



Mid-Pen president Chris Panero is a winner of the AAUW art contest. Chris says, "The photo was taken in February 2017 on the night market in Hoi An, a lovely city of canals and colonial architecture on the central coast of Vietnam we visited as part of an Overseas Adventure Travel tour. I was so pleased with how the photo came out and very surprised that it was one of the winners."

To advance gender equity for women and girls through research, education, and advocacy.

## Retired judge to speak at Mid-Pen, SM joint meeting Saturday, May 13

By Gail Langkusch

Retired Santa Clara County Supreme Court Justice LaDoris Cordell will speak to the joint Mid-Peninsula and San Mateo Branches at 2 p.m. Saturday, May 13, at the Redwood Shores Library.

A 1974 graduate of Stanford Law School, Cordell was the first lawyer to open a law practice in East Palo Alto. In 1978, she was appointed assistant dean for Student Affairs at Stanford Law School, where she implemented a successful minority admissions program.

In 1982, Gov. Jerry Brown appointed Cordell to the Municipal Court of Santa Clara County, making her the first African American woman judge in Northern California. In 1988, Cordell won election to the Superior Court of Santa Clara County.

In 2001, she retired from the bench to become Vice Provost and Special Counselor to the President for Campus Relations at Stanford. She left that position in 2009.

In 2003, accepting no monetary donations, Cordell, ran a grassroots campaign and won a four-year term on the Palo Alto City Council.

Cordell is a mother who lives in Palo Alto with her partner of 30+ years. In her spare time, she is a pianist, vocalist, portrait artist and cartoonist. Her recently released **See JUDGE CORDELL, Page 2**



LaDoris Cordell



## Who? What? When?

**Co-Presidents:** Carole Farina and Chris Panero  
**Membership:** Wilma Hoffmann and Barb Finnegan  
**Electronic distribution:** Cathy Chowenhill  
**Triad editor:** Micki Carter  
**Sunshine Lady:** Marge Haruff. Please contact Marge if you know anyone who would appreciate a card from Mid-Pen Branch.  
**Know of a prospective member?** Please contact Wilma Hoffmann or Barb Finnegan  
**Board Meeting:** Tuesday, May 2, at 10 a.m. via Zoom.  
**Triad Deadline for June** will be May 15. Please send articles in Word, Pages or Google.doc and photos (separately, not embedded) as large-format JPEGs to Micki

## President's Message

# Board review reveals lots to like at Mid-Pen

By Chris Panero  
Mid-Peninsula Branch co-president

I'm writing to you on a beautiful breezy day. Out my front window, I see a cheery patch of poppies and freesias in my tiny no-lawn front yard--c'mon by and take a look. More credit is due to the abundant rains than to the gardener (me), but the view still makes me smile.

Your board has been busy. Here are a few things we covered at our April 4 meeting:

We voted to increase the stipend we pay to our speakers from \$100 to \$150, in recognition of rising costs and greater needs all around.

The Redlands AAUW Branch sells attractive milestone pins to commemorate years of membership in AAUW. Barb Finnegan told us about the offer and wrote an article about it as well (elsewhere in this issue); let her know if you would like a pin.

We are trying to puzzle out how we might increase tips at our December book-wrapping fundraiser by being able to accept Venmo or other payment application that

would allow donations into our Branch bank account.

Sherry Booth shared the good news that we have five in-person campers and two virtual campers for this year. We hope to meet all seven Tech Trekkers at a general meeting next fall. The in-person camp at Sonoma State is named for Katherine Johnson, an African-American NASA mathematician whose work was vital to both early and manned space flights as well as the Space Shuttle.



Chris Panero

Gail Langkusch reported that Sheriff Christine Corpus invited our Branch to tour the San Mateo County Jail in May. You can sign up with the links in the April 10 Monday Memo.

The directory on the branch website has been updated. Thank you to Margot, Barb Finnegan, Wilma Hoffmann and Cathy Chowenhill for making it happen.

