



Corpus Christi (TX) Branch

American Association of University Women

**Mission:** To advance gender equity for women and girls through research, education, and advocacy.

**Vision:** Equity for all.

August/September Edition 2024

## Fall Membership Kick-off Event, New Location

- When:** Sunday, September 8, 2024, 2pm  
**Where:** All Saints Episcopal Church, [3026 S. Staples](#)  
**Why:** Fun, Fellowship, and Discuss the AAUW Mission

It's hard to believe a week away from the September Membership meeting! I hope to see you all there as we join together to welcome old and new friends.

*Just a few reminders to help us all be better prepared.*

1. The date of the event is Sunday, Sept. 8 from 2-4 pm. Please note we have a new location this year and I know you will all love it as much as I do. We will be in the Labyrinth area of All Saints' Episcopal Church located at 3026 S. Staples which is next to Ray High School.
2. Bring your friends who are interested in joining our branch. It is going to take all of us to keep our branch growing!
3. The annual yearbook will be available for purchase for only \$3. Please bring a check or cash as we won't be accepting credit cards.
4. Remind any prospective members to bring a check or cash. New Member Pricing is \$61. Plus \$3 for the yearbook if they wish to purchase.
5. We will be sending out the electronic yearbook next week so you can review the directory, the interest groups, and the proposed budget before our meeting.
6. Please make sure to arrive on time. We will be starting the meeting portion first with a break for food so we would love to have everyone ready to go when we begin at 2 pm.

I am looking forward to seeing all of you there and know it will be fun for all of us.

# President's Message



Kelly Gonzalez, President

Plans are shaping up for our reception on September 8 for current and prospective members. This is such a fun event each year and a great opportunity for us to come together as a branch. Please mark your calendar for Sunday, September 8

for an afternoon of fun with current and new members.

I don't know if you watched the Olympics like I did, but I was inspired by the performance of all of these dedicated athletes. According to the Women in Sport website, the Paris 2024 Olympics were gender-equal, making it the first time in history that there was an equal number of men and women competing. I think this is incredible! When the Olympics ended, the United States had won 126 medals, 67 won by women, 52 won by men and 7 mixed teams. Wow! I felt so proud as I watched the incredible women athletes, from all countries, give it all for their country. The medal count by gender was true for most of the larger countries with the exception of France, Great Britain and Japan. What I enjoyed most about watching was how each woman expressed themselves through their hair, nails and uniforms. I felt so proud to see these women feel comfortable with who they were. To live by their standards. As I listened

to the stories of some of the competitors, I was even more impressed. Harvard graduate in neurobiology and Masters in Public Health. Graduate from the University of Pennsylvania's Wharton's School of Business and Director of Global Creative Operations for Estee Lauder. Guidance, Navigation and Control Engineer for an aviation firm. Just to name a few. While I will never be an Olympic athlete, the hard work they show, off and on the field, is truly amazing and inspirational to me. With leaders like these I am feeling more hopeful for the future of our great nation.

While we may not want to take up sports to make a difference, there are other opportunities available to us. Recently information was sent regarding an initiative by the YWCA to perform some Get Out the Vote activities in our community. There will be a watch party at the Y on Saturday, September 7 from Noon to 3 pm for the YWomenVote National Town Hall, and get out the vote on election day. The Y is asking for us to participate and volunteer when and where we can. I plan on being there and helping when possible as I know this election is one of the most important ones we have had in years. I encourage all of you to get involved to make sure everyone gets out to vote. We cannot afford to lose the rights that we, our mothers and grandmothers fought so hard for. Our children and grandchildren should not have fewer rights in the future. Now more than ever, we need to support the mission of AAUW.

# Membership Form

If you are a **NEW** member to AAUW or you are transferring your membership from another branch, use this PDF [2024 AAUW new membership form](#). (Note: This is a fillable PDF form. You must first download and save it to your computer, and then you will be able to type in your information.)

Or, you can join our branch by going to the [AAUW, Inc. website](#) (be sure to select TX7023-Corpus Christi Branch on the menu option for Branch selection):

If you are **renewing** your [membership to AAUW Corpus Christi Branch](#), you can use the link and pay by credit card online. Or, you can send your renewal check to Dr. Vickie Natale, Finance Officer.

## Help AAUW Close the Gap



The **gender pay gap** is the gap between what men and women are paid. Most commonly, it refers to the median annual pay of all women who work full time and year-round, compared to the pay of a similar cohort of men. Other estimates of the gender pay gap are based on weekly or hourly earnings, or are specific to a particular group of women.

[Read More.](#)

# Here's to new beginnings. Good luck settling in your new place!

By: Catherine Cox

Sandra Heatherley has been an active member of the AAUW for 10 years. She was instrumental in including our membership in the active celebration of the first century of Womens' Right to Vote in 2020. She has served as the chair of the Bridge Players interest group for our branch and actively participated in the Classics Book Club. In 2021 Sandra lost her husband, Henry, of 59 years. Recently Sandra decided to move closer to her son, Alexander, who is a professor at Austin Community College and resides in Pflugerville Texas. She said "I will miss all the friends I have made over the years in AAUW" and she is actively seeking to join the Austin or Round Rock branches once she is settled. Please wish her well on her latest adventure in life.



