

# GREATER WHITTIER AREA BRANCH AAUW NEWSLETTER

<http://whittier-ca.aauw.net>

**APRIL**  
**2021**



## **BRANCH MEETING – ZOOM – APRIL 10, 2021** **11 AM**

The usual reservations, lunch and hotel ambiance will now be your comfortable chair and familiar surroundings. Take joy in no traffic or parking - just join the meeting with ZOOM.

The meeting starts at 11 AM, however you can log in starting at 10:30 AM for “social time.” If you don’t have the internet or have an old computer, you can call in by phone and hear the whole program. If you have family that you are comfortable with (even if they insist on a mask) and they have a ZOOM set up, try to join us. There are adult children, grandchildren or neighbors that would love to show their ZOOM technology skills. Hopefully, it won’t be long, and we can meet in person as many of our members have received their vaccinations.

To ensure you receive an e-mail invitation to the ZOOM meeting, contact:

Cindy Birt, e-mail Coordinator [cindybirt@roadrunner.com](mailto:cindybirt@roadrunner.com)

Sharon Heck, President [s.heck4peace@gmail.com](mailto:s.heck4peace@gmail.com)

Susan Halliday, Membership Vice President [sbathalliday@yahoo.com](mailto:sbathalliday@yahoo.com)

The month of April is the time for our Annual Meeting when we elect officers, honor our members and the women of the Greater Whittier Area community. This year we have heard from many accomplished women and now we will focus on our talented local women.

Las Distinguidas has been an annual tradition in the Whittier Branch for sixty-five years. This year we are honoring three outstanding women in the community. Myra Long was one of the first women in our branch to be selected a “woman of distinction”. Susan Halliday has arranged special videos of the 2021 chosen women. You will be able to see their awards and hear from each one during the ZOOM Meeting.

Pauline Rogers will introduce the named gift honoree and present her a certificate from AAUW - California. We have always tried to keep the names of these Named Gift recipients a secret until the Annual Meeting. Please join us on April 10th for the big reveal.

Clare Koehler, Co-Program Vice President

Barbara Gile, Co-Program Vice President

# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



We had an excellent Branch meeting on ZOOM March 13. The speaker, JoBeth McDaniel, was mentored by Nelle Harper Lee, the author of *To Kill a Mockingbird*. JoBeth called her Nelle and told us about the years of friendship and mentoring by this famous, private woman who was 18 years her senior. The three magic words from Nelle which helped JoBeth in her personal life were: “You deserve better.” For those who were unable to attend I will pass on her alphabetical listing of MENTOR. M – must be MUTUAL E – some form of EDUCATION N – honest NURTURE and encouragement T – TRUST in each other O – putting OTHER’S needs before yours R – REPEATED interactions Thank you JoBeth for speaking to our Branch.

The National AAUW Board has increased per member dues by \$3.00 for the coming year. They have reduced staff and cut other expenses, but there is still need of more revenue. They have a large endowment, but it is designated for grants and other purposes and cannot be used for everyday administrative expenses. We will be passing this \$3.00 increase on to each of you. Our Branch dues and the California State dues will remain the same, so dues for 2021-2022 will be \$106. Our treasurer, Kay Clark, is now accepting your checks, or you may pay online at the AAUW.org website. An application is included in this newsletter.

The National AAUW Board has proposed a change to the Bylaws of the organization. They wish to remove the requirement that you have a degree in order to be a member of AAUW. This decision requires a vote of the membership which will be held online between April 7 and May 17, 2021. If you cannot vote online, call this number (202)785-7700 and request a ballot. Do it very soon as the ballots must be postmarked by April 30, 2021. To vote online or by mail, you will probably need your AAUW membership number. If you don’t have it, call me on 562-698-0476 as I have a list. Please see the following several pages for talking points on this issue from National, and comments from our members.

Thank you to all who said yes to serving as elected or appointed officers for next year. I have a special thank you for Paula Ocampo who will be President and Nadine Wilcox who will serve as President-Elect. The entire elected slate is listed in this newsletter. We will vote on the slate at our April 10 Branch meeting, and they will be installed in June. We still need someone for hospitality and an assistant to help with the newsletter. Let me know if you are interested.