Lastly, I attended a Zoom workshop offered by AAUW-California on reviving and reorganizing a branch, with tips on finding and mentoring leaders. There were two

very interesting things about the workshop. It was the first one I've attended where we were placed in breakout rooms so we could talk to each other and exchange ideas. And, as we talked, it quickly became obvious that our branch is in pretty good shape!

One of the biggest ideas was one that we practice well here at Mid-Pen: If you need help, ask someone personally rather than broadcasting an appeal. This year's nominating committee used that technique to excellent effect, and we have a full roster of board and committee members.

## Judge Cordell

Continued from Page One

memoir, *Her Honor*; a finalist for the California Book Award, was published by Celadon, a division of Macmillan Publishing.

If you wish to socialize and enjoy some refreshments, please arrive between 1:30 and 2 p.m. so that our guest speaker can begin promptly at 2. We want to honor the time of our guest speaker.

If you can't make this presentation, Cordell will speak to the the Palo Alto branch on May 20, at 2 p.m., at Jane Stanford Middle School, 480 E.Meadow Drive, Palo Alto.

# Mid-Pen celebrates 2023 Named Gift Honorees

## Beth Swanson

By Chris Panero

Our usual way of announcing a Named Gift Honoree is to hint at the person's identity with a big reveal at the end. But this person is so well-known and her work with the branch is so specialized that it's going to be pretty hard to develop any suspense.

Today, our Honoree is Beth Swanson.

Beth joined our branch in September 2021 when she moved from the Midwest to San Mateo to help her daughter's family while her daughter attended law school.

Beth has a strong background in AAUW because her mother was a long-time member.

She has proven to be an absolute wizard at all the jobs she has taken on, skilled at planning, execution, making things happen, and getting things done.

Early in 2022, as a new member, she joined Micki Carter as a lead on our Facebook page, posting frequently and adding items that showcase women's achievements. She is a prolific and creative Facebook poster, helping our branch publicize our social activities, general meetings, and support for all women near and far.

She next took on our branch website, updating the design and making the first view inviting for those curious about AAUW. She lined up all the reasons why someone might want to join our branch and AAUW and added inviting photos of members at a Zoom meeting, at Tech Trek, learning about new foods, and at one of our meetings at Burton Park.

And then, she took on her biggest job: Programs Vice-President with Gail Langkusch. Beth started right out in the summer of 2022, convening the Program Planning Committee, collecting information about potential speakers and organizing and



Beth Swanson

tracking them on a really impressive Excel spreadsheet that even includes photos.

She found a wide assortment of exciting speakers, then organized all the details and help from members for our general meetings, both in person and via Zoom. She covered all the bases, finding a speaker who introduced us to local indigenous history and the political aspects of honoring that history, another, Teri Chinn, who told us about the impressive history of the new homeless center in Redwood City, and then a wonderful meeting with the first woman sheriff of San Mateo County Christina Corpus.

A meticulous planner, she has even reserved a few days this coming fall for general meetings at the Redwood Shores Library.

Beth is good at thinking things through, anticipating problems, and making decisions even when she does not have all the information she needs. Her patience — and lack of panic — when speakers did not respond promptly was reassuring. She's friendly, approachable, and open to new ideas.

We thank Beth for all she has done for our branch. We are so sorry that you are moving away, but we are grateful for what you have done for us and we will remember you. Please stay in touch.

## Micki Carter

By Linda Howard

I have been asked to say a few words today about my long-time friend, Michelle Carter, a.k.a., Micki. Throughout her adult life she has stepped up to challenges, and along the way supported individuals, worthy causes and service to the community, including AAUW.

When looking back at the past, the decisions we make become significant later in life. Micki attended Proviso East High School in suburban Chicago. Proviso East was a large high school and afforded the chance for students to take electives such as journalism and Russian. Micki's decision to take journalism and Russian would influence her life in ways she could not fathom at the time.

