



THE CONNECTION
WEST CONTRACOSTA BRANCH

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITY WOMEN
 Advancing equity for women and girls through advocacy, education, and research
westcontracosta-ca.aauw.net <<http://westcontracosta-ca.aauw.net>>

VOLUME XXXII

NEWSLETTER 4

JANUARY-FEBRUARY 2016



COME TO HEAR TERESA LE YUNG-RYAN AT OUR JANUARY MEETING

Saturday, January 16th, 10:00 a.m.
Christ Lutheran Church
780 Ashbury (at Stockton), El Cerrito

At our January 2016 meeting, author **Teresa LeYung-Ryan** will celebrate new beginnings, January “Self-Love Month,” and **AAUW’s** history of empowering women. Teresa uses her mother-daughter novel, **“Love Made of Heart,”** and her monologues, **“Talking to My Dead Mom,”** to encourage adult children of mentally ill parents to speak openly about the stigmas. She says, “Reach out, not stress out.” The California School Library Assn. and the California Reading Assn, recommend **“Love Made of Heart”**; it is used in Women in Psychology, First-Year Composition, and Advanced Composition ESL classes. Copies will be available for purchase at the meeting and are also at public libraries. She is a member of the California Writers Club and the Women’s National Book Assn. and the author of **“Build Your Writer’s Platform and Fanbase in 22 Days.”** For more information, visit <http://WritingCoachTeresa.com> and www.youtube.com/user/TeresaLeYung and <http://LoveMadeOfHeart.com/BLOG>.

Diane Ichiyasu, Program Co-VP

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***NAOMI WALENTA, A GLOBAL INFRASTRUCTURE CAPACITY
PLANNER AT GOOGLE, WILL SPEAK AT OUR FEBRUARY MEETING
ABOUT OPPORTUNITIES FOR WOMEN IN TECH INDUSTRIES***

**Saturday, February 20th, 10:00 a.m.
Christ Lutheran Church
780 Ashbury (at Stockton), El Cerrito**

Naomi Walenta grew up in Kensington and El Cerrito. She attended Portola Junior High School, where our late member, **Florence Yaffe**, taught her and helped to awaken her interest in science. She attended **UC Berkeley**, where she obtained a BA and MA in Medieval History. Naomi spent her junior year at the University of Vienna, and she speaks fluent German. She followed her passion for History in college, thinking she could teach in the winter and travel to Europe every summer. But disillusioned with the realities of academic life, she left Cal before obtaining her Ph.D. and obtained a “real job” as a “Y2K” Project Coordinator at Clorox in Oakland. She learned the Project Management trade, while her interest in technology blossomed. Lured to Silicon Valley, she managed more and more technically challenging projects, first for eBay, and now for Google. Today, she forecasts and manages hardware capacity in Google Data Centers around the world.

More about Google Data Centers:

<http://www.google.com/about/datacenters/>

Explore a Google data center with Street View:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=avP5d16wEp0>

Naomi will speak about opportunities for girls and women in the Tech world. She particularly wants you to know about the **Google RISE Awards**. Google sponsors an annual grants program for nonprofit organizations worldwide that promote computer science education opportunities. These efforts reach K-12/pre-university students, with an emphasis on girls and minorities who have historically been underrepresented in the field. See the web site below for more information.

<http://googleforeducation.blogspot.com/2016/01/google-rise-awards-are-open-inspire.html>

The deadline for submissions is **Friday February 19**, one day before Naomi speaks to us. If anyone wants to apply on behalf of an organization they work with, they should be aware of this deadline. Google has given a grant to the California Girl Scouts to develop a program that will enable girls to learn coding. Naomi will also speak about internships and other opportunities in the tech field.

The Editor



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Hello, members, and welcome to good times at **AAUW** in **2016!**

The New Year has begun, but allow me to look back and see our accomplishments in 2015:

Our Branch sent eight seventh-graders to **Tech Trek** camp along with one member volunteer. Later we heard rave reviews from the campers themselves. Thanks are due to the **Tech Trek** Committee headed by **Roberta Montgomery** and **Marsha Weintraub**.

Our members have volunteered many hours at local public schools in the **Read Aloud Program**, reading to kindergarten through third grade students. Thanks go to **Judy Sam** and to all her volunteers.

We have supplied children's books to the **Read Aloud Program** and the **Grant Birthday Book Project** for first and second grade students.