Sharon Heck, Branch President

**AAUW MISSION STATEMENT – To advance equity for women and girls through research, education and advocacy.**

# WHO IS ELIGIBLE TO BE A MEMBER OF AAUW?

## KEY TALKING POINTS FROM NATIONAL AAUW FOR DROPPING THE DEGREE REQUIREMENT FOR MEMBERSHIP

- The reasons we should drop the education requirement are simply:
  - Because it is the right thing to do
  - Because it is in keeping with our mission to advance gender equity
- AAUW needs to include members with diverse backgrounds and perspectives to meet our mission of advancing gender equity and society's needs today.
- Simply put, this is about inclusion. AAUW's vision is Equity for All. Our membership practices should align with this vision.
- The educational requirement is counterproductive to recruiting diverse members as well as younger members.
- There are many paths to education beyond colleges and universities. As important as the P12 and four-year college system is, education comes in many forms, including Career Technical Education, on-the-job training, and similar education routes.
- Those who do not have degrees can be strong advocates for our mission.
- We are an organization that promotes equity, yet we do not treat non-degree individuals as equal. This is simply unacceptable.
- Times have changed. Younger feminists care about our mission but don't join us because they see us as an exclusionary or elitist organization, one that hasn't evolved into modern thinking about equity and inclusion.
- Corporations and foundations prefer to work with and/or fund organizations that adhere to their diversity, inclusion, and equity policies and practices. We lose out on dollars that could help us move forward with our mission and vision which puts a bigger burden on our members to contribute to AAUW.



## COMMENTS FROM GWA – AAUW MEMBERS ON THE QUESTION OF REMOVING THE DEGREE REQUIREMENT FOR MEMBERSHIP IN AAUW

The opinions expressed herein are solely those of the member! They are unedited.

### From Kay Clark

I wanted to write a slightly different way of looking at accepting members who haven't achieved an Associates or higher degree. It's a personal one. My mother was raised in southern Missouri during the 20's and 30's. Her father didn't believe education was needed for girls and only one of her brothers got to go to college. She obtained a scholarship to a nursing school in Chicago and set off to enroll. However, the school closed down and so did her education chances. She ended up staying in the Chicago area, marrying my Dad and raising 4 children. My mother considered education to be very important and worked hard at a job outside the home (when it wasn't normal). After her youngest started school, she began her career as a keypunch operator and by the time she retired, was a systems analyst at Fermi Lab (an accelerator laboratory outside Chicago). She encouraged all 4 of her children to go to college and earn a degree and made sure we did so. Even though my mother never got a degree herself, she would have been a great asset to AAUW in promoting education for women and girls. This change in bylaws would benefit AAUW to have such dedicated members

### From Kathy Arriola

I think membership should stay as is. As a minority, I struggled to earn first my AA then my BA. My parents could not help me with college expenses, so I worked all my college years to pay for fees and books. What should've taken 4 years to complete both, took me 6 years to complete then added an extra year to earn my teaching credential. In addition, once I had a teaching job, I was told I needed an additional certificate in bilingual education. Back to school I went as a somewhat newlywed and a nursing mother. It was a struggle, but I am proud to say, I was the only one in a generation of 22 cousins to earn a college degree. What made it possible? I credit "ganas", the determination to do it. I consider it an honor to sit with women that perhaps made it through the same struggle I lived. I honor those that worked to complete a higher education, some financially, others with their own concerns. Being an AAUW member is a privilege I earned and am proud to be a part of this organization. It may sound a bit elitist, which is not my intention. I hope it clarifies my point which is that being a part of AAUW is something well earned.

### From Margot Eiser

In order to preserve the integrity of AAUW, there should be NO change to the by-laws to remove the requirement of a college or associate degree for membership. Instead, the organization should emphasize its commitment to encouraging and actually helping girls and women pursue and obtain a comprehensive education on all levels in all fields, starting with PRE-school. It should be well publicized how AAUW helps female students via Tech Trek, numerous scholarship funds, various outreach programs and student support endeavors etc. An additional enticement can be that when recipients and participants earn their degrees, their efforts will be rewarded by automatically becoming, at least for the first year, members of AAUW!

### From Pauline Rogers

The most obvious reason is the title of our organization, American Association of University Women! The title doesn't mention anyone, or everyone can be included! Such a change could eventually lead to some, maybe many, branches being led by non- college trained persons. Where then is our identification? My personal feeling is that this change is being proposed only for financial reasons. Baahumbug! If you want more college trained ladies in our organization research ways to reach out to the younger ladies at the colleges. They have different approaches than we did back in the day. Then promote those new approaches just don't go the slippery route of including everyone just to get funds! This organization has always been one that enjoys the company and hard work of women who believe in advanced education. Let's not succumb to silly propaganda for the almighty dollar!

### From Ginny Ball

I think this eliminates the goal of AAUW.

When we added trade schools—how many new members did we get?

When I was in college, my biology professor was the National President—she encouraged the women to join when we graduated.

I think the intent was educational study beyond high school.