With her passion for writing and two years of high school Russian, she walked through the door to a university education which would change her life. While studying at the University of Missouri in Columbia,

she was on the staff of *The Missourian*, the newspaper that served the the community.

After obtaining her degree in journalism, Micki and her husband moved to the Bay Area to begin their after-college lives. Their careers took root, and Micki started working for the *San Mateo Times* in 1967. She was hired as a reporter in the Lifestyle section of the newspaper, but ambition and talent led her to inquire about a position as a reporter in the newsroom. The managing editor at the time said: "... not a snowball's chance in hell; I've already got my broad." (He had one female staff member and that was enough.) In 1988, she had his job. She became the managing editor of the *San Mateo Times*.



Micki Carter

This was the journalism journey, but where did the acquisition of Russian language come in as an important part of her life? In 1988 and 1990, Micki visited the Soviet Union as part of peace exchanges. One of the stops on this trip was the Children's Hematological Hospital in Minsk, Belarus. There she saw the terrible results of the Chernobyl nuclear disaster.

This led to her writing the book, *The Children of Chernobyl: Raising Hope From the Ashes* (Augsburg, 1993) and the creation of the Children of Chernobyl Project of Northern California. Her second book, *From Under the Russian Snow* (Bedazzled Ink, 2017) is a memoir of the year she was USIA's Journalist-in-Residence in Russia in 1995.

The Mid-Peninsula branch of AAUW benefits directly from Micki's journalism skills and life experiences. She is the editor of *The Triad*. She also designs brochures and other materials for the branch.

So, it is no surprise that Micki Carter is receiving this well-deserved award today. The Mid-Pen branch benefits from her knowledge and generosity of time. She continues to use her skills to do good in the world — any time she is not gardening or playing tennis!

## Diversity, Equity, Inclusion

# Not just DEI, but consider adding new acronym

By Barb Finnegan

We are now familiar with the acronym DEI, standing for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. However, author Dr. Lata Murti, co-president of Santa Maria branch, feels this acronym provides a simplistic understanding of the issues and has developed the acronym JABEID. She feels it explains the concepts more thoroughly.

In her webinar on March 27, she explained these terms (see below) and then asked the Zoom audience to identify ways we could implement them in our own branch.

These were the meeting group’s ideas – what ideas do you have?

**J — Justice:** “AAUW is a social justice organization. Justice means everyone having all existing resources and opportunities to thrive available no matter their social identity (person’s sense of who they are based on their group membership(s), or social location.” That’s our gender, race, class, sexuality, etc. and how it relates to everyone else’s statuses in our community. The focus is on social injustices based on gender identity.

Example: Offer programs presented by young people who experience injustices. Actively support other non-profit organizations that support the underprivileged. Offer scholarships that make entry or return to or completion of college more equitable.

**A — Accessibility:** “Having available all the opportunities and resources needed

to thrive.”

Examples are holding meetings in ADA locations, offering meetings at different days/times and locations to make it convenient for more of the membership. Vote to remove degree requirements for AAUW. Offer hybrid meetings (online and in person).

**B — Belonging:** “Feeling not just included, but fully accepted, valued and appreciated in a specific context.”

Example: Food offered at meetings should be considerate of different diets, cultures, etc. Invest in name tags. Seek out and speak to the guest speaker or new members before or after the meeting. Focus on retention of existing members.

**E — Equity:** “Having the opportunities and resources needed to thrive, based on social identity and social location”.

Example: Members should be allowed to

pay what they can afford for membership. Meeting locations should be rotated to different areas to provide ease of transportation.

**I — Inclusion:** “Providing opportunities and resources to those who have not had opportunity due to social identity or location and inviting them to partake”.

Example: Reach out to underrepresented schools for Tech Trek applicants. Invite members from historically excluded groups to AAUW activities.

**D — Diversity:** “An appreciation of the full range of social identities and social locations, especially those identities and locations that have been historically marginalized.”

