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When: Saturday, May 8, 10:00 a.m.

Where: Zoom

Topic: *Meet the 2021-22 Fellows*

Speakers: **The Fellowship Recipients:**

- Emily Carl
- Poojja Mandke
- Stephanie Valenzuela
- Dominca Whitesell
- Anais Zimmer

The fellowship team consisting of **Nancy Andren, Elizabeth Newell, Joyce Pulich, Ruth Rubio, Mary Ellen Scribner, and Janet Widoff** reviewed twenty-four fellowship applications. As always, the team was impressed by the background and research effort of all the doctoral candidates. Five women were selected to each receive \$3,000 fellowships during the 2021-2022 academic year. Information about the recipients follows on **page 2**. All of the Fellows plan to speak about their work at our May branch meeting. Congratulations to all five Fellows!

Newsletter Editor:

Shirlene Justice
shirlenejustice@gmail.com

**Items for Summer Newsletter
DUE July 21, 2021**

Meet the 2021-22 Fellows

Emily Carl

Emily is doctoral candidate in the clinical psychology program. Her degree requires a year-long clinical internship which she will complete at the Palo Alto Veterans Administration, a teaching affiliate of Stanford. Her dissertation will use a relatively novel statistical approach to evaluate the effect of physical exercise on depression symptoms. Her professional goal is to continue a career that involves research, teaching, and clinical work, likely in an academic medical center. One of her greatest achievements during graduate school is her work with veterans with serious mental illnesses. She spends two days a week doing individual and group psychotherapy with veterans.

Pooja Mandke

Pooja is doctoral candidate in cell and molecular biology. The laboratory where she works was the first to report that apart from the various internal and external sources of DNA damage, DNA structure itself can intrinsically result in genomic instability and contribute to cancer development. The significance of her research for human health is that it will increase understanding of the association between HMGB proteins and non-BDNA sequences. This will provide information that targets biomarkers in the prevention and treatment of cancer. One of her greatest achievements was to establish and lead the Austin Chapter of Graduate Women in Science organization. Her professional goal is to do independent research in an academic setting where she will enhance understanding of cancer development and develop novel strategies to prevent and/or treat cancer in the long-term. Apart from research, Pooja wants to continue to build upon her scientific communication skills and inspire women in STEM through outreach programs.

Stephanie Valenzuela

Stephanie is a fourth year Ph.D. candidate in organic chemistry. Her dissertation work reveals how using a specific set of dynamic covalent bonding pairs can be used to create reconfigurable networks comprised of peptides and nanocrystals. She has complimented her dissertation through the Research Experience for Teachers (RET) program helping to spark a passion and love for chemistry in elementary school teachers working at schools serving low-income families. She helped create the Inclusivity, Diversity, Equity and Accountability (IDEA) Task Force, an organization in the Chemistry Department. This organization focuses on creating a more equitable and inclusive learning environment. Her professional goal is to become a professor at a primarily undergraduate institution working to promote science and mentor students from historically underrepresented groups.

Dominca Whitesell

Dominca is a doctoral student in the geography department. Her dissertation focuses on the gendered and colonial dimensions of neoliberal urban development. She analyzes the geopolitical and geo-economic implications embedded in the dramatic rise of the secondhand clothing industry in Kampala, Uganda. She weaves urban studies, feminist political and economic geography, and qualitative mapping frameworks to develop insights on urbanization, development and neoliberal globalization. One of her greatest achievements is co-forming the University of Texas first feminist geography lab in the fall of 2016. She works weekly with undergraduate researchers to mentor them with their scholarly interests. She is committed to a career in academia where she will support peers, build ethical and activist scholarship and deepen diversity in geography.

Anais Zimmer

Anais is a doctoral candidate in geography. Her dissertation research assesses how physical, ecological and social processes interact to drive ecosystem changes in alpine proglacial landscapes and how these inform the best adaptation strategies. Her research includes the Peruvian Andes and the European Alps, setting up a biogeographical comparison between the two continents. After her Ph.D., she wants to work with an international organization on the overlapping issues of science, conservation adaptation to climate change, and human rights. Pursuing a doctoral degree in her third language and carrying out research in three countries and two continents is her biggest achievement in recent years. As a passionate high mountain enthusiast, she is an ultra-marathon runner and has won several high-altitude races in the Andes and the Alps.