## MEMBER COMMENTS (CONTINUED)

### **From Susan Halliday**

I am definitely against national's proposal to eliminate the degree requirement for membership. AAUW is already quite inclusive, and was founded on, and by, educated women supporting other women in reaching higher levels of education in their field. It was founded during the late 1800s when it was rare for girls to even graduate from high school, much less attend college. It was founded to celebrate education and to help/support/encourage other women/girls in also achieving higher educational goals.

- It is NOT the right thing to do
- It has nothing to do with our mission to advance gender equity.
- It has nothing to do with greater adversity by eliminating the purpose for which our founding women strived.
- Yes, times have changed and so have some of our requirements. We now accept an AA degree or equivalent, an RN degree or the equivalent in addition to a four year accredited college/university degree.
  - The breadth of programming, research, policy and advocacy, fellowships and grants, and grassroots network have nothing to do with whether one has a degree or not. There are plenty of other women's groups who were not founded on & do not require a degree of any kind. Non educated women and educated women can join the other women's support groups. The name of AAUW would have to be disregarded and changed to American Association of Women! I totally disagree with every point made by our national AAUW to eliminate the degree requirement for membership

### **From Carol Shupek**

I am in favor of a change to the membership requirement, allowing members who support our goals of equity and equality for women and girls to join, with or without a college degree. I really thought it was ridiculous when we allowed community college graduates to join that we just did not open it to all women who share our goals. This would allow us to be all-inclusive, and certainly should increase our membership. Perhaps our name should be changed also.

### **From Barbara Gile**

I feel very definitely AAUW membership needs to be for women that have a college degree. When we let men into the group there was no big increase in membership. When we let women with only an Associate Degree there was no real increase in membership. If we let every person join AAUW we will not increase our membership that much. We will just be another women's organization.

### **From Iris Harris**

I am completely opposed to eliminating the requirement of a college degree to join the American Association of University Women. For one thing, the Association would have to change its name. The reason I joined was to belong to a group of like-minded women, with whom I could feel comfortable. If this requirement is voted out, I will resign my membership. Thank you for asking for my opinion.

### **From Janice Cecola**

My vote : you need to have a degree. The AAUW stands for university women. Changing the requirements is not going to increase membership.

### **From Mary Ann Gilmour (sent to Cindy Birt)**

Dear Cindy, so do you all want to change the name of the AAUW to American Association of Women?? How desperate really for members are you all? Opening up the doors to anyone is opening the doors to nuts of all kinds, or worse, who will use your website. God only knows we have enough incitement to violence just among our political divisions.

Dear Cindy, are you aware that one radical Whittier City Council member went to Jan 6 riot on our dime? So, even elected officials really need to be screened which may actually be impossible with all the media outlets. So, anyone who wants to admit any woman into AAUW should be asked how they would plan to screen prospective members.

## MEMBER COMMENTS (CONTINUED)

### From Earlyne Clemons

The name could be changed to American Association of United Women (AAUW)

### From Marie Hegwer-DiVita

I fully support the proposed changes to the AAUW bylaws eliminating any degree requirement for membership. I first heard of AAUW as a high school senior in 1966 when I applied for the Alhambra chapter's first Jean Brown Memorial Scholarship for a graduating young woman planning to pursue a degree in mathematics. I was very fortunate to receive that scholarship and it made all the difference. I was the first college graduate in my family (and it took another 20 years before there was another). How nice and helpful it would have been to have been able to join AAUW then. What better way to encourage, nurture, and befriend women trying to gain a university education than to unabashedly and wholeheartedly receive them as full members and colleagues working in all of AAUW's programs and in achieving all goals? I have no doubt voting "YES" is the right thing to do.

### From Ann Topjon

I just want to say that I definitely oppose this proposition that AAUW membership be open to any woman. AAUW was originally started in order to support, inspire, and help women obtain a college or university degree, and I think that mission is still very important and central to our organization. Opening it up to anyone is a distinct weakening and dilution of that original intention. I will definitely be voting against this.

### From Paula Ocampo

At its core, the change in membership would allow more women to join who share our values and mission statement. Those goals would not change: AAUW Mission Statement - "To Advance Equity for Women and Girls Through Research, Education and Advocacy." It seems that we would welcome any woman who wants to work to support those goals, which would eventually result in more opportunities for women in education. I recently attended a National AAUW ZOOM town hall webinar to hear the pros and cons of changing the degree requirement <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7yipxfxVUR0>. They make a very good case for eliminating the degree.

### From Gwen Woirhaye

Though I am normally inclusive I feel that AAUW is an exception. There is at least one other international organization that promotes and supports education for women, P.E.O., and many AAUW members belong to it as well. There is no degree requirement for that organization. I feel that AAUW is very special and honors the work and determination that we have put into obtaining our college degrees. Therefore, I am opposed to changing the requirement.