Example: Include members from different racial and cultural backgrounds, those with different sexual identities, and those of diverse socio-economic backgrounds. Incorporate themes of diversity in general programs. Offer cooking demos with the cook describing their origin story.

Recently, our new members have been the friends or acquaintances of current members. The AAUW CA goal for new membership this year is 6 percent which is six new members for our branch. To date we have four new members. It is recommended that our membership reflect our branch’s demographics.

With diversity in mind, we ask that each of you recruit a new member.



April is Diversity Month!

## Would you like a pin to show off your AAUW membership?

By Barb Finnegan

The AAUW Redlands branch is selling lapel pins to all AAUW branches, celebrating milestone years of membership. They are available for 5-, 10-, 15-, 20-, 25-year (silver), 30-, 40- and 50-year (gold) membership milestones.

Do you like the idea of wearing a pin to show your support of the mission, values, and goals of AAUW? It’s a reminder of the friendships you have formed in our branch.

If so, we would like to recognize you by offering you a pin for your years of membership. If interested, please notify Barb Finnegan by May 15. Please include the year you joined AAUW so I can compare that to our official roster.



5 Year



30 Year



10 Year



40 Year



15 Year



Silver Member



20 Year



Gold Member

## Climate Change

# Here's the rest of the Alaskan Pipeline story

M.A.D.

## Make a Difference

*"There's one issue that will define the contours of this century more dramatically than any other, and that is the urgent threat of a changing climate."* — Barack Obama

## Alaskan Pipeline Willow Project

We asked, in the last Triad, how you reacted to this:

The Biden Administration enacts "\$8 billion plan to extract 600 million barrels of oil from the largest remaining expanse of wilderness in the United States." (Lisa Friedman, environmental policy reporter for the *New York Times*)

This dismayed environmentalists and young people who viewed it as a betrayal of his promise of a strong position on climate change.

Here's the rest of the story:

In addition to allowing oil companies to extract oil from protected wilderness, Biden's executive order set aside "some new protections designed to limit fallout in the drilling area, which lies about 200 miles north of the Arctic Circle. They included a ban on offshore drilling in the Arctic Ocean and safeguards for some nearby wetlands," according to Friedman.

Remember how oil and fossil fuels' supply and demand declined with the advent of Covid-19? That is, until Russia's invasion of the Ukraine, which dramatically increased the demand for oil and spiked oil prices.

Prior to the invasion, oil companies such as ExxonMobil, BP and other oil giants had begun lowering oil production and increasing their push toward renewable energy sources with ads and commitments. Now, they have begun reneging on their advertised promises.

Shell backed out of its promise to increase spending on renewable energy in 2023. BP no longer is committed to reducing emissions by 35% by 2030, and ExxonMobil has lowered its funding and efforts to make fuel from algae.

Why the change of heart? The Ukraine/Russia war has boosted the demand and price for oil. The price of a barrel oil has



since skyrocketed, more than doubling the oil companies' profits from 2021.

The most compelling reason the Biden administration had to consider the Alaskan Pipeline Willow Project was that ConocoPhillips had existing leases in this area that ConocoPhillips was going to act on legally.

"The feeling was that the Interior Department had been given a difficult choice; if they tried to stop ConocoPhillips, they could have lost in court, ended up with fines in the billions and the oil company would still have been allowed to drill, an administration official said, according to Ellas Nilsen of CNN.

"The prevailing sense was that they should instead try to shape the project in other ways by adding more protections to federal land and water in Alaska. ...

"While the administration pointed out it had reduced the size of the project by nearly 70,000 acres, ConocoPhillips and the Alaska delegation still notched a major win by getting three drilling pads approved, meaning they can extract over 90% of the oil they sought."

The fight continues, with the expectation of legal action from environmental groups. Earthjustice reportedly is ready to seek an injunction to delay work for another year.

Does this explanation for Biden's executive order satisfy environmentalists?

The administration recently declared two new National Monuments, the Avi Kwa Ame National Monument in Nevada encompassing 506,814 acres in Nevada and the Caster Range National Monument that encompasses 6,672 acres of mountains near El Paso, Texas.

