

# GREATER WHITTIER AREA BRANCH AAUW NEWSLETTER

http://whittier-ca.aauw.net

JUNE 2021





## BRANCH MEETING – ZOOM – JUNE 12, 2021 11 AM

One of the highlights of the AAUW year is the presentation of scholarships to our recipients from Rio Hondo Community College. This year we have chosen five young women who, although facing numerous obstacles, have persisted and succeeded sometimes beyond their own expectations. Each of the eight has agreed to appear via Zoom at our June 12 membership meeting at 11:00 AM. Each will comment briefly on her life and on her future goals. It is always an inspiring event that I'm sure you won't want to miss. Brief biographies of the women appear elsewhere in this newsletter. Fourteen thousand dollars will be distributed among our recipients.

This year the Myra Long Scholarship Fund decided to pilot a scholarship program for high school senior girls, specifically those who attend California High School here in Whittier. At the time of this writing, we have yet to determine the recipients, so you will have to Zoom in on June 12 to see the results. This is an exciting new avenue for Myra Long funds. Ten thousand dollars has been allotted for distribution.

Following the scholarship portion of the program will be the installation of new officers by Sheryl Crockey. Please join us for an inspirational and informative morning....And perhaps our last meeting by ZOOM!

Directions on how to get into ZOOM will be sent to you on Friday, June 11, 2021. The usual reservations, lunch and hotel ambiance will be your own comfortable chair and familiar surroundings. With the continuing drop in covid cases, perhaps we will be seeing each other's faces in the near future. For now, though, enjoy no traffic or parking hassles and just join the meeting with ZOOM.

The meeting starts at 11:00 AM and you can log in starting at 10:30 AM This will give you time to socialize with friends. If you don't have the internet or have an old computer you can call in by phone and hear the whole program.

To ensure you receive an e-mail invitation to the ZOOM meeting contact: Cindy Birt, e-mail Coordinator <a href="mailto:cindybirt@roadrunner.com">cindybirt@roadrunner.com</a>
Sharon Heck, President <a href="mailto:s.heck4peace@gmail.com">s.heck4peace@gmail.com</a>

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Our AAUW year is about to come to an end. What a year it has been with most of our Board and Branch meetings being virtual on ZOOM. In spite of the learning curve for many of us, we had good meetings and some wonderful programs. In May, we heard a wonderful presentation by one of our AAUW Grant winners, Denise Mitchell. She told us of her science research studies at Cal State Riverside which will benefit the high school students she teaches. The grant she received was paid out of AAUW Fund which many of us support. Our Greater Whittier Area Branch (GWA AAUW) designates a certain amount for AAUW Fund each year. This is part of our mission.

Our California State AAUW Annual Meeting was held on ZOOM, Saturday, April 17. Along with business and reports, former State Senator Hannah-Beth Jackson was honored and given the "2021 Equity Champion Award" because of her work on legislation to help those in poverty, especially children. She then gave an excellent speech which lauded the work of AAUW among other calls to action. I was very happy to see her honored in this way.

We have just been informed that the votes have been counted in the AAUW National election. The Board recommended initiative to remove the college degree requirement did not get the required 66.6% vote necessary to enact a by-laws change. It did get 63%. Changes to the Public Policies priorities did pass.

I want to thank everyone who has served as an elected or appointed officer this past year. Everyone rallied round, did their jobs, and contributed to a very successful year. All of you are truly appreciated. Thank you also to those who said yes to a leadership position for this coming year. The new slate of elected officers will be installed at our Saturday, June 12, 11AM Branch meeting on ZOOM. I hope to see many of you and join us for chat time at 10:30AM. Thank you again for a great year.

Sharon Heck, Branch President

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





#### **AAUW Fund Speaker**

This last year the AAUW Fund luncheon was replaced by two webinars, which were held on two dates virtually. While we missed the physical social gathering, the webinars afforded the opportunity for us to still participate and to select a Fund Fellow to speak to our branch.

At our May 8<sup>th</sup> virtual branch meeting our members had the opportunity to meet and hear Denise Mitchell. Denise was among the recipients having received a Career Development Grant to pursue an M.S. degree in Biology and Plant Sciences at UC Riverside..