We have helped to support two students who graduated from **Contra Costa College** and moved on to four-year colleges with \$1,500 grants.

Our Branch participated in **AAUW's** launch of the nation's first free citywide salary negotiation program for women.

We learned from **Floyd Sam** about **AARP's** help with tax returns. We also heard from **Supervisor John M. Gioia** about his work as a **Contra Costa County Supervisor**. He told us about the **Family Justice Center** and other projects to prevent violence against women and children.

Five women joined our Branch in 2015. We welcome them and hope they will thrive here.

Next month we will talk about our goals for 2016, the all-important coming election, and how we can help to elect a President and Congress who are supportive of women.

Ellen Mills, President



LAF PLAINTIFF AILEEN RIZO WINS RIGHT TO PROCEED TO TRIAL

LAF-supported plaintiff **Aileen Rizo's** case has survived summary judgment to move ahead to trial. *Rizo v. Fresno County Office of Education* highlights a significant underlying factor that contributes to the wage gap: employers' practice of relying on an employee's prior salary history to set new salary levels. **AAUW** is proud to support the case through our **Legal Advocacy Fund**. The trial is scheduled to begin in January. Read more about Rizo's case on the LAF page and stay tuned to LAF Express for more information: <http://www.aauw.org/what-we-do/legal-resources/strategic-case-support/laf-cases/>

Ellen Mills, President (taken from AAUW)



CULTURE CORNER for JANUARY-FEBRUARY 2016
by Betty Ann Barnett

January 4 through February 29:

- **“Jane Eyre”** (Jan. 4, 13, 25; Feb. 3, 7 PM) (adaptation of Charlotte Bronte novel)
- **“Skylight”** (by David Hare) (January 6, 7 PM)
National Theatre Live from London
- **“The Winter’s Tale”** (by William Shakespeare)
(Jan. 9, 10 AM; Jan. 20, 1 & 7 PM; Jan. 27, 7 PM; Feb. 1 & 29, 7 PM; Feb. 20, 10 AM)
Kenneth Branagh Theatre Company Live)
Cerrito Theater (Rialto Cinemas), 10070 San Pablo Avenue, El Cerrito
Telephone: 273-9102, or see www.rialtocinemas.com

January 12 through March 3:

- **“Lewis Watts: New Orleans”** (photos of New Orleans)
- **“Family Portraits”** (artists across California share their family portraits)
Reception February 6, 2-5 PM
Richmond Art Center, 2560 Barrett, Richmond
Telephone: 620-6772 or see www.therac.org

January 22 through February 20:

- **“The Gamester”** (a comedy/farce by Freyda Thomas)

March 25 through April 23:

- **“The Elephant Man”** (by Bernard Pomerance)
Fridays and Saturdays at 8 PM; Sunday at 2 PM
The Masquers Playhouse, 105 Park Place, Point Richmond
Telephone: 232-4031 or see www.masquers.org

January 23 through March 19:

- **“The Black Panther Party”**
Reception January 23 (free admission)
Richmond Museum of History, 400 Nevin Avenue, Richmond
Telephone: 235-7387 (museum) or see www.richmondmuseumofhistory.org

Through January 29:

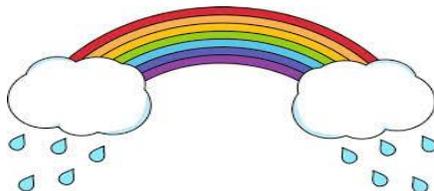
- **“Abstract Preferences”** (Main Gallery & Backroom)
- **“Linear Paths: Wall Objects from Anthony Pinata”** (Annex Space)
- **“The NIAD Sketchbooks”** (Storefront)
Reception, Saturday, January 9, 12:30-3:00 PM)
NIAD, 551 23rd Avenue, Richmond
Telephone: 620-0290 or see www.niadart.org

Through January 31:

- **“Collective Voices”** (Arts of Point Richmond)
(See Pt. Bolinas by Joe Bottomly, above)
San Pablo Art Gallery, 13831 San Pablo Ave., Maple Hall, Civic Center, San Pablo
Telephone: 882-8673 or see www.ci.san-pablo.ca.us

February 12 through March 6:

- **“The Clean House”** (by Sarah Ruhl; directed by Erin Merritt;
Fridays & Saturdays, 8 PM, Sundays, 2 PM
Contra Costa Civic Theater, 951 Pomona (at Moeser), El Cerrito
Telephone: 524-9132 or see www.ccct.org



JANUARY-FEBRUARY ACTIVITIES

Board Meeting: The next Board meeting will be on **Tuesday, January 12, 2016, at 2:00 PM**, at the home of **Sue Walenta** (526-4383), 737 Bay Tree Lane, El Cerrito. The following Board meeting will be on **Tuesday, February 9, 2016, at 2:00 PM**, at the home of **Ellen Mills** (526-5815), 1648 Oak View Avenue, Kensington. Please call **President Ellen Mills** (526-5815) for more information.