In addition, Biden directed the Commerce Department to create a new marine sanctuary that will protect 770,000 square

miles of water surrounding the Pacific Remote Islands near Hawaii.

Will these newly protected public lands assuage protesters?

## Skip the slip

Over 3.5 million trees and 10 million gallons of water go into producing receipts every year in the U.S. Receipts from your purchases are usually coated in toxic chemicals such as BPA/BPS. They eventually end up in the trash, and are non-recyclable.

Assemblyman Philip Ting has introduced AB1347 to give us the option of getting a toxic-free receipt, a digital receipt or no receipt.

Make your support for AB 1347 heard.

Contact: Diane Papan, Assembly Member District 21, District Office, 1528 S. El Camino, Real Suite 302, San Mateo 94401, or Capital Office: 1021 O St., Suite 4220, P.O. Box 942489, Sacramento, CA 94249

Many places including Whole Foods, Taco Bell, Bianchini's and Kaiser Health have already taken steps to eliminate paper receipts. Ask if there is a choice next time you shop.

## Paper cups

Imagine the millions of plastic cups that are being replaced by paper cups each day. Baskin Robbins, Costco, and Starbucks are making a difference by switching to paper cups. Support this trend. Encourage it everywhere.

Please continue to share your ideas. Send us photos of your progress. This is everyone's column.

E-mail either of us with your input.

**Elvira Monroe and Theoni Pappas**

## Interest Sections

# See any interest group that tickles your fancy?

### Movie Group

The Movie Group meets on the third Tuesday of each month in the mid- or late afternoon, depending upon the selected film. This is the bargain cost day in local theaters. We attend a movie, usually in Redwood City, occasionally in San Mateo, and then go to a nearby restaurant for dinner. In May, Movie Day is May 16. If you would like to be added to our group list, please either call or email Susanne Burrill.

### Tea Time Fiction Group

If you're working or have other commitments during the morning hours and haven't been able to attend other book groups, then join us for a late afternoon fiction book group. We plan to meet between 4 and 6 p.m. on the third Thursday of each month.

Since the hours are close to tea time, it was thought that it would be fun to meet at the Hillsdale Nordstrom's third-floor Café where one can purchase tea or coffee and a sweet or even a dinner meal and enjoy yourself while discussing a book.

Kathy Rafael and Mikki Coffino have selected books. Please contact Mikki for more information.

### Team Mah-Jongg

A lively group of members play and continue to learn American Mah-Jongg. We meet Tuesdays from 10 a.m. to noon at the San Carlos Senior Center.

Usually four to six players are able to attend, and we look forward to more joining the group. For further information, contact Kathy Morrow.

### Climate Change

The Climate Change section meets once a month on the fourth Monday from 3:30 -5 p.m. Contact Victoria Kline for meeting details and to RSVP.

### Book Bunch

Barb Finnegan will host on May 19 at 10 a.m. and has chosen *The Cartographers* by Ping Shepherd. Note that this is a correction from the April Triad that mentioned Carol Orton as the host. Please RSVP to Barb and let her know if you need the Zoom option. Our June meeting will be decided



**Filoli in Woodside is a favorite destination for the Walk/Talk & Gawk group, and this year didn't disappoint — despite a chilly wind and late blossoms.**

at that meeting.

### Hilly Hikers

Wilma Hoffmann will lead a hilly hike on the usual fourth Friday slot, May 26. The destination is dependent on weather, location of any flowers (hard to predict given our crazy weather) and trail conditions. Contact Wilma either to join the Hilly Hikers' email list or RSVP for carpool planning.

### All About Food

We will Zoom together on Thursday, May 11, at 4 p.m., to discuss products purchased at the Japanese market, dishes we have tried preparing and growing vegetables

in our gardens. Contact Carole Farina before May 4 for information.

### French Conversation

Our next meeting will be on Tuesday, May 9, at 1:30 p.m. Check with Laverne Rabinowitz for the location and come be part of the fun!