### From Patricia Cuocco

It makes no sense to me to change the degree requirement. It seems a contradiction in terms of our name, our history and the intent to encourage women to pursue higher education for all of the reasons that education is considered both a personal and a public good. Maybe there are funders who preclude us for our requirements, but I don't see how or why, since a college degree makes sense for an organization of university women. So many of us struggled to finish our degrees – attending college while employed, raising children, caring for elder parents or all of the above. That says something and the struggle should be honored. We are women who have worked to achieve something special. Keep the degree requirement.

**Thanks to all who shared their opinions –**

**Sharon Heck**



# PUBLIC POLICY

## *Transgender Athletes*

Last month, I asked members to send me issues they would like to see addressed. One member did and my first reaction was, “Be careful what you wish for.” Our member asked about AAUW’s position on transgender athletes, specifically, athletes who are biologically male, but identify as female. No one seems concerned about the opposite situation for good reason. There is no science backing up a claim that a biological female has any strength, stamina, athletic skill or prowess advantage over men. That is not necessarily true for biological males competing in female athletics.

To start, I tried looking on the AAUW website for a specific policy and could not find one. However, AAUW fully supports passage of the Equality Act and the March 5 email on the topic from National to members states, “Equality means including all people. America's civil rights laws should reflect that promise and protect everyone. That's why it's crucial that Congress pass the Equality Act, which would amend existing federal civil rights laws to provide explicit protection against discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity.” This seems unambiguous, and, Ginny Hatfield, our state Public Policy liaison assures me, “As far as AAUW policy is concerned, “AAUW would support self-ID individuals in their endeavors - sports or otherwise. Our PP committee has just completed our public policy priority review and basically that's what we state.”

Ginny also sent me a fascinating YouTube video on Olympic athlete Caster Semenya. I urge you to look at it, even though it provides more questions than answers. See <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MicftTLUzCI>. There is also a good article in *The Guardian* on her legal efforts to overturn the ban or require her to take testosterone lowering medication to compete. See <https://www.theguardian.com/sport/2021/feb/25/caster-semenya-career-olympics-european-court-human-rights>. Science may have the ultimate answers on this one, but the quest to get to the answer looks like it will be a bruising and bloody skirmish in the existing culture wars. Meanwhile, real people with real needs and issues are being hurt on both sides – transgender athletes who feel marginalized and discounted and cisgender athletes who feel the already fierce competition has become insurmountable because of biological realities.

You should also know that the Biden Administration withdrew support for a case in Connecticut that sought to ban transgender athletes from participating in girls’ high school sports. The Trump administration had supported the lawsuit filed by cisgender athletes who feel the competition from biological males is unfair. We will see many more of these cases filed in the states.

So, Thank You, Dear AAUW Sister, for sending me on a learning journey. To quote Bette Davis in *All About Eve*, “Fasten your seatbelts. It’s going to be a bumpy night.”

Patricia Cuocco  
Public Policy Chair

**NOTE: Please send me your comments on the state legislative attempts to suppress voting. Barring some major, unforeseen issue coming to the fore, I will likely address this in the May newsletter.**

# AAUW FUND

## 2021 NAMED GIFT HONOREE AWARDS

*“Every woman’s success should be an inspiration to another. We’re strongest when we cheer each other on.”—Serena Williams, Athlete*

Each year our branch recognizes women who have provided leadership, inspired and have contributed to the success and goals of the branch. These members have been our ambassadors and have embodied the mission of AAUW.

At our April 10th Branch Meeting we will be honoring two women, both members of the GWA AAUW branch, who exemplify the values of the organization. The names of our two women honorees will remain anonymous until their names are revealed at our branch’s Named Gift Honorees’ event. Both have enriched our branch and those they have come in contact whether in meetings, in service of the organization and by living our organizations’ values.

Please join us on Saturday, April 10th at 11 AM and help us make their Named Gift Honorees’ day special and memorable.

*Dolores Gonzalez-Hayes  
AAUW Fund*



### **FROM THE FINANCE CORNER – Kay Clark:**

A friendly reminder - your dues payments are for the fiscal year (July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2021). The earliest I can record dues at National for the following fiscal year is March 15, 2021. If you aren’t sure if you have paid for the 2020-2021 year, please contact me ([kayclark310@gmail.com](mailto:kayclark310@gmail.com) or 310/890-6510) or Susan Halliday ([sbathalliday@yahoo.com](mailto:sbathalliday@yahoo.com) or 562-696-7395 ). I thank you!