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

May is a month of celebration for our Branch. In May, we:

- Honor our University of Texas Fellowship recipients,
- Install new Branch leaders,
- Award "Named Gift" recognition to acknowledge member service, and
- Announce recipients of the Branch's NCCWSL (National Conference for College Women Student Leaders) Scholarships.

As always, we thank the volunteers who made these awards possible and also those willing to serve in leadership positions.

I have reminders and requests:

- If you haven't yet renewed your AAUW membership, please do it sooner rather than later. That will ease the burden on the Membership committee.
- I have heard that some are tired of Zoom meetings and thinking of not renewing because of that. Have faith! Meeting in person seems near.
- If you are wondering about the program for May's Branch meeting, expect to witness amazing talent and to hear about a variety of topics. Our University of Texas Fellowship recipients are scheduled to speak about their doctoral research.

As previously noted in this column, AAUW has a long tradition of supporting women in obtaining advanced degrees. Fellowships are funded at both the National level and, as with our Branch's University of Texas Fellowships, at the local level. However successful (or not) we feel in our other AAUW initiatives, the Fellowship program is always a winner.

Back to, "Meeting in person seems near."

- At the May Board Meeting, Austin Board members will be discussing the topic of returning to in-person meetings.
- We have heard about discontent over a lack of in-person meetings but also know that some continue to be concerned about getting out.
- AAUW leaders at National and State may give guidance.
- As for in-person Branch Meetings, having already had some lessons with this, we will be cautious about making deposits for meeting rooms. Our decisions have trade-offs.

More to come on this.

Best wishes,
Larayne Dallas, co-President
ldallas@austin.utexas.edu



April Meeting Recap

Our Fragile Early Childhood System: Lessons from COVID 19

COVID-19 has revealed how essential childcare is to our economy and how broken the childcare system is. Our April speaker, Cathy McHorse, Vice President, Success BY 6 at the United Way for Greater Austin opened with some startling statistics about COVID-19's disproportionate impact on women: 22% of all women have left the workforce, including 42% of women with children under the age of 2.

Texas has the least coordinated, most fragmented early care and education system in the country and ranks 45th in the quality of care provided to our youngest and most vulnerable Texans, with funding and regulations coming from multiple sources in Washington and funneling through the Governor's Office to the Health and Human Service Commission, the Workforce Commission, Texas Education Agency and the Department of Agriculture. To learn the details of this convoluted system, check out the Texas fact sheet from the Bipartisan Policy Center at:

<https://bipartisanpolicy.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/Texas-State-Fact-Sheet.pdf>

We learned that childcare costs more than tuition at UT Austin (\$10,582), with childcare costs averaging \$10,600 a year in Austin at a time when young families have the least resources and no time to save. This is only second to housing costs. The demand for childcare exceeds the supply, especially for families with low incomes, creating barriers for parents to enter the workforce. In Travis County, more than one in three children live in a low-income household. Ninety percent of the children under six in low-income households are children of color. Hispanic children are disproportionately impacted with **71%** of Hispanic children under age five living in poverty; 15% of Black children and 10% of non-Hispanic white children under age five also live in poverty.

Quality childcare programs like Mainspring Schools prepare children for future success by being kindergarten-ready. Only 50% of the children in Austin are kindergarten-ready. Multiple studies have shown a return on investment of \$7 - \$13 for every dollar invested in good quality early learning. Our speaker presented compelling arguments for the business case for investing in quality childcare.

COVID-19 has exacerbated the long-standing problem of lack of childcare with only 50% to 60% of the childcare programs open and/or operating with reduced enrollments, but still requiring the same number of staff as before. Austin City Council has recognized the problem and invested \$5 million in local childcare relief grants. But more help is needed to fix this broken system and invest in the youngest and neediest members of our community. Cathy shared the work being done at the local, state, and federal level that need our support. You can learn more and get involved by signing up for the Success by 6 Advocacy Alerts: [Success by 6 Advocacy Alert Sign-up](#)

Recap prepared by Linda Welsh (lawelsh@gmail.com)

May Interest Groups

Bridge Groups, Out to Lunch, Wine Tasters

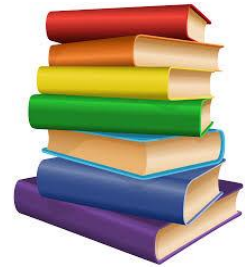
No May Meeting

Art Tours

When: Saturday May 19, 10:00 a.m.
Where: Home of Sharon Babot in Dripping Springs
What: Planning for the 2021-22 program year
To RSVP: Marsha Endahl Kramer, MEKSpirit66@gmail.com or text (512) 906-6566
Directions to Sharon's home will be sent to attending members.