### Walk/Talk & Gawk

The group continues to meet on Thursday mornings. 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.

# Meet new members: Nancy Kucharik, Carol Orton



**Nancy Kucharik**

**By Barb Finnegan**

Welcome our newest member, **Nancy Kucharik**, who is in Neighborhood 2. She joined AAUW after friends encouraged her to join after a recent retirement.

Nancy was born and raised in Southern California. Her family moved to the San Bruno area when she was about 5 years old and she grew up there with two sisters, ultimately graduating early from Woodside High School in Redwood City.

She received a BA in psychology in 1980 from UCLA and an MBA in operations management from Santa Clara University in 2003. She worked for QANTAS Airways for 15 years in transportation and logistics. Based in Los Angeles, she worked cargo, assisting companies to ship products to Australia and the South Pacific.

She then transferred to the Bay Area for the last couple of years and worked in passenger sales, contacting travel agents to book trips through QANTAS.

She then shifted to working in the logistics departments in various companies in Silicon Valley, assisting with import of goods from Asia. She negotiated contracts with carriers and managed the assessment of their performance. Nancy retired in July 2022.

Nancy's life priorities are family, friends, health and well-being. She has two daughters and one grandson. She wishes her grandson lived closer but cherishes their time together. She enjoys a weekly dinner with close family members and is known for

her delicious desserts.

Nancy practices healthy cooking and, during the Covid lock-down, began working with sourdough, a hobby she enjoys with her younger daughter who taught her how to bake sourdough bread.

Her newest hobbies include line dancing at the San Carlos Community Center and golfing. She has recently taken golf lessons, joined a group of women golfers, and plays several times a week as she is dedicated to improving her game.

She is quickly learning American Mah-Jongg and hopes to join our interest group. A well-seasoned traveler, Nancy is going to accompany me on my first trip to Europe this summer on a Viking River Cruise.

Other interest groups she would like to join are All About Food, Film Viewing and Walk/Talk & Gawk.

Nancy has already volunteered to serve on the Hospitality Committee next year.

Please welcome my friend, Nancy, to our branch.

**Carol Orton**

Welcome our new member, **Carol Orton**, who lives in Neighborhood 1. AAUW was recommended by her friend, Katherine Linnemann, and she thought it would be a good fit as she wishes to remain active in the community and connect with women with similar interests.

Carol grew up in Sacramento with three siblings, an older sister and two younger brothers, all who still live in California. She enjoyed the wonders of Tahoe and was an avid skier.

She received a BA in 1978 from Stanford and then went on to receive a J.D. in 1981 at Indiana University in Indianapolis. Afterwards she returned to California to be close to family and friends.

She and husband, Luther, have a wonderful, blended family. Carol has two stepsons and one stepdaughter, and they share two daughters. The three older children have a total of 10 children. One younger daughter works in San Francisco for a tech company, while the other is in law school. Carol feels lucky that most of the family live close by, including her mother who is less than one mile away.

Carol worked 15 years for San Francisco law firms, specializing in business litiga-



**Carol Orton**

tion. She took a break from law while the children were young but remained active in the community. She was very involved in both the elementary and high school Menlo-Atherton foundations, PTAs and the local school board.

In 2004 she returned to work managing the family law firm for five years. She then decided she would like to work outside the family and attended community college to earn a certificate in Travel Planning Business. Carol then opened her own travel agency and enjoyed extensive travel from 2009-2019. She retired at the beginning of the pandemic.

Carol remains active in the community, working with a group of lawyers who assist Nevada residents with "voter protection." They aid those seeking help with issues related to voting. She also works to elect women to public office.

And finally, two afternoons a week she volunteers in the library at an East Palo Alto Charter School.

Carol is also interested in AAUW political and Mid-Peninsula branch interest sections. She has already participated in Lobby Days, presenting three bills AAUW is promoting to a staff person for Josh Becker and to Nancy Papan and her staff. Both were supportive of the bills and Ms. Papan had special concern that the bills were written correctly so they would hold up in court. Carol has also participated in the Book Bunch.

