



# The Grapevine

Healdsburg Branch

Advancing equity for women and girls through advocacy, education, philanthropy, research

November, 2017 <http://healdsburg-ca.aauw.net> Vol. 33 No. 3

## CHALLENGES

*This is a difficult time as fires in Sonoma, Napa, Lake, and Mendocino Counties have changed life as we know it, particularly for some of the members of our branch. As I write this, more mandatory evacuations are being ordered. My heart goes out to all of those who have been affected and I know we are all eternally grateful to the amazing firefighters and professional personnel who work to protect us. I know that many of you have already donated your time and/or money in support of your neighbors. Your Board will be brainstorming some ways our branch can help. Please send your suggestions to anyone on the Board. This will be a very long recovery process.*

— Nancy Haiston

*“In every community, there is work to be done.*

*In every nation, there are wounds to heal.*

*In every heart, there is the power to do it.”*

Marianne Williamson

**Healdsburg AAUW** will continue to make a difference for the people of our community.



## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

As I promised, here is more information about what our national organization does. **AAUW** is the second largest funder of graduate education for women. (The government is the first.) Through our national organization, **AAUW** has given over \$100 million for fellowships and grants to



graduate women. At the national conference, I had the opportunity to hear one of those recipients speak – Tererai Trent, Ph.D. She grew up in a cattle-herding family in rural Zimbabwe and was married with 3 children by the time she was 18. Overcoming her humble beginnings, she came to the U.S. and put herself through college. Unable to afford graduate school, **AAUW** stepped in with a grant. She is now one of today's most internationally recognized voices for quality education and women's empowerment. Her favorite motto is "tinogona," which in Shona means, "It is achievable!" Supporting women like Dr. Trent is what we do at the National level.

### Did you know?

**AAUW** conducts groundbreaking research on issues related to gender equity in education and the workplace. Its initial research in 1885 helped debunk the idea that going to college rendered a woman sterile.



### What's happening at the Petaluma AAUW Branch?

The Petaluma Branch is hosting an event on Monday, November 6, 7 p.m. at Sonoma Portworks, 613 2nd St. in Petaluma. The speaker is Janis Couvreur, author of the newly published *Sail Cowabunga*. It is the true story of her family sailing and living on a boat for 10 years. Books will be available and Janis will sign any copies you bring or buy! More information about the book is on her website [janiscouvreur.com](http://janiscouvreur.com).

— Nancy Haiston

**Healdsburg Homes Tour 2017**

**Sunday May 6, 2018**

**10:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M.**



## **2018 HEALDSBURG HOMES TOUR**

Our very capable team is preparing yet another fantastic Homes Tour. We are very excited about the lineup of homes we already have in the pipeline – hopefully, all within walking distance from the Healdsburg Museum starting point. **Kate Van Ness** and her team have completed Sponsor and Advertising packets and are ready to begin solicitation. If you have ideas for additional advertisers, please let **Kate** know.

In the meantime, be sure May 6<sup>th</sup> is on your calendar. We hope every member will consider supporting the Homes Tour by buying a ticket and serving as a docent or volunteer. Of course, cookie baking is always appreciated as well. If you are out of town for the event, please consider buying a ticket to give to a friend.

**Ronnie Devitt**, who is our Publicity Chair as well as our Healdsburg Museum President, is working on a joint publicity campaign featuring historical aspects of this year's homes and the upcoming Museum's publicity, and exhibitions around historical Healdsburg.

Thank you to our fabulous HHT team: **Janice Sexton, Kate Van Ness, Marian Van Alyea, Yvonne Schell, Debbie Potmesil, Phil and Gail Wright, Joy Fremont, Shally Schultz, Ronnie Devitt, Pat Swaney, Maureen Keefe, Laura Tredinnick, Kim Alexander, Julie Hanamura, Laura Tyler, and Terry Leach.**

—**Johanna Lieblein and Carlene Reininga**, 2018 Healdsburg Homes Tour Chairs

# FUNDRAISING

## PLEASE SUPPORT HEALDSBURG AAUW WHEN MAKING YOUR YEAR-END GIFTS

In a few weeks, you will be receiving a letter from **Nancy Haiston** and me, describing the good work that takes place with the dollars that we raise here in northern Sonoma County. You will learn about the scholarships we've made, changing *local* lives, one at a time. We couldn't do this without you and your support!

In this letter, we will be asking all of our members to consider donating \$100.00, or any amount that is comfortable, to our local branch. We know that all of you have worthy non-profits that you support, and ask that the **Healdsburg AAUW** becomes one of your top priorities.

We receive so many more requests for individual and organizational assistance than we can fulfill. **AAUW Healdsburg**, as you know, has become a significant force in Northern Sonoma County and the more that we raise, the more that we can positively impact our community.