Contemporary Literature

When: Monday May 3, 7:00 p.m.
Where: Zoom
Book: *Whose Story is This? Old Conflicts, New Chapters*
Author: Rebecca Solnit
Leader: Ann Berasley
To RSVP: Mary Ellen Scribner, maryescribner@gmail.com

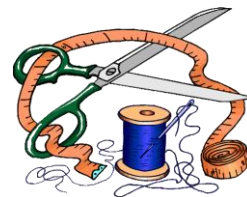


Central Book Club

When: Monday May 10, 10:30 a.m.
Where: Zoom
Book: *The Book of Joy*
Authors: Dalai Lama, Desmond Tutu and Douglas Abrams
Facilitator: Suellen Myers
To RSVP: Mary Lou Bell, maryloubell@gmail.com

Creative Stitchery

When: Wednesday May 19, 11:00 a.m.
Where: Renaissance Hotel, 9721 Arboretum Blvd.
Where: Planning Meeting for 2021-2022
What: No Host Luncheon
To RSVP: Beverly Locklin, bklocklin@outlook.com



Culture and Cuisine

When: Thursday May 20, 6:30 p.m.
Where: Home of Ann Gibbs, 5200 Rambling Range
Theme: Outdoor Cookout and Potluck
Planning for 2021-22 program year
Hosts: Ann Gibbs and Roberta Coffin
To RSVP: Shirlene Justice, shirlenejustice@gmail.com



First Friday Book Club

When: Friday May 7, 10:00 a.m.
Where: Hyde Park Church of Christ, 43rd and Avenue B.
Book: *The Music Shop*
Author: Rachel Joyce
Reviewer: Judy Reinhart
Host: Judy Reinhart
To RSVP: Judy Reinhart, jareinhart@att.net, 512-345-5936

Hiking Group

When: Thursday May 20, 10:00 a.m.
What: Planning for 2021-22 program year
Where: Bastrop State Park, Park Road 1A, Bastrop
Leader: Linda Welsh
To RSVP: Linda Welsh, lawelsh@gmail.com



Mystery Book Club

When: Tuesday May 25, 11:00 a.m.
Where: Zoom
Topic: Author New to Me
To RSVP: Pam Wolfe, piwolfe@yahoo.com



Pears

When: Saturday May 15, 5:00 p.m.
What: Happy Hour on the patio at Carve
Where: Carve, 7415 Southwest Parkway
To RSVP: Milli Stecker, milli1251@gmail.com
RSVP by May 13



Southwest Book Club

When: Monday May 10, 10:30 a.m. - noon
Where: Zoom
Book: *Little Fires Everywhere*
Author: Celeste Ng
Facilitator: Inés García
Host: Home of Inés García, 6310 Abilene Trail
To RSVP: Please RSVP to the emailed calendar invitation and save details to your calendar.

Member Spotlight – Ruth Subramanian

Ruth Subramanian lived in the same Chicago house from birth until a couple of years before her marriage. Her father, a native Texan and UT graduate, was a chemical engineer and her mother was a homemaker. Ruth is the middle of three sisters. She and her husband, Mani, have an adult son living in Austin, who does contract engineering work and is an active volunteer. Two years ago, they moved to Austin to be nearer to him. Their daughter is a free-lance environmental journalist who lives on Cape Cod, Massachusetts, with her husband. She also has two adult stepdaughters.



