



THE CONNECTION

WEST CONTRA COSTA BRANCH

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITY WOMEN

Advancing gender equity for women and girls through research, education, and advocacy
westcontracosta-ca.aauw.net

VOLUME XXXXI

NEWSLETTER 2

NOVEMBER-DECEMBER 2025

COME MEET TESS TAYLOR, POET, PLAYWRIGHT, EDUCATOR, TRANSLATOR

Saturday, November 15, 2025

Christ Lutheran Church
780 Ashbury (at Stockton), El Cerrito
10:00 a.m. meeting gathering
10:30 a.m. Talk

We are honored to welcome **Tess Taylor**, nationally acclaimed poet, playwright, educator and translator. Her work appears in the *New York Times*, the *Atlantic* and elsewhere. She taught at UC Berkeley and Queens University Belfast. She served as on-air poetry reviewer for NPR's "All Things Considered" for over a decade. Recently, as El Cerrito's Poet Laureate, she built an ambitious program for poetry in the public schools as part of her community outreach. She is currently an Academy of American Poets Laureate Fellow. Her most recent works include a new play, "Last West: Roadsongs for Dorothea Lange," a heart wrenching translation of Ovid's letters to his wife from exile, and "Come Bite," a forthcoming book. She lives and gardens in El Cerrito

Maria LaForge, Program Co-Chair

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

We continue with our 2025-2026 Programs. On **Saturday, November 15, at 10:30 am Tess Taylor**, 2024-2025 Academy of American Poets Laureate Fellow and former Poet Laureate of El Cerrito will talk. Topics to include: her new play - "Last West: Roadsongs for Dorothea Lange", her translation of Ovid's exile letters to his wife, her poems, and her community and school outreach. See write up Page 1. Then on **Saturday, January 17 at 10:30 am Sheri Krams** will speak. She is the Senior Associate Dean Graduate Education and Postdoctoral Affairs at Stanford University School of Medicine and a Professor of Surgery (Abdominal Transplantation).

Our Board meetings on the fourth Tuesday of the month are via Zoom. The **next Board Meeting is Tuesday, November 18, at 2:00 pm**. All members are invited to attend.

Thanks for all your support. We are very busy people and have many commitments. I appreciate all you do for the Branch. I enjoy working with such special women.

Roberta Montgomery, President

MEMBERSHIP DIRECTORY UPDATES

The Board decided that we would not print a new Directory. We will continue to use the **2019-2020 Directory with gold cover** that Ellen Mills and her husband Paul printed. Member information updates will be published in the Newsletter. I have extra copies of the 2019-2020 Directory. Let me know if you need one. **New member, Genoveva Calloway's contact information is listed below. Seti Sedhardta retired effective July 1. Her new email address is below.**

All changes to date:

CORBIN, ROSEMARY **474 Western Drive, Richmond 94801, (510) 520-0404**

CALLOWAY, GENOVEVA (510) 384-6555, 1529 Costa Ave., San Pablo 94806
genovevacalloway68@gmail.com

DADZIE, MEIGAN **PO Box 7273, Berkeley 94707, greenledger@gmail.com**

ICHIYASU, DIANE **2100 San Pablo Ave Apt 416, Berkeley 94702**

PLAYER, PATRICIA **(707) 603-8518** (new landline phone number)

SIDHARTA, SETI **INDONONA999@gmail.com**

SOUTO-MARTINEZ, MARTHA (Marty) **marthasoutomartinez@gmail.com** (not marty)

WALENTA, SUSAN **1100 San Pablo Ave #306, Albany 94706**

WEINTRAUB, MARSHA **marsha.weintraub@gmail.com** (email in the directory has an extra "e" at the end of her last name)



CALENDAR – MONTHLY EVENTS

NOVEMBER 2025:

CalACS-WCC Virtual Meeting: **Saturday, November 8, at 11:00 am** Dr. Shelby Hatch's talk "*Mapping Heavy Metal Contamination in Chicago's Neighborhoods*". See Write-up Page 4.

Meeting: 10:00 am at Christ Lutheran Church **Saturday, November 15, at 10:30 am** Tess Taylor, nationally acclaimed poet, playwright, educator and translator will talk. Topics to include: her new play, "Last West: Roadsongs for Dorothea Lange", her translation of Ovid's exile letters to his wife, her poems, and her community and school outreach. See Write-up Page 1.