Thank you for all you do!

—Terry Leach, Fundraising Chair

## 2017 SRJC SCHOLARSHIPS FOR RE-ENTRY WOMEN

### “Our efforts are making a difference”

As a part of our **Healdsburg AAUW** chapter's mission of encouraging higher education for women, this year we awarded scholarships to seven highly deserving, re-entry women who graduated from Santa Rosa Junior College and are this fall pursuing their degrees at a four-year college/university. These awards bring the total amount in scholarships to SRJC students to nearly \$200,000 since 1995. Applicants were carefully screened and interviewed by our scholarship committee that included **Cindy Brenton, Jane Martin, Kathleen Riley, Phil Wright, and Mickey Sarquis**.

Besides the academic rigor of taking college classes, this year's awardees have had to overcome a host of significant barriers that cause many others to rethink their need for a college degree, lower their career goals, or walk away from college never to return. Not so for this year's scholarship recipients! While they all at one point were forced to step back from school, each rallied in her own way, worked through and overcame the challenges that confronted them, returned to and graduated from SRJC, and are now pursuing their degrees at a 4-year college/university.

What did this year's candidates face that forced them to drop out of school in the first place?

- Depression that resulted from death of a loved one;
- Mounting unexplained physical and/or mental health issues;
- Escaping a battered family situation with young child to care and support;
- Becoming the sole caregiver for a family member;
- Losing her home with no family support even having to live out of her car; and much more.

Yes, the stories were heartbreaking! But despite all that confronted these women, our recipients were winners. They DID return and graduated with highest honors from the SRJC!

The selflessness and dedication to their communities is also worth noting. Each in their own way not only worked to better their lives, but also worked to make a difference in the lives of others. They were actively involved coaching and assisting students with disabilities; volunteering throughout the community including grade schools, nursing homes, children's camps, hospitals, clinics, crisis help lines, and libraries; tutoring, coaching, and mentoring other students; assisting with Meals-on-Wheels, Habitat for Humanity, and other charitable groups.

## FUNDRAISING (continued)

The following is a brief introduction for each of this year's SRJC Scholarship awardees.

### Ashlee Maheras



Having first started college in 2007, Ashlee struggled with yet undiagnosed health problems and eventually dropped out. Eight years later with a diagnosis finally in hand, she returned. She writes: "in the face of adversity, I overcame. It was in my darkest hour, that I chose to rise, and prove to myself that I COULD do this, instead of giving up, and never going back to school. I was going to prove to myself that I could overcome any obstacle put in my path." And that she did, graduating from SRJC in Spring 2017 with a with a double major in Administration of Justice and Psychology.

Ashlee has now moved from Santa Rosa to Henderson, Nevada and is attending the University of Nevada Las Vegas. In a recent email, she wrote: "I am thrilled to be majoring in Psychology at UNLV, as my long-term goal is to become a Developmental Psychologist."

### Chelsea Ridgway



In a thank you note, Chelsea wrote: "WOW! I am so grateful and honored to have been chosen as a recipient of the scholarship from the **Healdsburg Chapter of AAUW**. I had a great time interviewing with your panel and I love and appreciate what you and the members do for women and the community. I am starting at Sonoma State University on July 5 and will be working towards my Bachelor of Science in Nursing. I just graduated from Santa Rosa Junior College's Associate Degree Nursing program with a 4.0 grade point average and I have begun interviewing for my first job as a Registered Nurse. It truly is an exciting time and I cannot thank you enough for helping me in my journey.



I would be honored to become a student affiliate member of **AAUW** and I look forward to learning more about what you and the members do.

Thank you so much, I am forever grateful for what you have given me and I can promise you that it will not go to waste. I am determined to become the best version of myself and I am dedicated to changing the lives of every patient I meet."

### Mariele Ponticello *(no photo available)*

Graduated from SRJC with a 3.68 GPA in Mathematics and has transferred to Mills College to continue her work towards a Bachelor's Degree in Mathematics, with a minor in Computer Science. She is fluent in French, Spanish, and American Sign Language, and hopes to combine these skills with her degree to eventually become a conference interpreter.

Mariele's is a story of being bored and frustrated with high school so rather than going directly to college after graduating, she moved to Columbia where she became interested in the field of human rights. In 2014, she became a student at SRJC studying Mathematics and Laney College where she completed the Legal and Community Interpreting certificate program. In her application, she noted that her "role as a student is to develop as a citizen, to be a part of the collective, to work for fundamental change to benefit the collective."

### Letha (Lea) Kelley



Letha (Lea) Kelley majored in English at SRJC and is now attending the University of New Mexico working towards a BA in Liberal Arts with plans to pursue her Masters in Art Therapy.

