

# Holiday Open House


Saturday, December 16<sup>th</sup>, 2023

Home of Diane Stauffer: 3615 Cumberland Court, Stockton

A Holiday Open House - what fun! On Saturday, December 16<sup>th</sup>, AAUW members and friends are invited to gather at the home of member Diane Stauffer from 1-4pm. This festive event serves as our December Branch Meeting. There is no charge for this event!

Enjoy shared food and complimentary beverages as you mingle with AAUW members and friends. Expect to be contacted by your AAUW caller so that we have an idea of how much food and drink to serve.

You can also indicate that you are planning to come by contacting reservation chair Betty Parsons at 408-309-8958 or [bjpars\\_95120@yahoo.com](mailto:bjpars_95120@yahoo.com)

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We affirm and promote the inherent  
worth and dignity of every person and  
are a welcoming congregation.

# President's Message



## PEACE ON EARTH?

“Peace on Earth” is a sentiment echoed often during the holiday season. However, this hope seems to grow more and more unlikely ever to be reality.

There have been approximately 3,400 years of recorded human history. Historians have acknowledged that peace has been elusive, at best, with only an estimated 268 years of peace, a mere eight percent. In fact, those who teach history and write textbooks often divide historic periods into eras of war. An exception was the Pax Romana, the “Roman Peace,” that spanned about 200 years, which occurred because there was no other country to fight, as Rome controlled the entire known world. After the fall of Rome, history has continued to be marred by one war after another.

It seems to be human nature to solve disputes by fighting, whether it is children in a schoolyard or countries at odds. In some cases, people within the same country found reasons to fight each other, including in our own American Civil War.

World War I was supposed to be “the war to end all wars.” This was followed shortly by World War II, the Korean War, Vietnam, and many wars in the Middle East between predominantly Arab nations and the State of Israel. We even had something called a “Cold War.” Recent history has also seen wars in Kuwait, Iraq, Ukraine, Afghanistan, and now, in the Middle East again. Few countries have avoided being affected by war.

Exactly who wins a war? People die on both sides. Both sides spend a great deal of money. There is property damage wherever the war is fought. I’m not suggesting that Hitler didn’t have to be stopped. However, in a way, World War I and the economic upheaval it created helped to create an opportunity for him to come to power.

So, what do we do? I don’t have the answer, and it seems no one does. The attack on 9/11 had to be avenged. Now Israel is waging war on Hamas for their sneak attack on October 7<sup>th</sup>, and innocents in Gaza are caught in the middle. Is there no end? Maybe we could try harder to let the ideal of the United Nations actually work to avoid conflict.

Bob Dylan once wrote “How many times must the cannon balls fly before they’re forever banned? The answer, my friend, is blowing in the wind.” Maybe we should try listening.

Sandra Mazzuola  
President

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# Mentor Program

Our girls have had a busy November! We started off early in the month on November 2<sup>nd</sup> with the *Dinner with a STEM Professional* event sponsored by the San Joaquin County office of Education. Our girls rotated to three different tables where a STEM professional was waiting to talk to them about their vocations and field questions. Some of the girls talked about "a very cool chemist" who actually brought props to dinner (mom would not approve!) that had to do with electrons, etc. that wowed the girls. Along with a pediatrician (always a hit) Dr. Amir Assadi-Rad from Delta College discussed careers in medicine. Ari and Queena were both gifted copies of his book The Nuts and Bolts of Getting Into Medical School. All of the girls are buzzing about the possibilities for their futures!



December will be another busy month starting on December 9<sup>th</sup> when they will spend the morning in a cold warehouse assembling food baskets for the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC). The next Saturday, December 16<sup>th</sup>, will be just for celebrating the holidays together. We will have a midday meal at LaPalma Restaurant followed by the Stockton Civic Theatre's production of "Beauty and the Beast." A great activity to end a great year!