Lunch Group: **Monday, November 17, at Noon** at **ZUT! On Fourth**, 1820 Fourth St, Berkeley (Parking lot in back, ½ block west of building) RSVP Maria (cell: 1-925-899-3278; d.laforge@sbcglobal.net).

Board Meeting: using Zoom **Tuesday, November 18, 2025 at 2:00 pm**. All members are invited to attend.

DECEMBER 2025:

Holiday Party: DATE AND TIME TO BE DETERMINED

JANUARY 2026:

Meeting: 10:00 am at Christ Lutheran Church **Saturday, January 17 at 10:30 am** Sheri Krams will speak. She is the Senior Associate Dean Graduate Education and Postdoctoral Affairs at Stanford University School of Medicine and a Professor of Surgery (Abdominal Transplantation).

Board Meeting: using Zoom **Tuesday, January 27, 2026 at 2:00 pm**. All members are invited to attend.

SUNSHINE

Know someone who needs a note? Sally Dunham is our Sunshine Chair and will send cards on behalf of our branch. If you know of a member in need of a get well, condolence or congratulations card, contact Sally at (510) 758-4094 or sallydunham1@gmail.com.

HEAR SHELBY HATCH'S TALK

Mapping Heavy Metal Contamination in Chicago's Neighborhoods

The California Section American Chemical Society
Women Chemists Committee

Virtual Meeting
Saturday, November 8, 2025
10:30 am Chatting
11:00 am Talk and Discussion

Our member Elaine Yamaguchi has invited us to attend this CalACS-WCC virtual meeting. Information about Shelby Hatch, PhD and her talk is below. All are welcome! Please visit the CalACS website www.calacs.org to register for this meeting. **Register before Thursday, November 6, 12 noon.** Your email address is needed to send the Zoom link, which will be shared with attendees on or before the day of the event via Event Brite.

About the Speaker

Shelby Hatch (she/her/hers) is a scientist focused on the intersections of chemistry, sustainability, and social justice. Shelby is a Weinberg College Adviser and an Associate Professor of Instruction in the Department of Chemistry. She has taught a variety of undergraduate chemistry courses – introductory lab classes, first year seminars, courses for non-scientists, and a capstone laboratory course for chemistry majors – plus firesides on the chemistry of beer & the chemistry of chocolate. Her research involves environmental justice and Youth Participatory Science, which centers and involves students in the entire research process, from creation of a hypothesis through disseminating results once data has been collected and analyzed. Since 2017, she has been a lead collaborator on a National Science Foundation grant Teachers and Students Synergistic Learning Through Youth.

Shelby studies the distribution of heavy metal contamination in Chicago in relation to where low socio-economic status and communities of color are located. She enjoys teaching undergraduate chemistry courses that incorporate sustainability and environmental justice into the curriculum. Shelby is also very passionate about teaching in the Northwestern Prison Education Program (NPEP). She developed a course and compiled an open educational resource textbook for her NPEP chemistry courses, has taught at Stateville Correctional Center, and looks forward to teaching at Logan Correctional Center in the fall of 2022. She received her BA from The College of Wooster and her PhD from The University of Rochester.

Abstract

For over two decades, I have partnered with undergraduate students, environmental justice organizations, Chicago Public School (CPS) teachers and their students, and faculty from various Chicago universities to study heavy metal contamination across the city of Chicago. Projects have ranged from examining contamination caused by particular industries – including the now-shuttered Crawford and Fisk coal-fired power plants – to exploring specific neighborhoods with differing demographics, to zooming in on areas where students live and go to school. Despite this, when we took a comprehensive view of our data, we realized that there were areas of the city where we had never collected even one sample. As a result, we set a goal to collect samples from all 77 community areas in Chicago to aid in answering the broad research question: to what extent is heavy metal contamination in our city correlated with socio-economic, racial, and ethnic demographics?

In this talk, I will discuss our research methods (analytical chemistry, ICP spectroscopy, and geospatial analysis), the collaborative, participatory, nature of the work, and how it is shared publicly, particularly with those most affected, through StoryMaps