She has been an educator for 24 years teaching high school students. Denise has influenced many teenagers throughout her career and has used her knowledge of biology and chemistry to help her students interact with the natural world.

Denise Mitchell often receives letters from her students or her students' parents. One such letter came from a student's mother writing a heartfelt letter thanking Denise for opening the world of biology to her daughter. Her daughter, Brittany, graduated from high school in 2005 and in 2019 Brittany received her PhD in biology.

It is important to Denise to sow the seeds of sustainability and care for the world in younger and new generations. Denise had an opportunity to travel with some of her students to Ecuador to visit and spend time in a 100% sustainable community at 10,000' in elevation. The students planted potatoes, sheared sheep and worked the fertile soil along with the indigenous people. This was an opportunity for her students to develop a reverence for the planet, the natural world.

It was during this trip that Denise realized that she needed to return to school after 30 years, as a mother and grandmother, with peers the age of her children. Denise realized that if she was to be a mentor and an influence on young minds then she needed to become a researcher to authentically stimulate the minds of her students, the next generation and stewards of the natural world. Denise then returned to be a graduate student at UCR aligning her research interest in drought resistance native flora.

Congratulations to Denise, recipient of an AAUW California Career Development Grant.

#### **Dolores Gonzalez-Hayes**



## **MLSF SCHOLARSHIPS**

Five women from Rio Hondo Community College have been selected to receive Myra Long scholarships this year. Despite a number of obstacles, they have persevered and will transfer to a four-year college this fall. The following biographies simply hint at their accomplishments.

**Carmen Barbosa** returned to school after many years in the workforce. She has three grown children whom she home-schooled while helping her husband build his business. Following her divorce, she rose to the position of manager in two offices until Covid closed down the company. Her counselor commented that "Carmen is a role model for re-entry students, a natural leader." She will attend Cal State Fullerton in the fall as a Business Administration major.

**Ashley Fragoso** was once told by a doctor that she would need special help all her life due to an epilepsy diagnosis. Through the support of her mother and her own strength of character, she refuted his words and will enter Cal State University at Northridge this fall to major in Sign Language Linguistics and Deaf Cultures in preparation for a career with underserved youth with disabilities. She works in a classroom now with autistic children and has found sign language to be of immense help in communicating with them.

**Melody Greer** is a former foster youth and victim of domestic violence. She worked as a CNA and in other positions at a hospital until Covid reduced the number of workers. Her CNA position and other life experiences have directed her toward a nursing career. She will continue nursing studies this fall at Cal State University at Fullerton. "I am able to show compassion because I know how much people need it when they are feeling most vulnerable." A teacher commented, "She is a great role model not only to her son, but to her fellow classmates." Melody has an 11-year-old son who is her inspiration.

Monique Munoz credits a deep depression she unexpectedly experienced in tenth grade to helping her realize the person she needed to become. She will attend the University of San Diego this fall majoring in biology. She would like to become a cardio-thoracic surgeon. "I want to become a role model for more minority women to become doctors." One of her teachers stated, "She always asked engaging questions and helped fellow students at every turn." Monique never knew what caused her depression or how she managed to come out of it, but believes the introspection it engendered has helped her succeed in college.

**Elizabeth Palacios** lifted her grades from Fs to As after she transferred to Rio Hondo from Long Beach City College. She was inspired by an administration of justice teacher and has been accepted into the program at Rio Hondo College. Her mother supports five children and Elizabeth would one day like to be able to help her financially. In the fall she will transfer to Cal State University at Fullerton to major in Administrative Justice.

We hope you will tune into the AAUW membership ZOOM meeting on June 12 to hear from these remarkable women.

(continued on next page)

# MLSF SCHOLARSHIPS (continued)

This year, we launched a pilot to test the feasibility of scholarship for High School girls. We chose Cal High as our pilot site, for the ease of our ability to work with them. We will likely expand the schools with which we work next year and maybe even the amount we can give. This year's budget was \$10K.

The scholarship pilot program for senior girls at California High has engendered four worthy recipients. The committee was tremendously impressed with the focus and dedication of these young people in the face of a difficult year.