Afternoon Books: The group usually meets on the **fourth Monday** of each month at **1:30 PM**. We have changed the date of the January meeting to **Monday, February 1, at 1:30 PM**, at the home of **Sue Walenta** (526-4383), 737 Bay Tree Lane, El Cerrito, where we will discuss *Brooklyn* by Colm Toibin. We have also changed the date of our following meeting to **Monday, February 29**, at the home of **Maria La Forge** (527-4378), 240 Columbia Avenue, Kensington, where we will discuss *The Goldfinch* by Donna Tartt. All are welcome — please join us!

Daytime Bridge: This group usually meets at **1:00 p.m.** on the **third Friday** of the month. The next meeting will be on **Friday, January 15**, at the home of **Ellen Mills**, 1648 Oak View Avenue, Kensington. The following meeting will be on **Friday, February 19**, at the same time and place. All levels of players are welcome. Any bridge player who would like to join the group should contact **Ellen Mills** at 526-5815.

Global Interests Group: The group meets on the **second Monday of each month from 1:30 to 3:00 PM** at the home of **Ellen Mills** (526-5815), 1648 Oak View Avenue, Kensington. The group's next meeting will be on **Monday, January 11, from 1:30 to 3:00 PM**. The following meeting will be on **Monday, February 8**, at the same time and place. Newcomers are welcome to join. All those attending should come with a four- or five-minute presentation on some recent global event to share with other attendees during the first part of the meeting. For further information, if you have any questions, or if you wish to bring a guest, please contact the group's coordinator, **Marty Sarbey de Souto** at 925-304-2022 or josemarty@yahoo.com.



WELCOME TO NEW MEMBER

Please welcome another new member: **Mary Ghidella**. Her contact information is:

Mary Ghidella

7424 Potrero Avenue

El Cerrito 94530

Phone: (510) 236-2928

Email: mdghidella@sbcglobal.net

Education: Holy Names University

Roberta Montgomery, Treasurer



TECH TREK NEWS

The kick-off meeting for our 2016 Tech Trek Program is Tuesday, January 19, at 10 AM, at the home of Marsha Weintraub (644-0320), 1080 Park Hills Road, Berkeley. Consider joining the Team. We can use more volunteers to work with the West County schools on the nomination, selection, and processing of the seventh grade girls we will sponsor to attend the **2016 Tech Trek Science and Math Camp** at **Sonoma State University** from **June 19-25**. Let us know if you want to work on the **Tech Trek** selection team. We also provide a camper orientation/reception at the EC Denny's on **June 11** and the camper follow-up presentations at the September meeting.

Tech Trek continues to be a major program for our Branch. This year we will be sponsoring **nine girls** from the **WCCUSD Middle Schools** (Crespi, DeJean, Helms, Hercules, Korematsu, Pinole, Mira Vista (NEW), and Stewart). The Branch works closely with the middle school math and science teachers to identify seventh grade girls who will benefit from the **Tech Trek** experience. Each nominated girl completes an application, writes an essay, and is interviewed with a parent. For the selected girls, the **Tech Trek Science and Math Camp** is often a life-changing experience.

In addition to selecting the girls, raising the money to send them is very challenging. It gets increasingly difficult to get donations from businesses, since **Tech Trek** doesn't meet the grant application criteria. **Bio-Rad Laboratories** was the only company to give us a donation last year. We therefore depend more on the generosity of our Branch members and family/friends. Special thanks go to last year's Branch donors: **Lanice Clark, Susan Duncan, Susan Forsythe, Lita Fries, Mimi Fruhan, Diane Ichiyasu, Carolyn Linnard, Marion McIntire, Ida Michael, Ellen Mills, Phyllis Jean Niehaus, Patricia Player, Judy Sam, Marianne Selph** and **Virginia Summerer**.