Kay Clark, Treasurer



# MEMBERSHIP

## ***MEMBERSHIP MATTERS***

RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP for 2021-2022. Our treasurer, Kay Clark, is ready to accept your checks anytime, beginning mid-March, for our upcoming fiscal year. Remember our dues for national has increased by \$3.00, making our total dues \$106.00. There is an application/renewal form attached to this newsletter. You can also renew online at [aauw.org](http://aauw.org) using a credit card. It's not difficult. Go to [aauw.org](http://aauw.org) and click on 'Membership' renewal. Be sure to check all the proper boxes that reflect your membership. Most of us should be paying the total of \$106.00. If you'd like to also add a donation for AAUW FUNDS, please feel free to do so.

This month we are celebrating our members who have 1 to 9 years of membership. With the pandemic and the stay-at-home rule, many organizations are not feeling as robust a membership as pre pandemic days. I'm hoping that we will continue to increase our membership. Please feel free to invite any potential members to one of our zoom branch meetings. Just be sure to let Susan Halliday or Patricia Cuocco know ahead of time so that she or he will be allowed into the ZOOM meeting. It's a great way to share some of the amazing things and activities that are happening in our GWA-AAUW branch.

Remember **Membership is a job we all share**. We want to keep our GWA-AAUW vibrant and robust. Sadly, this year we have lost several members through relocating, illness and death. We currently have over 120 members, a healthy number, and we encourage continued growth. There was a time when our branch actually had over 400 members ('back in the day' over 40 years ago). Let's share the many incredible things our GWA-AAUW branch offers to members (Interest Sections), scholarships to women moving from a community college to an accredited 4 year college/university, high school scholarships, iPads for selected 8<sup>th</sup> grade girls unable to attend Tech Trek, Math Science Conference for 400 girls in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade from 26 different schools, conferences, connection to California State AAUW and National AAUW online trainings, research, interesting and inspirational speakers at monthly branch meetings. Our GWA-AAUW is definitely one absolutely amazing group of women. It's important to invite other women to join us in our support "to advance equity for women & girls through research, education, & advocacy."

### **Congratulations to our members with 1 to 9 years of service:**

Nine (9) years: Patricia Cuocco, Carole Duff, Christine Heller, Mary Holden, Christine C. Kennedy.

Eight (8) years: Janice Biby, Ann Chambers, Ellen Peck.

Seven (7) years: Diana Clark, Dolores Gonzalez-Hayes, Deirdre Shatzen.

Six (6) years: Debra Benveniste, Earlyne Clemons, Lucia Navar, Helen Rader, Karen Van der Baan.

Five (5) years: Elizabeth Baca, Lucille Householder, Helen Jewell, Mary Knight, Elvira Marshall, Pauline Rogers.

Four (4) years: Kathleen Arriola, Claire Koehler, Irma Perez Houston.

Three (3) years: Kay Clark, Margot Eiser, Bea Myers, Paula Ocampo, Lucille Serrano.

Two (2) years: Belen Duarte-Sousa, Carol Johnson, Kathleen Marin, Linda Oberholtzer, Linda Oubre, Susan Sones.

One (1) year: Amanda Garcia, Marie Hegwer-DiVita, Valenda Holmer, Monica Jolles, Joann Libolt, Anne Luangpraseut, Carla Ramsing Lowinger, Karen Romero, Dee Thorn, Nadine Wilcox



**Greater Whittier Area-American Association of University Women  
MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM for YEAR 2021-2022**

Please fill out completely and mail with check made payable to: Greater Whittier Area AAUW  
Mail/give your check to: Branch Treasurer GWA-AAUW, P.O. Box 5333, Whittier, CA 90607-5333

<b>ANNUAL DUES</b> Please choose Membership type:	<input type="checkbox"/> Paid Life Member \$44	<input type="checkbox"/> Student \$38.81
	<input type="checkbox"/> General \$106	<input type="checkbox"/> Dual \$24
{National Dues \$62 + State Dues \$20 + Branch Dues \$24 = \$106 TOTAL} REMINDER \$80 of YOUR DUES IS TAX DEDUCTIBLE		
<b>To order the following items, please include/add the following to your check:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> I want the yearbook insert mailed to me - \$2 <input type="checkbox"/> I want the AAUW binder, cost \$6 + (if mailed, postage \$5 = \$11)		

**If all your information is the same as in the yearbook, just print your name and write  
"INFORMATION SAME AS LAST YEAR" across the application.**

\*Fill in starred items to update your information. New members must complete ALL information.