After high school Ruth attended a two-year community college. Her dad didn't think girls needed more education to get married and raise a family, so she took a job as a secretary at Zenith Radio Corp. Ruth continued to take classes at night in subjects that interested her such as French and philosophy. She continued her part-time studies for five years. While at Zenith, Ruth met her future husband, Mani, a graduate student at Purdue University from India. As a newlywed living on campus with her assistant professor husband, she resumed her college education earning a Bachelor of Arts degree in English with an emphasis in American Literature in 1966. The couple moved to New Jersey where they raised their children. While there, Ruth worked in their church as a secretary for 11 years. In 1988, the family moved to Atlanta, Georgia, where she continued her career as a secretary, working for several different companies. Her last position was as an Administrative Assistant in Major Gifts at United Way. Ruth retired in 2005. After retirement, she and Mani spent five years living in India in her husband's hometown of Chennai (formerly Madras). The highlight of her time there was spending time with his family, especially his mother. While in India, Mani was teaching and running a network management company and Ruth was active in the Overseas Women's Club (OWC), serving as their Membership Chair for several years.

Ruth has a wide-variety of interests. She is a passionate reader and is a member of both the Contemporary Literature and First Friday Morning Book Review interest groups. Her interest in music includes participating in several church choirs and two community choruses. She shared her interest with others by scheduling musicians for a monthly church folk-music "coffeehouse". Ruth also enjoys attending plays and concerts. She is active in environmental issues, and believes in keeping physically active by participating in fitness classes and taking walks. Ruth combines these two interests by her participation in the Hiking Club interest group.

Ruth joined AAUW in 1968 in New Jersey because she supported the mission of equity for women and girls and to meet other educated women. She was an active member of a large New Jersey branch, serving as a Co-Program VP. Later, as a member of a smaller Atlanta suburban branch, she was the Newsletter Editor and compiled the directory. She also kept track of book fair volunteer hours. Books would be collected during the year to sell at the annual book fair. Ruth also listed books for sale on Amazon. Of the three AAUW branches where Ruth has been a member, the Austin branch is the only one that does not conduct a book sale as a fundraiser.

Ruth's advice to young women is to keep physically and mentally active and get involved with and contribute to an organization. As a member of three Austin Branch interest groups, Ruth lives the words she speaks. Ruth is the incoming Membership VP and is looking for a Co-VP. If you are interested in serving in this capacity, please contact Elaine Penn (epenn9915@gmail.com), Nominating Committee Chair.

Membership Renewals are Underway

It's that time of year again. Renewal time.

In early April, renewal notifications were distributed via email. As of April 21, we had 39 individuals to renew online. THANK YOU. We also received seven checks in the mail. Now all we need is about 120 of the rest of you to respond!

Start watching your inbox. Within a day or so, you should be receiving an email from memberinfo@aauw.org. The subject line will be AAUW Membership Renewal for Fiscal Year 2022, followed by your membership number.

This email includes a personalized invoice and link to renew online. Grab your credit or debit card, click on the link and you will be done in a matter of minutes.

For those wanting to send checks, mailing instructions are included at the bottom of the email you received from memberinfo@aauw.org. Just print out the form, write a check and mail with the form to the address provided. Or, use the form included at the end of this newsletter.

If you have already paid your membership renewal online or mailed a check any time up until April 21, you will not receive this notice. The same is true if you are an Honorary Life Member. In recognition of 50 years of membership, you do not owe any dues!

Anyone else who does not receive this email – check your Spam folder or any other email accounts you may use. Then – if you can't find the renewal notice, please send a note to aauw-atxmembership@aauw.net.

Roberta Coffin, 2020-2021 Membership Co-VP
aauw-atxmembership@aauw.net



[Renewal Form](#)
[Click here!](#)

AAUW Elections – Remember to Vote! Before May 17, 2021

All members are encouraged to vote in the AAUW National election concerning the membership requirement in our bylaws and our Public Policy Priorities. You should have received your unique voting number in your email around April 7. Voting continues through May 17, 2021.

For voting information:

<https://www.aauw.org/resources/member/governance-tools/national-election/faq/>

For answers to questions about the bylaws change:

<https://www.aauw.org/resources/member/governance-tools/national-election/open-membership-toolkit/>

For information about updates to our Public Policy Priorities:

<https://www.aauw.org/resources/member/governance-tools/national-election/2021-comment-ppp/>

Yearbook Due Dates



It happens every year. Soon Flynn and her team are already planning the 2021-22 yearbook. Here is the list of submission deadlines. Please make a note of when information is due and submit it to Soon on-time. This is one way we can all help to make the job easier for the dedicated yearbook team.