**Thursday, Oct. 10**



Sponsored by AAUW Texas  
Zoom presentation  
featuring Award-winning journalist  
[Mike Hixenbaugh](#)  
author of *They Came for the Schools*  
*More info to come.*  
**Mark Your Calendars - Thursday, Oct. 10**



## *Promoting STEM*

# AAUW Members Judge Student Upward Bound Math and Science Research Presentations

*Story by Dr. Diana Cardenas*

Jennifer Gonzalez, Chair of the STEM Committee, and fellow members Leslie Peart, Laura Grantland, and Diana Cardenas eagerly participated in the summer Academic Recognition and Showcase of Posters

Banquet, organized by the Family Centered Educational Agency (FCEA) of Corpus Christi. It was held on July 11, 2024, at Del Mar College (DMC). As judges, they evaluated the research poster presentations of students in the Upward Bound and the Upward Bound Math and Science programs. The total 61 student program participants are enrolled in this federal initiative that aims to promote learning and leadership skills of high school students to prepare them for success in college, particularly achievement in STEM.



Pictured right to left: Laura Grantland, Leslie Peart, Diana Cardenas, Felicity Carmona (student presenter), Jennifer Gonzalez, and Melinda Dynyel Miller, director of FCEA. Bottom row: Mercedes Garza and Micaela Garza. Not pictured: Emalee Salinas.



Ms. Melinda Dynyel Miller serves as the agency's director.

The 61 students dedicated six weeks to a comprehensive, multi-prong instruction in academic subjects—such as Math and English--and social development--such as leadership skills: communicating effectively with peers, time management, interviewing, budgeting, and goal setting. Instruction and mentoring were provided by staff of the FCEA and also by the Student Success Center at DMC, whose director is Mr.

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# AAUW Members Judge Research Presentations

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Omar Villarreal. The Center engages the academic English and Math instructors and facilitators from the Counseling Center, Career Development, and TRIO Student Support Services.

Divided into nine teams, each team selected an issue—such as identifying DNA, the speed of microwaves, water temperature in detecting luminol, using solar power in desalination, and building a robotic arm. They collected data, set a process, experimented with key factors, analyzed and organized the results, and produced a research poster for public examination. Also, they prepared an oral presentation for judges.

Jennifer, Leslie, Laura, and Diana judged four engaging team posters involving 16 students. They asked questions and offered suggestions. Leslie asked a brother and sister, from Miller High, if they had to make changes in their process as they built a robotic arm. Pleased with the question, they responded,

“Yes, we had to make several adaptations in our code.” Leslie suggested that they highlight these adaptations in the poster and in their abstract.

We admire the six-week commitment of the students to their daily STEM work, interactions with instructors and facilitators, meaningful poster research presentations, and engagement with the judges.

Ms. Miller, director of the Family Centered Educational Agency, and facilitators cheerfully presented special awards to students: Mathematics Achievement (2 awards), Above and Beyond (2 awards), Enthusiastic Learner (2 awards), Perfect Attendance, Leadership (2 awards), and Rising Star (2 awards).

We delighted to learn that 28 of the participants have been accepted into colleges and universities: Del Mar College, San Antonio College, TAMUCC, TAMUK, Prairie View A&M, Texas Tech, UT Austin, and University of the Incarnate Word.

## AAUW Facebook to Showcase Membership



Lara Gephart and Kay Pluta have been busy reviving our social media presence. We currently have a Facebook Group (AAUW-CC) and a Facebook page (AAUW-Corpus Christi). The group will be used mostly for internal communications – notices of meetings, interest group activities, elections, etc. The page is the public face of AAUW, used for recruiting and external communications. Some information will overlap on both, such as meeting dates and times.

We would love to have pictures and short video clips from your AAUW activities! Please send them to either Lara or Kay at [aauw.cc.social@gmail.com](mailto:aauw.cc.social@gmail.com). Also include what the picture or video is, the date, and who is in the picture or video. We would like to showcase our members! Our social media email address is [aauw.cc.social@gmail.com](mailto:aauw.cc.social@gmail.com)

## Wine and Cheese - Members Delighted in Wine Presentation and Fellowship



The Wine and Cheese interest group met at Dottie Ewing's house on Sunday, July 21, 2024. Dottie and her daughter – and branch member – Becky Simoneau served a sample from each of the original six noble grapes: Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Pinot Noir, Chardonnay, Riesling, and Sauvignon Blanc. The noble grapes originated in France, but are grown world-wide now. With that in mind, the hostesses provided samples from California, South Africa, New Zealand, and other countries. Each wine was described and presented with a sampling of the perfect cheese pairing. The 14 members who attended were delighted with the educational presentation and with the opportunity to enjoy each other's company. Salud!





## Interest Group News



*Wine and Cheese*  
*Sunday, Sept. 8th*  
*at Tannin's*



Wine and Cheese is scheduled to meet on Sunday, Sept. 8th, immediately following the Fall Membership event. We will meet at Tannin's Wine Bar, located at 3855 S. Alameda.



The Lunch Bunch will be meeting at 12:30 pm on Tuesday, Sept. 17th. We will be meeting at Saltwater Grill Restaurant, located at 2401 Cimarron Blvd. Please RSVP to Susan Birchfield if you plan to attend.



There are no planned book sales due to the ongoing renovations at the Neyland Library. However, the Bookfinders are still working the usual Tuesday afternoon schedule, pricing and shelving books that were donated before the renovations began. Any AAUW members who would like to join this important and dedicated team of workers are invited to join us.