Today's Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Do you have a sponsor? If so, who? \_\_\_\_\_

Your Title: Mrs. \_\_\_\_\_ Ms. \_\_\_\_\_ Miss \_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

\*Last Name \_\_\_\_\_ \*First Name \_\_\_\_\_ \*Middle Initial \_\_\_\_\_

Spouse's Name \_\_\_\_\_

\*Address \_\_\_\_\_ \*City \_\_\_\_\_ \*Zip \_\_\_\_\_

\*Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_ \*Cell Phone \_\_\_\_\_

\*Work Phone \_\_\_\_\_ \*Email address \_\_\_\_\_

Degree \_\_\_\_\_ Year \_\_\_\_\_ Major \_\_\_\_\_

College/University \_\_\_\_\_

Degree \_\_\_\_\_ Year \_\_\_\_\_ Major \_\_\_\_\_

College/University \_\_\_\_\_

Degree \_\_\_\_\_ Year \_\_\_\_\_ Major \_\_\_\_\_

College/University \_\_\_\_\_

## HOW TO ZOOM

We will be doing our meetings with ZOOM for the foreseeable future. If you need help downloading ZOOM and logging in, please get with one of the ZOOM tutors who have volunteered to help.

On your computer, go to ZOOM.us and download a free copy. On your smart phone, download the ZOOM app. When you get an invitation to a meeting, click on the link provided and it will take to you the meeting.

If you are having Internet problems or don't have a computer, you can call this phone number listed on the ZOOM invitation under:

Dial by your location  
+1 669 900 9128 US (San Jose)

and you will be able to attend like a conference call. You will need the meeting ID and passcode. There won't be a video, but you can hear, and you can be heard.

If you want to practice before a meeting, please contact a helper.

Kay Clark for PC users 310-890-6510  
Patricia Cuocco for MAC users 562-756-9509  
Paula Ocampo for smartphone users 562-447-7483

Also:

Sharon Heck - 562-858-9253  
Claire Koehler - 714-473-6184

### APRIL IS:

National Poetry and National Humor month.

February is also Keep America Beautiful Month and Lawn and Garden Month.

- *"April, dressed in all its trim, hath put a spirit of youth in everything."*  
-William Shakespeare



# CELEBRATE 2020-2021 LAS DISTINGUIDAS

Since 1967, it has been the privilege of the Greater Whittier Area Branch to bestow the Las Distinguidas Award annually to outstanding women in our community. Las Distinguidas means the distinguished one. The awards are given to exceptional women who have made significant and noteworthy contributions in one or more areas of business, the arts, education, community service, politics and the professions. One hundred sixty “distinguished ones” have been recognized to date.

Due to the ongoing pandemic, this year we are celebrating the 2020-2021 Las Distinguidas women at our April 10<sup>th</sup> meeting. In January 2020, the Las Distinguidas Committee mailed out approximately thirty-five letters inviting organizations to nominate an ‘outstanding woman who has made significant and noteworthy contributions...’ in the above mentioned areas.

We are impressed by the amazing accomplishments of the women who were nominated. Selection is always a difficult decision. This year was not an exception; the choice was not easy, but we have chosen the absolute best. Our Las Distinguidas Committee has selected three very deserving women for our 2020-2021 awards. We will briefly introduce the three awardees in this article and will save the more detailed information for the actual award.

**Petra Schmiske** was nominated by Studio Danza with additional letters of support from Soroptimist International of Whittier and the Women’s & Children’s Crisis Shelter. She has been instrumental in Studio Danza’s incorporation into a 501 (c) (3). Teaching over 2,400 Zumba classes, Petra has generated support for Studio Danza programs, including dance lessons for children who otherwise may not have been able to afford lessons. Additionally, Petra has served on the board of Soroptimist International of Whittier and on the board of the Women’s & Children’s Crisis Shelter for years.

**Linda Eagan** was nominated by The Assistance League of Whittier, where she has served in numerous positions including President. An additional letter of support came from Alpha Xi Delta Sorority at the University of South Dakota. Linda created and managed ALW’s Facebook page, served as webmaster, newsletter editor, and implemented the Work Ability 1 Program, helping youth with disabilities receive work experience at ALW’s Thrift Store. The nomination stated that Linda’s exceptional abilities and personal qualities make everyone around her want to become involved in whatever cause she supports.

**Judith Henderson** was nominated by the Whittier Historical Society. She has served on numerous committees and has been an active member for over 20 years. Judi has been involved in the Whittier community as a member of League of Women Voters, board member of First Day, Whittier Historical Society & Museum, Whittier City School District Educational Foundation, Soroptimists International of Whittier. Her work with Bright & Beautiful Therapy Dogs, Inc. has seen Judi and her beloved dog visiting the Whittier Library, Presbyterian Intercommunity Hospital, and at Oakmont of Whittier.