Please welcome Carol to our branch.

## Public Policy

# AAUW pushes its Top Three bills in Sacramento

By Ginny Hatfield, Amy Hom and Kathi Harper, AAUW CA Public Policy Committee

If you participated in this year's Lobby Days on March 21-22, you know it was a whirlwind of activity.

Over two jam-packed days, 120 AAUW CA members from 50 branches met with the staffs of 46 Assembly offices and 23 Senate offices. Most of the meetings took place via Zoom and the majority went off without a hitch. For the first time, some of our members met in person in Sacramento.

While most meetings were conducted with legislative staff, we were able this year to schedule 10 meetings with the members themselves - six Assemblymembers and four Senators. In addition, Kathi Harper, AAUW

CA Public Policy Chair, and Kathy Van Osten, our AAUW CA Legislative Advocate, met with the governor's staff and Assembly Speaker Anthony Rendon's office.

We were happy to learn that our organization was known to many of the legislative staff and legislators with whom our members met. Some had spoken to branches in their districts; others were familiar with our public policy priorities and expressed alignment and support for them.

A handful were appreciative of the background we provided about our mission and programs.

A sterling endorsement came from none other than Alf Brandt, policy consultant for Assembly Speaker Anthony Rendon, whose mother was an AAUW member in the 1940s in Orange County. He credits her involvement in AAUW for "making me the man I am today."

The reception of our Top Three bills (AB 1394, SB 287 and AB 549) was generally favorable, especially the two social media bills. Both staff and legislators could identify with the pervasive problem of having children who are or will be targeted by social media.

AB 549 needed a bit more explaining, as some were unfamiliar with CEDAW, the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women.

During our Lobby Days event, we were able to get our message across to those who make our laws and to highlight AAUW, our mission, accomplishments and the benefits we bring to our communities throughout California.

It was an empowering exercise in advocacy and for those of you who participated, AAUW CA thanks you!

Adding this reminder: It's time to vote on the updates to the Public Policy Priorities for 2023-25. In response to input from 466 members, the state Public Policy Committee recommended and the board has approved 11 changes, which can be viewed [here](#).

Highlighted additions include support for civics education, access to diverse staff and curriculum, safe infrastructure and access to technology in our schools, gun violence prevention, and a fourth pillar to support women in leadership roles.

If you haven't voted yet, here's a reminder that voting closes May 13. Make sure you make your voice heard!

## Mid-Pen is invited to tour women's jail of SM County

By Gail Langkusch

Mid-Pen branch's tour of the San Mateo County women's correctional facility has been arranged for Monday, May 15, at 9 a.m.

If you wish to join the tour, you need to first email me, so that I have a complete and accurate list of all those who will participate, and then fill out the [application](#) for jail clearance. When you get to "reason for request" on the application, please put "MSC tour with Sgt. Gilletti."

You will also need to bring your ID with you when you arrive for the tour of the jail.

Sgt. Jim Gilletti will be leading us on a tour of the new women's correctional facility. The new facility is located at 1590 Maple St., Redwood City.

He will explain how the facility functions and what is being done for the women who are being detained, as well as provide other relevant information.

There will be time for you to ask Sgt. Gilletti any questions you might have.

Please let me know as soon as possible if you plan to join the group. The applications must be completed and sent at least two weeks prior to the visit.



The All About Food section visited a Japanese market in San Mateo and then treated themselves to a sushi lunch on a recent outing.



# Faheema Eissar tells a most compelling story

By Micki Carter

Faheema Eissar, a young Afghan woman who has been supported in her master's degree studies at the University of San Francisco by AAUW International Fellowship grants, described the remarkable journey that brought her to USF and her plans for the future at the Annual Meeting of Mid-Peninsula Branch on April 15.

Eissar, who likes to be called Fahym, grew up under the first Taliban rule, which prevented girls from going to school.