The goal of our **Tech Trek Program** is to make the opportunity available to all **WCCUSD** seventh grade girls and to sponsor as many qualified girls as possible. Due to the past and anticipated generosity of our donors, for 2016 we added another school and increased the number of girls we sponsor to nine. The number of girls we sponsor each year depends on how much money we raise. Our fundraising is year-round, and we are already looking to 2017. Although there was no increase for 2016 in the amount for each **Tech Trek** camper we sponsor (\$900, including the \$50 camper commitment fee), there will most likely be an increase next year, since the \$900 does not cover the actual camper cost.

Donations of any amount to our **Tech Trek** Program are always welcome and fully tax-deductible. **Make your check payable to AAUW**, and then either mail it to AAUW WECC Branch, PO Box 501, El Cerrito, CA 94530, or give it to me (Roberta) at our January 16 meeting. Note that this time donations should not be made to Tech Trek online, either through the MPP Ellen presented in the October newsletter or the AAUW website. There currently is no way online to designate a particular branch or Tech Trek camp, so those donations will go to the Tech Trek general fund.

Thank you in advance for your support.

Roberta Montgomery and Marsha Weintraub, Tech Trek Coordinators



MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN 2016

2016 is a presidential election year, which makes it very important for women, because we have so much at stake in this election. **AAUW** is giving us a chance to learn how our Branch can register, educate, and turn out millennial* women voters nationwide as part of our ***It's My Vote: I Will Be Heard*** campaign. We will try to make sure every woman is registered and has the information she needs to cast her vote.

Kick-off is coming soon, **January 13**, with a webinar open to all members. To watch the webinar:

Go to aauw.org, the national website;
Click on **start 2016 off right**;
Then go to community;
Click on **It's my vote 2016** webinar;
And fill in the registration form.

Date: January 13, 2016

Time: 7:30 PM, ET

Location: Online

*Millennial: a person reaching young adulthood around the year 2000; also known as Generation Y or the Net Generation.

Ellen Mills, President (from AAUW)



FEMINIST RESOLUTIONS FOR THE NEW YEAR

1. Be confident, not sorry. We still live in a world where women are paid less, underrepresented in high paying fields,

and openly harassed, so it is no wonder they feel they have to apologize for every little thing. Instead of succumbing to the stereotypes that women are submissive and weak, resolve this year to **fight back**. In your next class or meeting, think twice before you start a sentence with "sorry."

2. Register to vote. 2016 is an especially important year for voting. Whether or not a woman will be on the ticket, it is likely that women's issues such as reproductive rights, paid family leave, and equal pay will be important topics.

3. Negotiate your salary. Women working full time in the US typically are paid just 79% of what white men are paid. Make 2016 the year you negotiate for an equitable salary.

4. Love your body. Research has proven the damaging consequences of stereotypes, especially on self-esteem and confidence. But beauty takes countless forms, and it is time to embrace all of them.

5. Help young women find their voices. Women's elevation to top positions is relatively rare. Research has found that college women often doubt their leadership potential, so it is important to encourage these young women to help empower them early.

6. Be an ally. In order to create real change, social justice movements need to involve people beyond the affected communities. Resolve to be a supportive ally.

7. Carry the mantle of feminism. The "f-word" has become a hot topic. We must encourage more intergenerational and intersectional collaborations around identity issues like sex, gender, race, and class. Resolve to get involved and take action.

AAUW Advocacy



**REFLECTING ON AAUW'S 2015
POLICY ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

Thanks to the work and generosity of you and all our members and supporters, we can be proud of some impressive AAUW advocacy achievements in 2015. Here are just a few:

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AAUW Action Network members sent over 250,000 emails to their legislators, both statewide and nationally. Your online advocacy efforts amplified **AAUW's** voice far and wide and across the nation. Each Thursday, when the **AAUW** Action Fund's Lobby Corps hits Capitol Hill, they are able to show members of Congress how many of their constituents are **AAUW** activists. Our Action Network was a critical force in furthering our public policy priorities in the states and in Congress in 2015!

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AAUW Action Fund Capitol Hill Lobby Corps made over 1,300 visits to senators and members of Congress on issues important to women and families. Lobby Corps members were toasted by U.S. House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi and Sen. Mazie Hirono (D-HI) in recognition of the corps' 40 years of citizen lobbying.