## 2021/2022 SLATE OF ELECTED OFFICERS

In accordance with the GWA-AAUW bylaws, Sharon Heck, on behalf of the Nominating Committee, presented the proposed slate of 2021/2022 elected officers to the membership at the March 2021 Branch Meeting. The slate will be voted upon at the April 10, 2021 meeting, which will also be the Annual Meeting.

President	Paula Ocampo
President-elect	Nadine Wilcox
Program Vice-President	Claire Koehler
Hospitality Vice-President	TBA
Membership Vice-Presidents	Lynda Richardson Karen Van der Baan
Public Policy	Patricia Cuocco
Treasurer	Kay Clark
AAUW Fund Vice-President	Dolores Seidman
Recording Secretary	Mandy Knight
Corresponding Secretary	Maura Greeley
Past President	Sharon Heck
Myra Long Scholarship Fund Committee (MLSF)	
Treasurer	Kaye Kidwell
Secretary	Carole Restovich
Director	Barbara Gile
Director	Susan Halliday
Director	Sharon Heck
Director	Patricia Dudley
Director	Ann Chambers

# THE SPOTLIGHT



How nice to hear from a member who lives far away and still keeps in touch! Jill Smith provided this snapshot (literally) of life in Colorado:

This storm with over 2 feet of snow is a record for us - the fourth largest blizzard since weather records in 1881 (another banner year - AAUW!!). In 2003 there were 5 more inches recorded, as the 2nd largest and most recent storm.

Sunday, we felt like we were living in a snow globe - it was just swirling all around - and piling up. I have a wonderful neighbor who is a body builder, and she came to shovel my driveway 2 times, but the snow kept falling through the night and it had to be shoveled again on Monday.

My son Josh also shoveled the driveway, I helped for a while and shoveled the walkway to the front door - and the wonderful neighbor and her mother came to help at the end. You should see the mounds of snow on front lawns and piles at the sides of the road (sometimes in front of our driveways - I hate that because when it melts and freezes again it becomes a skating rink).

We're expecting more snow overnight tonight but only 1-2 inches - then a nice warm-up the end of the week - then more snow next week. I'm so glad I don't have to go out in it - to work - or even for meetings! I'm really enjoying ZOOM meetings and bridge games!!





## SECTION INFORMATION

Because of the uncertainty surrounding containment measures for COVID-19, scheduling section meetings will be difficult for the foreseeable future. We suggest that you keep in touch with your Section Chair for updated information.

### MYSTERY MAVENS

Mystery Mavens does not meet in April. Our next meeting will be on Wednesday, May 19, 2021 on ZOOM at 7PM. The book will be *Death on Demand* by Carolyn Hart. Maurine Behrens will lead the discussion. We will also be voting on the five books we will read next year, so send me your nominations with a short description of each book.

If you have any questions, please call or email Sharon Heck. 562-698-0476  
[S.Heck4peace@gmail.com](mailto:S.Heck4peace@gmail.com).



### MODERN TRENDS IN LITERATURE

The next Modern Trends will meet on April 22nd at 7pm. The book will be *American Dirt* by Jeanine Cummins. The discussion will be led by Ann Chambers.

The May meeting will be on zoom. Please email Kristine Yseda at [surfzena@earthlink.net](mailto:surfzena@earthlink.net) for the link.

May 27<sup>th</sup> will be *The Mountains Sing* by Nguyen Phan Que Mai

If you have any questions, please call Georgine Sweeney at 562-631-6698.

## MEMORIES

Memories will meet at the home of Carole Restovich on April 28 at 1:30 PM. We will celebrate this auspicious occasion by writing on something uplifting, such as “How I Fell in Love With” (during the pandemic). Maybe it’s a binge-worthy TV show, maybe it’s your cell phone, maybe it’s Dr. Fauci, maybe it’s cooking. Or maybe you are eager to write on a totally different subject. Go for it! We will be happy to listen. **Carole’s house is behind Whittwood Center at 10413 Portada Dr. Phone: 562-787-0727.** All are welcome (if you’ve been vaccinated).

## INTERNATIONAL CONCERNS

Our International Concerns section is reading a book printed each year by the Foreign Policy Association titled *Great Decisions*. The book contains eight articles on a variety of topics, and we read one article each month.