**Kayla Fortis** is a straight-A student headed for Northwestern University with a major in Neuroscience and Global Health. Her ultimate goal is to become a physician. "In life, I know my purpose includes educating, inspiring, serving and healing."

**Samantha Gonzalez** will enroll in Fullerton Community College. She is the top student in Cal High's Culinary Arts Academy and has excellent grades in all her classes. At this point she is undeclared about a major, but "I know I really do want to further my education."

**Ariel Viveros** has been accepted at Cal State Fullerton, loves political science and may one day become a lawyer. She has participated in USC's Upward Bound Program for students preparing for college. "She has a passion for learning and works hard to be her best possible self," says her high school counselor.

**Judy Yu** will be heading to the University of California at Riverside to major in Art (Studio). She has been on the Honor Roll every semester and, according to her counselor, Judy is "an out-of-the-box thinker and problem solver...well equipped to become a leader."



## **MEMBERSHIP MATTERS**

Current membership renewal shows that GWA-AAUW has approximately 41 members whose membership will expire on June 30, 2021. As of today (5/15/2021) 59 members have renewed and approximately 15 of 24 Lifetime members have renewed for Branch. Seems to be some confusion on this. Paid lifetime members must still register/pay for their state and branch dues (\$44.00) until they reach 50 years membership, when they become Honorary Lifetime Members and owe no dues at all. Be sure to renew ASAP, before the end of June, when the 2020-2021 membership expires.

All members are *super* encouraged to update their GWA-AAUW Questionnaire. If you need your old one to help you know what you've already stated I can scan it & email it to you. Please encourage your GWA-AAUW friends to also update theirs.

The Membership Committee is encouraging all members to fill out the Questionnaire found in this June Newsletter and email, U.S. mail, or give in person to Susan Halliday, Pauline Rogers (Membership Co-Chairs). The information is needed so that when a committee is looking to honor someone the information will be available. Also, if a committee might be looking for someone with experience in a specific area they would have information available. If you have a resume (even an old one), please include it with your Questionnaire. We can easily forget various committees or projects, awards, or offices we held in the past, so a resume can definitely help jolt our memories. If you filled out a questionnaire a few years ago and can't remember what you put, just give Susan Halliday a call and she can send you a copy of your old one.

Susan Halliday and Pauline Rogers, Co-Membership Vice Presidents



## 2020-2021 GWA-AAUW Membership Questionnaire

Please print or fill in with text. Use the back of this paper if you need more space information.

Elected Offices held in AAUW  Branch  Year (app	roximate is ok) continue on back of paper
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Appointed Offices held <u>Branch</u> Year (app	
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Committee / Section Chair Positions Branch Year (app	roximate ok)
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Committee / Section Chair Participation Branch Year (app	roximate is ok)
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Projects for AAUW Worked on/Completed	
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Community Activities (Clubs, Volunteering, etc)  Organization Year (s)	approximate is ok)
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What would you like to see at branch meetings or at sections? What areas are of interest to you?	



#### <u>Greater Whittier Area-American Association of University Women</u> 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

ANNUAL DUES Please choose Membership type:	Paid Life Member \$44	Student \$38.81			
	General \$106	Dual \$24			
{National Dues \$62 + State Dues \$20 + Branch Dues \$24 = \$106 TOTAL} REMINDER \$80 of YOUR DUES IS TAX DEDUCTILE					
To order the following items, please include/add the following to your check:					
I want the yearbook insert mailed to me - \$2					
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 ir	formation. New i	members must com	plete 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 a	ddress	
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## **PUBLIC POLICY**

In April, we addressed the issue of transgender athletes and fairness. The following article was written by Archana Manier, an AAUW-CA Public Policies Committee member. I thought you might enjoy reading it.

AAUW California supports "freedom in definition of self-identity" as critical to ensuring justice for a diverse and inclusive society. One group that is consistently denied this freedom is black transgender and gender non-conforming individuals. Over the past several years, increasing attention has been focused on the multitude of ways in which these individuals encounter marginalization and discrimination.