"Taliban rule ended in 2001, and I was able to go to school for the first time at age 12. But I already knew how to read and write. My mother, my illiterate mother, taught me .

"She never went to school, but she learned to read the Koran. Arabic and Farsi use the same letters. When I was 5 years old and couldn't go to school, my mom started teaching my older sister and me to read the Koran. I was reading fluently in just a week.

"My mother was a saint. She educated all three of her daughters so her daughters would not end up like her. She always said, 'If I could have gone to school just one day, it would have changed my life.' You have to know that we are not just sitting there waiting for the world to come and save us."

After high school, Fahym was able to get



Faheema Eissar

her bachelor's degree in the United States and then returned to work in a variety of different programs administering aid programs in Afghanistan.

"All that led me to the understanding that we don't have accurate data or accurate interpretation of data to make those programs effective. Everything was designed

and interpreted by foreigners who were looking through different lenses. Lots of good intentions behind those policies and programs, but because of this understanding gap, nothing was working well.

"As an Afghan woman, I would like to have a say on how those resources are used. I decided that I would study economics. Next time. I can tell them I have the skills to analyze these programs and offer constructive advice."

Fahym's master's thesis focuses on post-trauma economic recovery. She researched how young women, who had been victims of abductions, had been affected by their trauma and how they see their world. She reported that the youngest have the least empathy and the oldest the most.

All her family has been able to get out of Afghanistan, and her husband, who has not been able to work, is leaving soon.

"It's very unlikely that I can go back any time soon. I'll continue working in academia," where she can develop data about the socio-economic situation in Afghanistan and bring to attention issues that can be helped through change. . .

"I'm standing between two worlds right now."

## Full slate of officers for 2023-2024 is elected

The business portion of the Annual Meeting, conducted via Zoom on April 15, approved the proposed changes in the bylaws and elected a full slate of officers.

The Named Gift Honorees announced were Beth Swanson and Micki Carter. (See Page 3.)

The bylaws changes will:

- Eliminate the position of director-at-large
- Allow the Vice President of Funds to be appointed rather than elected.
- Eliminate the requirement that Interest Section Coordinator and Public Policy Chair attend board meetings.

The slate of officers elected for the year 2023-2024 are:

**President:** Chris Panero

**VP Programs:** Bernie Mellott and Lois Monroe

**VP Membership:** Barb Finnegan and Stephanie Katz

**Admin Finance:** Kathy Rafael

**Treasurer:** Amy Armstrong

**Member Treasurer:** Mary Spring

**Recording Secretary:** Margot Diltz

**AAUW Fund:** Jeanne George

**AAUW Public Policy:** Marty Moga

**Archivist:** Nancy Oliver

**DEI:** Barb Finnegan

**ISCCC Rep:** Nancy Oliver

**Neighborhood Coordinator:** Carolyn Seffens

**Parliamentarian:** Nancy Oliver

**Scholarships:** Margot Diltz, Katherine Linnemann, Mary Spring and Nancy Oliver

**Tech Trek:** Jane Fernald and Sheri Simmons

**Tech Trek Treasurer:** Kathy Rafael

**Triad Editor:** Micki Carter

**Website Editor:** Cathy Chowenhill

**Facebook:** Micki Carter

**Branch Email:** Cathy Chowenhill

**Virtual meetings:** Cathy Chowenhill

**Event Graphics:** Nancy Oliver

**Directory:** Margot Diltz

**Sunshine:** Marge Haruff

**Hospitality:** Nancy Cantisano, Nancy Kucharik and Kathy Linnemann

**Book wrapping:** Susanne Burrill and Diane Beu

**Outreach:** Yvonne Bergero

**Nominating Committee 2024-25:**

Sherry Booth, Joyce Inouye, Bernie Mellott and Mary Ann Miotto

**Are you on Facebook?  
If so, please join the  
Mid-Pen AAUW FB group  
so that we can spread  
our message further!**