Our meetings are on the third Thursday each month at 10 AM. On April 15 we will meet by ZOOM at 10 AM and I will be sending you the ZOOM invitation. Our topic for the April 15 meeting will be “The Future of Persian Gulf Security,” chapter 2 in the 2021 *Great Decisions*. If you do not have the book, you might be able to access some information on the Foreign Policy Association website. [www.fpa.org/great\\_decisions](http://www.fpa.org/great_decisions)

Sharon Heck will be leading the discussion on April 15. Everyone reads the material ahead of time, and we have a lively discussion around the topic. If you have newspaper articles or materials, we are happy for you to share them. All are welcome to join us for International Concerns. If you are new to us, send Sharon your email so you will be included on the ZOOM invitation. Her email address is [S.Heck4peace@gmail.com](mailto:S.Heck4peace@gmail.com) or phone 562-698-0476 .

Sharon Heck, co-chair  
Sheryl Crockey, co-chair

## FIRST FRIDAY

I am projecting restarting our First Friday meetings in September. All members, significant others, and guests are welcome. We meet at a member’s home from 6 to 8 PM on the first Friday of each month. You are expected to bring your choice of beverage and an appetizer to share. We visit for two hours and then depart. The hostess provides glasses, plates, coffee, and the home.

This is a great way for new members to become acquainted. It is very informal and a good way to introduce prospective members

We will need hostesses for September 3; October 1; November 5; January 7; February 4; March 4; April 1; May 6; June 3; July 1. We will host December 3.

Please email me with your choice of a date to host. Thank you.

Gwen Woirhaye  
[gwen@woirhaye.com](mailto:gwen@woirhaye.com)

# MORNING BOOK

We do not meet in April, although please be thinking of books to recommend for the 2021-2022 year. I will accept suggestions through Sunday, May 16. Please include the title of the book, the author, number of pages, and a brief description which can easily be found on many websites, including Amazon.

The last two books for discussion this year are *The Jane Austen Society* (Natalie Jenner) on Monday, June 7, discussion led by Gwen Woirhaye; and *The Splendid and the Vile* (Erik Larson) on Monday, July 26, with the discussion led by Dolores Seidman. Further information about these meetings will be in the May and June bulletins.

Ann Topjon, Chair 562-695-6185

## LA CUISINE

I'm hoping that we will be able to renew La Cuisine in September. This is a group that enjoys cooking, eating in company, and socializing about five times per year. We usually have one group dinner including all members and substitutes; one restaurant meal which also includes all; and two or three dinners in homes with eight to twelve at each home, depending on the hostess' choice. Hostesses meet to plan the menu and send recipes to those participating. Regular members are those who are willing to host or assist a host; substitutes are called upon when there is room and of course to the two group dinners.

This group began around fifty years ago with only couples. In recent years we have added singles, so everyone is welcome to participate. The year's schedule will be created during the summer. We encourage new members to join us for good eating and socializing.

PLEASE if you are interested in participating during the coming year, contact me and say whether you can host, assist, or wish to be on the substitute list.

Gwen Woirhaye  
gwen@woirhaye.com

### **IMPORTANT: MEMBER ADDRESS AND NUMBER CHANGES**

Change of address for Brenda Gaumer: 65 Mira Collado: San Clemente, CA 92673

Change of address for Patricia Cuocco: 33 Via Di Mello; Henderson, NV. 89011. Telephone number is 562-756-9509.

APRIL 2021  
GREATER WHITTIER AREA BRANCH CALENDAR

Board Meeting	April 6 (Tuesday)	7 PM ZOOM
AAUW Voting Begins	April 7 (Wednesday)	
Branch Meeting	April 10 (Saturday)	11 AM ZOOM *
International Concerns	April 15 (Thursday)	10 AM ZOOM
Memories	APRIL 28 (Wednesday)	1:30 PM ZOOM

CHECK WITH YOUR SECTION LEADERS FOR UPDATES AND ZOOM INVITATIONS

\* Tune in at 10:30 AM, if you wish to chat with other members.



**NEXT NEWSLETTER WILL BE OUT  
IN LATE APRIL FOR MAY 2021.**

Please consult our style sheet and follow it when preparing your newsletter article. It will save me a great deal of time and work. If you do not have a style sheet, please let me know and I will send you one. Thank you for your cooperation and for sending in your articles by the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month. **All submissions must be in WORD documents as attachments to emails. Please create the document within WORD itself rather than cutting and pasting into WORD. Please DO NOT use TABS. Please, do not type the articles within the email itself. Please give the article a descriptive name, not merely “newsletter article,” and use that name in the subject line of the email. PLEASE do not send articles in Google Docs.**

Please send articles by email on or before the 15<sup>th</sup> of every month, August through May to [patricia@fullerton.edu](mailto:patricia@fullerton.edu)

Newsletter Editor – Patricia Cuocco

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