Depending on your area of responsibility, please submit the following lists and information to Soon Flynn (smerz_2000@yahoo.com) no later than **June 15**.

Incoming Executive Board • Committee and Off-board Members • AAUW TX Board • AAUW National Board • Committees and Chairs • Local Scholarship Recipients • Fellowship Recipients • Named Gift Recipients • Legacy Circle Members

In addition, the following information is also due on **June 15**.

Funds Overview • Individual Interest Group Description and Schedule • Interest Group Calendar and Rules • Membership Criteria and Dues • In Memoriam • Past President Update

Branch goals are due **July 15**.

Schedule of 2021-22 events and programs are due **August 1**.

2021-22 membership list is due **August 25**.



Fundraising Updates

Thanks to everyone who purchased See's candy bars. Fundraising team member **Sharon Babot** reports that our first 2021 fund raising activity earned \$750 in sales! The proceeds will support donations to the AAUW National Greatest Needs Fund.

Thanks also to those who purchased jewelry during the April 19-20 Kendra Scott Give Back Jewelry sale. The fundraising team will report the revenue from the virtual 48 hour sale in the summer newsletter. Twenty percent of total sales will be donated to AAUW and will help support all of the causes that we all support: education, leadership, employment equality and voting rights. **Jan Rooker** worked hard to make this event a success with the help and support of **Brenda Hahne**.

Virtual Cooking Class

June 13, 2021, from 4-5:30 p.m. Virtual cooking class with Chef Alex. Learn to make delicious appetizers and cocktails. An invitation will be sent out in late May or early June. To learn more about Chef Alex, click on the appetizer.



STEM news from your STEM liaison and committee: **Nancy Andren**, Liaison; **Lilac Bauer**, **Robert Coffin**, **Jackie Hardee**, **Anita Knight**, **Rosemary Morrow**, **Elizabeth Newell**, and **Ginny Tannebring**.

Latinitas

If you are interested in ways to help as a Latinitas volunteer, please reach out to Bailey Pownall, Latinitas Engagement Manager (Bailey@latinitasonline.org).

Girlstart

Girlstart will need volunteers to help preparing materials for their upcoming Summer Camps. Stay tuned for information regarding this and other volunteer opportunities at summer camp. They are offering both in person and virtual camps. Their after-school at-home virtual STEM program will continue until school ends.

Their Amplify Austin event generated more than \$11,000 for Girlstart.

Girlstart held a free virtual Earth Day extravaganza on April 22nd with hands-on environmental activities.

I have received the latest summary of their work this fiscal year. If anyone is interested in the details please let me know and I will send it to you.

Article submitted by Nancy Andren. (texasnancy@austin.rr.com).

AAUW Austin Celebrates The Week of the Young Child Honoring Mainspring Teachers

The teachers at Mainspring Schools had a perfect ending to a busy Week of the Young Child, an annual celebration of everything about young children. Thanks to some AAUW Mainspring Angels, the teachers were treated to made-to-order lunches from Chipotle Mexican Grill on Friday to end their week. We had to make a quick pivot from our plan for preparing a luncheon to buying lunch.



AAUW Mainspring Angels include: **Jonesie Abernathy, Nancy Andren, Sharon Babot, Larayne Dallas, Resa Dunn, Jackie Hardee, Anita Knight, Joyce Pulich, Milli Stecker, Pam Watson, Linda Welsh, and Marion Wernicke.** More folks would have donated if the committee chair were more tech-savvy or there were more time!

Our group is so generous that we have enough funds leftover to honor these teachers who have been under tremendous stress this past year. Join the Mainspring Advocacy Committee if you are interested in engaging more with this work.

After hearing our April speaker (see recap in the newsletter), you understand why good schools serving families with limited resources like Mainspring Schools needs to get all the support they can receive.

If you want a way to help when we are not able to volunteer at the school, check out the [Amazon Wish List](#) for Mainspring. Mainspring Schools keeps an updated list of school needs on their Amazon Wish List (no need to purchase from Amazon – it is an easy place to maintain their list.). On the left side you will find areas listed, such as art supplies or books.