Many of you had the opportunity to meet our girls who served at our first annual Thanks For Giving Tea on November 11<sup>th</sup>. We mentors were each engaged in our own areas of Implementation. Terri Mercer and Rosa Solis were kitchen staff while Paula Almaas was hostess at a table of former girls from our program. These women are now young professionals and we could not be prouder. Two of them are now mentors themselves! I (Pam Mallett-Jones) coordinated the efforts of our girls as servers. The girls were effusive about meeting and talking to some of you and were so surprised at how fun the job was! One of them came to me and said, "I think they like us!"



KATHLEEN M. SOLARI, CPA

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# Public Policy Update

**Update:** On Sept. 25<sup>th</sup>, Gov. Newsom signed AB 1078 into law, which officially prevents school districts from banning books and censoring curriculum based on the materials' depiction of inclusive and diverse perspectives. Among other items, the law -

- adds to the list of included topics in social sciences textbooks: the role and contributions of people of all genders, Latino Americans, LGBTQ+ Americans, and members of other ethnic, cultural, religious and socioeconomic status groups;
- reduces a school district's funding formula allocation if it doesn't provide sufficient instructional materials to fulfill these provisions; and,
- prohibits governing members of school districts from refusing to approve or prohibiting the use of any book or instructional material simply on the basis that it contains inclusive and diverse perspectives.

There is an excellent documentary currently streaming on PBS. It is hosted and produced by sports champion of equality Billie Jean King. "Groundbreakers" weaves together eight athletes' discussions of how their own struggles and achievements shaped women's sports. In addition to Billie Jean King, it features Naomi Osaka, Jackie Joyner-Kersey, Chloe Kim, Nancy Lieberman, Suni Lee, Julie Foudy and Diana Flores. If you can't stream it, it can also be found at

<https://www.pbs.org/video/groundbreakers-1rsodf> until 12/19/23. Celebrate 50 years of female excellence in sports through the eyes of athletes who changed the system!

**Coming up: December 10<sup>th</sup>, Human Rights Day. Stand up for someone's rights today!**

This day commemorates 12/10/1948, when the UN General Assembly adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Many of us are fearful about the way the world is heading and

the foundation of these extremist movements and violence is the disrespect for basic human rights. Wherever we are - on the street, in school, at work, in public transport, in the voting booth, or on social media – we must reaffirm our common humanity. Wherever we are, we can make a real difference. Defend the rights of a refugee or migrant, a person with disabilities, an LGBT person, a woman, a child, indigenous peoples, or anyone else at the risk of discrimination or violence.

<https://www.un.org/en/observances/human-rights-day>.



**DEI: Merry Christmas or Happy Holidays**

At this time of year, there always seems to be a discussion surrounding saying Merry Christmas to everyone or opting for something more inclusive such as Happy Holidays. The following list of holidays that are celebrated during the months of November 2023 through January 2024 may help you to decide what is best for you and the people with whom you interact.

<u>Day</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Culture</u>
Nov. 1, 2	<b>Dia de los Muertos</b>	Mexico
Nov. 1, 2	<b>Diwali</b>	Hindu, Jain, Sikh
Nov. 23	<b>Thanksgiving</b>	U.S.
Nov. 24	<b>Native American Heritage Day</b>	U.S.
Dec. 7-15	<b>Hanukkah</b>	Jewish
Dec. 8	<b>Bodhi Day</b>	Buddhist
Dec. 21-Jan. 1	<b>Yule</b>	Pagan
Dec. 25	<b>Christmas</b>	Christian
Dec. 26-Jan. 1	<b>Kwanzaa</b>	U.S./African Am.
Jan. 1	<b>New Year's Day</b>	International
Jan. 15	<b>Martin Luther King Jr. Day</b>	U.S.
Jan. 21	<b>World Religion Day</b>	Baha'i
Jan. 25	<b>Mahayana New Year</b>	Buddhist