A recent study by the National Center for Transgender Equality addressed these forms of discrimination through the National Transgender Discrimination Survey. The study highlighted a variety of economic, safety, and physical and mental health challenges faced by transgender and gender non-conforming individuals. Black transgender people had unemployment rates four times the rate of the general population and twice the rate of transgender people at large. A startling 41% of black transgender or gender nonconforming individuals said they had experienced being unsheltered. Black transgender individuals suffered extreme poverty at a rate of 31% which is twice that of transgender individuals of all races and eight times the general US population. Furthermore, 50% of black respondents who attended school while expressing their transgender identity or gender non-conformity reported harassment in the survey. Nearly half of black respondents to the survey had attempted to commit suicide and more than 20% were living with HIV compared to 0.60% of the general population. The findings highlight the profound challenges faced by black transgender and gender non-conforming individuals and point to the need for social justice advocates and government officials to address the intersection between race and gender identity to assure equity of transgender or gender non-conforming citizens.

AAUW members can address the challenges faced by black transgender and gender non-conforming individuals by advocating for legislation that assures an even playing field and addresses the unique housing and healthcare challenges faced by this population. These will help us achieve AAUW-California's public policy goals of equality, inclusiveness and financial security for all women.

 $\frac{https://www.thetaskforce.org/new-analysis-shows-startling-levels-of-discrimination-against-black-transgender-people/}{}$ 

I have a suggestion. Please consider putting a reminder or "note to self" to visit the Two-Minute Activist page on the AAUW website on a regular basis. Go to <a href="https://www.aauw.org/act/two-minute-activist/">https://www.aauw.org/act/two-minute-activist/</a> and take action on the policy issues important to AAUW members.

Patricia Cuocco Public Policy Chair

## **TECH TREK**

The Tech Trek Committee is proud to announce the recipients of our iPad awards:

#### East Whittier Middle School

Amanda Gallegos, Angelina Gonzalez, Hayden Lamothe, and Alondra Ruiz

#### Los Nietos Middle School

Valentina Gomez, Breanna Gonzalez, Ailani Guerro, and Nydia Palacios

Schools each nominated six 7<sup>th</sup> grade girls to submit teacher recommendations and an application/essay. We held ZOOM panel discussions with the two schools and the committee selected four girls from each school to receive an iPad, keyboard, and a two-year Apple assistance agreement. The other two applicants were honored with \$100 Amazon gift cards in recognition. We met with the girls, their family members, principals, and other AAUW members to acknowledge their accomplishment and receive their awards. Thank you once again to the Myra Long Scholarship Fund for their generous support.

Christine Chacon Kennedy, Pat Dudley, and Ann Chambers

**Tech Trek Committee** 



## **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

## JUNE MISCELLANY

In June, we celebrate all of the wonderful fathers in the world. Happy Father's Day. June is also National Men's Health Awareness month, Alzheimer Awareness Month and Brain and Aphasia awareness month.

"In early June the world of leaf and blade and flowers explodes, and every sunset is different."

— John Steinbeck, *The Winter of Our Discontent* 

Enjoy the summer! Stay safe!

### THE SPOTLIGHT



Dolores Gonzalez-Hayes reports that husband, Glen, came through shoulder replacement surgery in May. He is facing six to eight months of recovery. Ouch! Hang in there, Glen.

Carol Shupek let us know that her husband John, who has had serious heart problems as previously reported, survived his risky aortic valve replacement surgery on Friday, May 21. He suffered a post-op bleed (serious), but the docs were able to save him. Carol and her family are grateful for prayers and good wishes, so keep them coming.

As for summer plans, Kay Clark will be travelling to Kentucky, Illinois and Wisconsin to visit friends and family. The highlight will be meeting twins, great-nephew Rainer and great-niece Thea born last year on 3/13/2020. Pictures, please!

Mandy Knight has two items for us. First, she is looking forward to spending time in the Sierras this summer. She tells us, "My great grandfather began this family tradition when he purchased cabins in an idyllic spot nestled between June Lake and the base of Tuolomme Meadows. The lake sits at 8,500 ft. and is an easy walk from the cabins. It's the perfect place to leave the electronic world behind and enjoy the best nature has to offer. I'm hoping to make 3-4 trips between June and October with assorted family and friends."