A Reminder: Mainspring Schools turns 80 in October. This year they are hosting a virtual fundraiser to celebrate their anniversary. Anyone can participate in Mainspring's [80 Celebrations for 80 Years](#). The AAUW Austin Mainspring Committee will be thinking of ways that AAUW can commemorate this anniversary and celebrate our role in establishing this important Austin institution!

Article submitted by Linda Welsh, AAUW Austin Mainspring Schools Advocacy Chair (lawelsh@gmail.com).





auction

A FABULOUS 2-DAY GET-AWAY TO FREDERICKSBURG
AWESOME JEWELRY, FASHIONS, & ART
WINE TASTING & TOUR, AND TO TOP IT ALL OFF,
20 GENTLY-USED DESIGNER & DESIRABLE PURSES FILLED WITH
WONDERFUL SURPRISES!

These are just a few of the delightful items awaiting bidders in **AAUW Georgetown's** first on-line Silent Auction. You're invited to join the fun, find the item you can't live without, and at the same time, support the AAUW National Grants & Fellowships Program.

ON-LINE PREVIEW STARTS: MAY 12 at noon

ON-LINE BIDDING OPENS: MAY 12 at noon

ON-LINE BIDDING CLOSES: MAY 24 at noon

Watch for link to be emailed around May 12!



American Association of University Women
AAUW - Austin (TX) Branch
Membership **RENEWAL** Information 2021-2022

Date: __/__/__

Please make check payable to AAUW-Austin and mail with completed form to:
AAUW Austin Membership, P.O. Box 5304; Austin, TX 78763-5304

**Or to renew with a credit card
send a request to aauw-atxmembership@aauw.net**

(Please mark status/\$ amount)

Dues: (All but \$3.00 of National dues may be applied as a charitable tax deduction.)

Branch Member (\$91.00 total - National - \$62; State - \$13; Branch - \$16) _____

(If Dual Member and primary branch is a different Texas branch, total due is \$13.00)

(If Dual Member and primary branch is outside of Texas, total due is \$29.00)

Paid Life Member (\$29.00 total - National - \$0; State - \$13; Branch - \$16) _____

(Paid Life Member - one-time payment of 20x National Dues - currently set at \$1,240.00)

Honorary Life Member (\$0 total - National - \$0; State - \$0; Branch - \$0) _____

(50 years of continuous AAUW membership - no dues charged)

Student of Non-AAUW C/U Members (undergraduate or degree-seeking graduate)

(Non-voting membership / \$26.81 Total -- National - \$18.81; State - \$1; Branch - \$7) _____

Students of AAUW C/U Members* (undergraduate or degree seeking graduate)

(Non-voting membership / \$8.00 Total - National - \$0; State - \$1; Branch - \$7) _____

AAUW FUND donation: 100% Tax Deductible

Unspecific donations will be used where needed most. \$ _____

Or write on check your mission preference: Economic Security, Leadership Initiatives, Education and Training or Governance and Sustainability. For other ways to support AAUW's Mission, please go to aauw.org/resource/the-aauw-fund-faq/

LOCAL donation:

Austin Branch Operating Funds \$ _____

Total payment: \$ _____

Check your yearbook and, if there are any changes that need to be made to your listed information please fill in the appropriate items below. If not, just sign and date.

Name: Last _____ First _____ Middle (or initial) _____

Preferred name (if different) _____ Name of Spouse/Significant Other: _____

Address: _____ Apt. _____ City _____ Zip _____

Phone: Home (____) _____ Mobile (____) _____ Work (____) _____ (Asterisk Preferred)

Email: _____

Dual AAUW Memberships: Primary Branch _____ Other Branch(es): _____

Current AAUW Austin Interest Groups you enjoy: _____

Education: Degree Earned/Major(s) _____ Institution & City/State _____ Year _____

Graduated

(BA Psychology, BS Business, MBA, etc.)

Changes in work status/position, employer and contact information (if you want published): _____

Additional Honors/Published Materials _____

Interests (hobbies, causes, charities, other organizations): _____

Current volunteer commitments: _____

Permission to Publish personal contact info in newsletter and yearbook _____(Y) _____(N)

You may also circle any specific item that you wish to keep private and not publish in the AAUW Austin Yearbook.

Signature _____ **Date** _____

*Austin Community College, University of Texas, St. Edwards University are University/College partner

THANK YOU!