*Please note, this list is not all-inclusive, but a representation of the holidays that are celebrated during the winter months.*



## **Jazmine Rocha, A NCCWSL Scholarship Recipient says Thank You**

I'm Jazmine Rocha, a third-year, first generation, Sociology student at the University of the Pacific. My path was very untraditional compared to my peers at school, my parents didn't have the luxury of finishing high school and my mother gave birth to me at 18 years old. In many ways, I've had a lack of opportunity and never truly felt a sense of belonging in higher education, because the systems aren't designed for people like me. AAUW was generous enough to fly me from Sacramento, California to Maryland to attend an amazing conference, NCCWSL, or the National Conference for College Women Student Leaders! I'd never flown anywhere before, the furthest I'd gone from my home was San Francisco, so imagine my initial reaction when my dear mentor Barbara proposed this event to me. I had numerous questions and worries; Would I make it there safely? What if I fell short knowledge and education-wise compared to my peers? What would I do if I made no friends or if my dietary restrictions weren't met? The fear and impostor syndrome weighed heavily on me. Nonetheless, I got on that plane and pursued this opportunity, and am so glad I did. NCCWSL was genuinely such a warm and welcoming place with diverse groups of people and proper organization. The ladies I met varied in backgrounds, education levels, racial identities, sexualities, and so on. As a social caterpillar, I feared I'd be stuck in the dorm room for three days, with no one to talk to and no real connections. The girls I met made me feel cared for and understood in a way only replicated by the drive and comfort of feminine energy. I attended many sessions that dove into the importance of sticking up for oneself and never settling for less as a woman. I learned the importance of determination and pushing restrictions, challenging 'no,' and creating a powerful legacy to help lead other women in my education and career. Though I was extremely hesitant to take this opportunity, I can't emphasize enough how happy I am that I did. As I met amazing speakers, hosts, Women

of Distinction, the AAUW Maryland branch, and my new friends for life, I felt whole. I saw myself in each of the ladies I'd met and our shared struggle and hardships tied me to Maryland and the NCCWSL conference for life. Though the conference itself was powerful, the effects it had on me months later were somehow even more impactful. Since then, I've shared with the people around me that my life began when I left Maryland. Granting me this chance allowed me to reach outside of my comfort zone and shoot for the stars, it provided me with a new perspective, more knowledge, and genuine warmth in a space curated for girls like me. To make a long story short, I learned three important lessons across the country. One, women need women, we need each other to uplift, understand, and connect souls. We all share such a strong, valuable identity that allows us to experience hardship and discrimination while simultaneously allowing us to feel empowerment and strength not just in our education but our everyday lives. Two, we need to push boundaries and limitations. We reserve the right to push back and question others, understanding where their doubt lies and prove that we belong. Lastly, grasp onto every opportunity possible. Meeting such perseverant ladies helped me understand how courageous and excited women can be. We deserve every opportunity out there and it's mine, and your, responsibility to advocate for ourselves and grab life by the horns. Thank you, AAUW, and my amazing mentor, for allowing me such an amazing opportunity. I'm so genuinely appreciative to have been able to attend and I can't wait to see what the future holds for AAUW, NCCWSL, and the effects it will have on women like me. Thank you.

## **Directory update:**

Please welcome New Member:

**Sarah Howard**

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**Vision:** AAUW will be a powerful advocate and visible leader in equity and education through research, philanthropy, and measureable change in critical areas impacting the lives of women and girls.

**Mission:** **AAUW advances equity for women and girls through advocacy, education, philanthropy and research.**

**Value Promise:** By joining AAUW, you belong to a community that breaks through educational and economic barriers so that all women and girls have a fair chance.

## *December Calendar*

Day	Date	Time	Event	Location/Contact
Mon	11	6:00pm	December Board Meeting	Online via Zoom
Sat	16	1:00-4:00pm	<b>Holiday Open House</b>	3615 Cumberland Court