.

Described as energetic, buffleheads speed along in the water. When diving for

aquatic plants, they do a little "up and over" move reminiscent of graceful synchronized swimmers. The male has won my vote for rubber ducky in the tub.

In contrast, hooded mergansers are small and sleek. Males have a squarish or fan-shaped white crest on a black and white head.

Females have a buff-colored or orangish crest which reminds me of the actress Elsa Lanchester's tall hairstyle in *The Bride of Frankenstein*. The crests are collapsible, which changes the head shape. When mergansers drift, they can rotate their heads with the crest not visible.

My neighborhood birding skills have improved this past year. Ducks provide much viewing enjoyment; I'll miss them when they migrate in the spring.

Stephanie Katz's husband, Bruce Hargreaves, is an experienced and enthusiastic photographer. Like his father, he started taking pictures early and used the family darkroom to print black and white photos. Bruce became his family's primary photographer and did experimental photos. He later incorporated photos into his career as a university scientist. The pandemic prompted a new hobby of photographing birds in his neighborhood and beyond. Bruce researched equipment online and got advice from friends. He rented two cameras for a week each in November and bought a Fuji X-T4 in December with two different lenses. His objective is to photograph birds in flight and other animals in future travels.

## Climate

Continued from Page One

in San Francisco and Walter in San Carlos. Mary taught biology at Notre Dame High School in Belmont while Walter worked on his Ph.D. in Classics at Stanford in the late 1970s.

She received a MS in evolutionary biology from the University of Michigan, taught at the community college level in Portland then career-shifted to mental health after receiving an MA in counseling psychology at Lewis and Clark College in 1991.

Mary recently retired from her mental health practice and Walter retired from teaching Classics and Humanities at Reed College in Portland for 37 years. In retirement, they are both volunteering for several environmental organizations and devoting their lives to addressing climate change and related environmental issues.

Members will receive the Zoom link a few days before the talk.



Walter Englert



Mary Englert



Flamingo's Paradise



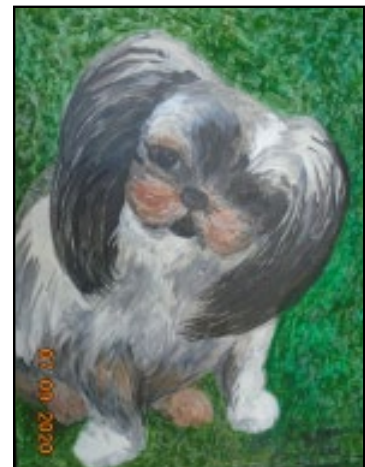
Rebirth

## Two Mid-Pen members are entered in the AAUW art competition

Take a look at the AAUW [Art Contest](#) entries by two Mid-Pen members, Victoria Kline Cosley and Patricia Holvick. Search for the entries by title. Victoria's are "Flamingo's Paradise" and "Rebirth" (a monarch butterfly on a flower). Hers are the photos at the left. Patricia's entries are "Jeanette Isabella's Doggie" and "Orchids in a Vase." They are on the right. If these photographs delight you, Victoria and Patricia would appreciate your support. You are allowed to vote for 10 choices. The voting ends March 3.



Orchids in a Vase



Jeanette Isabella's Doggie

# Make the Road

Continued from Page One

local welfare centers. They filed a federal lawsuit to require a sufficient number of interpreters on hand at the centers. They won, and by 2003, New York City laws ensured language access.

“Power concedes nothing without a fight,” she said, adding that people who are oppressed will be in a better position to organize if their initial needs are met. So, Make the Road took a page from the Black Panthers to provide survival services such as access to health insurance, ESL and civics classes and food.

Their long-range goal is “to shift power to those who have been denied it most,” she said. “Economic exploitation keeps money, power and privilege in the wealthy white class. Policing is a big part of it. A very explicit, anti-Black narrative has created a blueprint for how the dominant culture treats every other group.”