Mandy also reports that her daughter, Molly Knight, will be part of the Whittier Public Library Foundation's Virtual Author series fundraising efforts in June. Her book, *The Best Team Money Can Buy*, about the Los Angeles Dodgers, was published in 2014. Growing up in Whittier. she spent countless hours in the "big" library when the smaller Whittwood Branch didn't have what was needed for a school project. Mandy says she loves the full circle feel of this!

Recently, our member, Cherie Heck Trapani, attended a five person dinner party which included U.S. Representative Linda Sanchez. Cherie was presented with a certificate because she served as a judge for the 58<sup>th</sup> District art contest for high school students. The winning art work is displayed at the U.S. Capitol for a year. Congratulations Cherie! (see the photo of Cherie with Linda Sanchez, below).



Spotlight on all of us, the fabulous women of the GWA-AAUW. Through our collective generosity, hard work and fiscal prudence, we were able to positively impact the lives of 17 women and girls. See the MLSF Scholarship and Tech Trek articles for the details.

Yay, us! Keep up the great work so we can help more women and girls next year!

## 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**

Our last meeting for the year was held on May 19, 2021, at the Mission Square restaurant in Whittier. We meet every other month on the third Wednesday evening. Hopefully, we will continue to meet at a restaurant beginning on Wednesday, September 15 in the evening. There will be more information in the September newsletter.

Our books for the coming year include:

September 15, 2021

<u>The Shaman Sings</u> by James D. Doss reviewed by Gwen Woirhaye November 17, 2021

<u>A Morbid Taste for Bones</u> by Ellis Peters reviewed by Brigitta Weger January 19, 2022

<u>The Secret of the Old Clock</u> by Carolyn Keene reviewed by Mandy Knight March 16, 2022

<u>Murder at the Palace</u> by Margaret Dumas reviewed by Jackie Brearley May 18, 2022

Girl Waits with Gun by Amy Stewart reviewed by Sharon Heck

If you have any questions, please call or email Sharon Heck. 562-698-0476 S.Heck4peace@gmail.com Sharon Heck



## 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 10AM. On June 17 we will meet by ZOOM at 10 AM and I will be sending you the ZOOM invitation. Our topic for the June 17 meeting will be "The Coldest War: toward a return to Great Power competition in the Arctic," chapter 4 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.

Ann Chambers will be leading the discussion on June 17. 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 me your email so you will be included on the ZOOM invitation.

S.Heck4peace@gmail.com 562-698-0476

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



## **FIRST FRIDAY**

First Friday parties will resume September 3, providing we have a hostess. We also need hostesses for November 5, January 7, February 4, March 4, May 6, June 3. Please email me with your choice.

Gwen Woirhaye gwen@woirhaye.com



## **MORNING BOOK**

There will be no meeting this month. Our last meeting for discussion this year will take place on Monday, July 26, at 10 AM. We will meet via ZOOM. The book to read is <u>The Splendid and the Vile</u>, by Erik Larson, and the discussion will be led by Dolores Seidman. Further information, including the ZOOM link, will be sent closer to the date. If you do not regularly get the Morning Book emails and wish to participate, please let me know, and I can send you the information.

Hopefully we will be able to start scheduling in-person meetings in the fall. Stay tuned!

Ann Topjon, Chair 562-695-618





## **MEMORIES**

Memories will meet at the home of Barbara Gile on June 23 at 1:30 PM. A suggested topic is "Experience(s) in Childhood that Most Affected Me." As usual, any topic that prompts you to write is welcomed. Anyone who enjoys writing for organization of thought, catharsis (especially in the Time of Covid), stimulation of the brain or just plain fun is welcome to attend. We read our written pieces aloud to an always appreciative audience. Please join us. Questions: call Carole Restovich at 562-787-0727.

#### JUNE 2021 GREATER WHITTIER AREA BRANCH CALENDAR

Board MeetingJUNE 1 (Tuesday)7 PM ZOOMBranch MeetingJune 12 (Saturday)11 AM ZOOM \*International ConcernsJune 17 (Thursday)10 AM ZOOMMemoriesJune 23 (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 AUGUST FOR SEPTEMBER 2021.

Please consult our style sheet and follow it when preparing your newsletter article. It will save 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

Newsletter Editor – Patricia Cuocco

Greater Whittier Area -American Association of University Women PO Box 5333 Whittier, CA 90607- 5333