New Title IX coordinator materials were released this year! After several years of advocating, **AAUW** realized a huge victory when the US Dept. of Education's Office for Civil Rights published the first-ever official tools for Title IX coordinators. These free resources (including a guidance letter and manual) reinforce Title IX coordinators' authority and support their work. **AAUW** was specifically mentioned in the press, from *Politico* to *Huffington Post* and *Inside Higher Ed*. **AAUW** branches across the

country have undertaken a [resource delivery project](#), in which they meet with Title IX coordinators in their communities and school districts to highlight the importance of – and to share – the new materials. Since the project began this summer, more than 50 schools or district offices across 17 states received the Title IX Coordinator Guidance from AAUW members. There will be even more deliveries in 2016!

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AAUW leaders **Bets Brown** (ME), **Christine Siebeneck** (OH), **Corinne Anderson** (MS), **Denny McGuire** (NC), **Mary Modder** (WI), **Deborah Karvey** (GA), **Katherine Burgess** (CO), and **Sharon Bigot** (MN) were a key part of our coalition lobbying efforts when they came to Capitol Hill to advocate for critical civil rights protections in federal K-12 education laws. The bill that was signed into law included several of these important civil rights and gender equity provisions.

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The House Education and Workforce Committee held a hearing on Campus Sexual Assault. **AAUW's Lisa Maatz** was invited to testify at the House Education and Workforce Higher Education Subcommittee Hearing on "Preventing and Responding to Sexual Assault on College Campuses."

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After advocacy by **AAUW** and other groups, the U.S. Department of Justice released much needed guidance on identifying and preventing gender bias in law enforcement's response to sexual assault and domestic violence. The gender bias present in policing results in decreased protection, less robust services, and a diminished response – especially for women of color. The new guidance provides tools and resources for law enforcement while recognizing and addressing biases, assumptions, and stereotypes.

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AAUW released the Fall 2015 edition of [The Simple Truth about the Gender Pay Gap](#), complete with new information and tools about **AAUW's** expanded state policy efforts.

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AAUW released [Solving the Equation: The Variables for Women's' Success in Engineering and Computing](#), with additional recommendations for state and federal policy makers to increase women's participation in STEM fields. **AAUW** hosted a packed briefing at Google, as well as a Capitol Hill briefing, to share the policy recommendations of [Solving the Equation](#).

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President Barack Obama's paid leave executive order includes many **AAUW** priorities, and is the result of years of persistent member advocacy. The president announced his support for many **AAUW** endorsed policies including 1) Healthy Families Act, which would allow millions of working Americans to earn up to seven days a year of paid sick time; 2) a budget plan to help states create paid leave programs; 3) a presidential memorandum that will ensure federal employees have access to at least six weeks of paid sick leave when a new child arrives, and proposes that Congress offer six weeks of paid administrative leave as well. **AAUW's** statement was included on the [White House Blog](#) reacting to Obama's proposal for paid sick leave!

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The U.S. Department of Labor issued [final rules](#) prohibiting federal contractors from retaliating against employees who ask about or share salary information. **AAUW** led the fight to secure this executive order, and **AAUW** members from all 50 states submitted over 1,000 comments in support of this rule to the U.S. Department of Labor. This important rule will protect almost 28 million people working for federal contractors.

It took years of hard work and dedication to pass the [Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act of 2013](#). The law's campus safety provisions – sometimes called Campus SaVE or the VAWA Amendments to the Clery Act – are now supported by final regulations that require colleges and universities to take new and better steps to end sexual violence. These critical new rules from the U.S. Department of Education went into effect on July 1, 2015.

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AAUW's annual Title IX anniversary [event](#) on Capitol Hill exceeded expectations with over 200 attendees! It was a bipartisan event attended by 45 congressional and committee offices, 25 advocacy and civil rights organizations, and **AAUW** members. Lobby Corps members were lauded as "**AAUW** Title IX Champions."

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AAUW public policy priorities were included in the 2015 State of Union Address. Our staff was at the White House for the live SOTU watch party with leading White House policy staff. We were very pleased to hear the President urge Congress to support reforms that will provide concrete economic benefits to women and their families — working toward equal pay, expanding care tax credits, establishing paid sick days and paid family leave, making college more accessible and affordable, improving retirement savings, raising the minimum wage, and making investments in education. Following the State of the Union, [Lisa Maatz wrote a blog reacting to the speech](#).

AAUW Action Network