The result is structural racism, which she described as “a system in which public policies, institutional practices, cultural representations and other norms work in various, often reinforcing ways to perpetuate racial group inequity. . . . It has come about as a result of the way that historically accumulated white privilege, national values and contemporary culture have interacted to preserve the gap between white Americans and Americans of color.”

Fontaine quoted author Ta-Nehisi Coates: “Racism and anti-Black racism in particular is the belief that there’s something wrong with black people.”

Anti-Blackness, she said, results from widespread stereotypes that show Black men as aggressors and sexual predators. This extends to Black youth who are viewed as not deserving of a second chance. “We have to police them and lock them up. . . . These beliefs become norms, just part of our daily lives. We start to use the language. We call Black youth ‘thugs,’ and we start reinforcing a specific kind of outcome.”

Make the Road is committed to dismantling the school-to-prison and school-to-deportation pipelines, and Defunding the Police has become a rallying cry. Fontaine noted that this expression has been largely misunderstood. It really means, she said, “redirecting resources toward things that keep communities thriving such as housing,



youth services, health care and jobs. Where we spend our money reflects our values.”

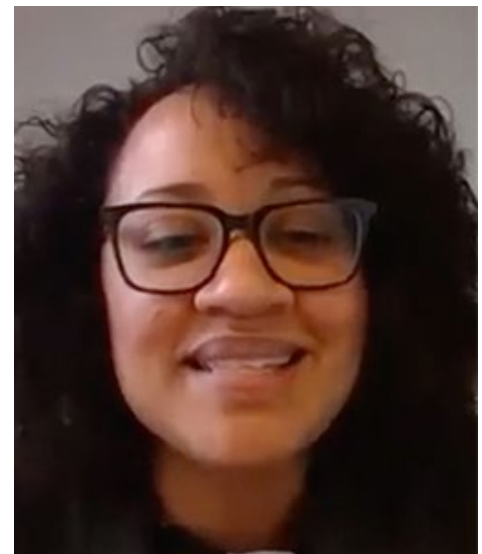
She noted that systemic racism plays a role in the immigration issue, causing us to see immigrants as less than human, undeserving. The xenophobia of the Trump Administration tapped into existing narratives and added fuel to the fire. Using impact litigation, Make the Road has worked to change the narrative on immigration.

So how do we help?

“We start by changing our hearts and minds, and then we can change our behavior. Once behavior is altered, we can change the structure of society.”

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If you would like to view the recording of Fontaine’s presentation, email Cathy Chowenhill, and she will email it to you.



Sienna Fontaine



## The Fight for Pay Equity: A Federal Road Map

Updated September 2020

In 2019, median annual earnings in the U.S. for men working full time, year-round were \$57,456, compared to just \$47,299 for women, according to the most recent census data. That means women were paid just 82% of men's earnings — a gap of 18%. The gap narrowed over the past half-century, but progress has stalled in recent years. Our federal equal pay laws need an update and agencies can do more to ensure women bring home the pay they have rightfully earned.

**Pass federal bills advancing pay equity.** Congress must take action to close the gender pay gap by passing legislation that will enable all women to take home a fair paycheck.

- The Paycheck Fairness Act would protect workers by updating and strengthening the Equal Pay Act of 1963.
- The Pay Equity for All Act would prohibit employers from seeking salary history during the hiring process.
- The Fair Pay Act would require employers to provide equal pay for work of equivalent value.

**Issue regulations, then implement and enforce agency actions.** Agencies must act to identify and close gender and race-based pay gaps by implementing meaningful executive branch actions.

- Prohibit retaliation against employees of federal contractors who discuss or disclose their wages.
- Require employers to annually collect and report summary pay data by gender, race, and ethnicity.
- Ensure more salaried employees receive appropriate overtime pay.
- Require federal contractors to disclose labor law violations.

### California: Tell your member of Congress you want fair pay!

| Current Member of Congress | District | Men (2019) | Women (2019) | Earnings Ratio (2019) | Ranking in State <sup>a</sup> | Current Member of Congress | District | Men (2019) | Women (2019) | Earnings Ratio (2019) | Ranking in State <sup>a</sup> |
|----------------------------|----------|------------|--------------|-----------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------|----------|------------|--------------|-----------------------|-------------------------------|
| Speier (D)                 | CA-14    | \$80,563   | \$68,622     | 85.2%                 | 28                            | Eshoo (D)                  | CA-18    | \$122,687  | \$84,632     | 69.0%                 | 53                            |

## Equal Pay Day proclaimed on March 24 by San Carlos Mayor Laura Parmer-Lohan

By Yvonne Bergero

San Carlos Mayor Laura Parmer-Lohan signed a proclamation designating March 24 as Equal Pay Day. According to the proclamation, the city urges the citizens of San Carlos to recognize the full value of women's skills and significant contributions to the labor force and further encourages businesses to conduct an internal pay evaluation to ensure women are being paid fairly.

In 2019, median annual earnings in the U.S. for men working full time, year-round were \$57,456, compared to just \$47,299 for women. That means women were paid just 82% of men's earnings — a gap of 18%. The gap has narrowed but progress has stalled in recent years. Our federal equal pay laws need an update.

Congress must take action to close the gender pay gap by passing legislation that will enable all women to take home a fair paycheck.

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tect workers by updating and strengthening the Equal Pay Act of 1963.

The Pay Equity for All Act would prohibit employers from seeking salary history during the hiring process.

The Fair Pay Act would require employers to provide equal pay for work of equivalent value.

Three [AAUW resource websites](#)

### Lobby Date is March 24

AAUW CA "virtual" Lobby Day on March 24 assures that our voices will be heard by legislative leaders before bills we support come up in committee hearings. We're planning a webinar for March 22 to prep for Lobby Day. You must [register](#) by Feb. 28 to attend both Lobby Day and a virtual training webinar to prepare and train for it.

### Other dates:

March 8 – International Women's Day  
 March 15-26— The NGO Commission on the Status of Women [Forum](#)



Mid-Pen member Laura Parmer-Lohan, Mayor of San Carlos, read the proclamation adopted by the City of San Carlos. It declares March 24 as Equal Pay Day. (It was previously reported incorrectly as March 31.)





## The Fight for Pay Equity: A State Road Map for California

In 2019, median annual earnings for men in California were \$57,016 compared to \$50,220 for women — an earnings ratio of just 88%, or 4th out of all states and the District of Columbia, according to the most recent census data. The gap is worse for most women of color and working mothers. With Congressional gridlock at the federal level, states are working to enact their own legislation. Check out which provisions California still needs to pass to help close the gap.

### Protections

- Include equal pay or employment discrimination provision
- Cover all or most employees
- Include protected classes in addition to sex
- Prohibit retaliation/discrimination for taking legal action to secure equal pay
- Prohibit retaliation/discrimination for discussing/disclosing wages
- Prohibit using salary history in hiring
- Make salary range available
- Prohibit job tracking based on sex
- Prohibit reducing another employee's pay to comply with law

### Occupational Segregation

- Include comparable work/substantially similar standard
- Include mechanism to guide and enforce pay adjustments

### Defenses/Rebuttals

- Narrow reasons employers can use to justify pay differences
- Require consideration of less discriminatory practices
- Prohibit agreement to a lesser wage as a defense

### Remedies

- Require liable employer to pay employee's damages
- Require liable employer to pay additional penalties for multiple violations
- Require liable employer to pay employee's costs and attorney's fees

### Procedures

- Permit class action lawsuits or joined claims
- Explicitly reset statute of limitations if continuing violation
- Include private right of action

### Preventative Measures

- Require employers to keep records of wages
- Require employers to collect data on pay gap
- Create state advisory committee on pay equity
- Sponsor state education and training programs, such as salary negotiation

To learn more, check out AAUW's helpful resources at [www.aauw.org/fairpay](http://www.aauw.org/fairpay).