Lea created this mosaic from portraits she took of members of the community. She writes that this “reflects my philosophy that a community is formed of individuals and an individual is formed by community. This also represents my appreciation for the donors like **AAUW** that make it possible for me to continue my education. I am looking forward to becoming a student affiliate of **AAUW** and paying forward the kindness that has been shown me.”



### Danielle Marroquin



“Thank you so much!!! This is wonderful news! I'm very happy to be honored by the **Healdsburg AAUW**. I'm proud to say that I will be attending UC San Diego. I will be starting coursework for my major (Cell Biology & Biochemistry) in August--I was accepted into the Summer Transfer Academy program, and I couldn't be more thrilled!

I will also be sure to join **AAUW** as a student affiliate member; I was very impressed with **AAUW**'s mission and would love to be a part of the organization.

Again, thank you for selecting me for the scholarship--it was a pleasure to meet you and the other four representatives back in April. I am honored to receive your recognition.”

### Rachael Toral



With numerous community volunteering activities including efforts for the needy in Mexico, Rachael graduated from SRJC with an outstanding 3.97 GPA with an associate's degree in Nursing. She is now attending Samuel Merritt University in Oakland pursuing her BSN in nursing. She has been aiming for this since she was 5-years old. She wrote: “For me, nursing is not just a job; it's a calling, a drive to nurture and heal not just the physical body, but the mind and spirit as well.”

### Assmaa Ashooqullah *(no photo available)*

The recipient of the special \$5,000 Al Garen scholarship awarded through our **AAUW** chapter, Assmaa graduated this summer with a Business Administration degree from SRJC and has transferred to Sonoma State University pursuing a degree in accounting with career goals of becoming a forensic accountant.

Tragic deaths of her father and brother coupled with her mother's disabling injury, Assmaa worked to support her family while going to high school in her home country. After high school, she taught mathematics for 8 years in her home country before moving to the USA in 2009. “I wanted to continue my education here and would be the first in my family to go to college.” She enrolled at SRJC in 2011 taking ESL and general education courses. She writes that her “dream was to be an accountant, but my husband would not let me continue my education.” Now as single mom, balancing full-time care and support of her young daughter, Assmaa is profoundly appreciative of our scholarship assistance which is helping her to achieve her dream to study business in order “to build a successful career in the future and to improve not only my life, but also the life of my child, and to give back to my community.”

—Mickey Sarquis

# CULTURAL EVENT

## Walt Disney Family Museum Cultural Tour

Who would have thought it? That Walt Disney, the master of portraying joyful, feel-good stories and movies, could have had so many challenges throughout his creative career? This was only one of the many



interesting facts about Walt Disney we learned on our 90 minute-long tour of his life which was portrayed in story, image and artifacts throughout the museum. The location, facing the parade grounds at the Presidio on the edge of the ocean, and only an hour south of Healdsburg, was an added plus to the day.

Walt profoundly influenced a whole cultural era in the US and abroad via his many movies, which won multiple gold Oscars, Little Golden Books, TV shows and extravagant destination theme parks. From Bambi to Zorro to Mary Poppins, his keen sense of just the right rendition of each story he sponsored captured its magic uniquely and opened the hearts and imaginations of generations of children. Through it all he never lost his own sense of fun and play, and we are all the beneficiaries of this remarkable man's perseverance throughout his life. We appreciated his story in its multi-media presentation with commentary from an experienced guide during our tour. Afterwards, we visited the adjacent showings of the art of two of his more famous illustrators.

And finally, we followed a labyrinthian path to Sessions Gastropub where a delicious lunch was the opportunity for animated

chatter among our 18 participants. Many remarked that the tour was much more than they had expected, and that they look forward to re-visiting with friends and families, having more time to participate in the many interactive experiences provided by the museum.

—Jean Norelli

# SOCIAL EVENT

## SAVE THE DATE

Annual Holiday Party  
Sunday, December 3, 2017  
Good Shepherd Church, 1402 University St., Healdsburg  
4:00 – 7:00 PM

Once again, we are approaching the holiday season  
Please mark this date on your calendars.  
More details will be forthcoming via email.

We are looking forward to another wonderful holiday party!

—Barbara Reid and Violet Nelson

## MEMBERSHIP

If you are interested in being a 'Buddy' for a new member please contact **Pat Bertapelle**, [pat@vbbn.com](mailto:pat@vbbn.com) .....New members are the life blood of our organization, and the experience of a new friend is invaluable!

If you are aware of any member who is ill, has had an operation, an accident, or has passed away, please notify **Maria Lucidi** that a card can be sent to the person or family from **AAUW**. [mlucidi5@gmail.com](mailto:mlucidi5@gmail.com) or (707) 838-1483.

## FOR YOUR INFORMATION:

Occasionally the email and/or website links do not work for some of our **AAUW** members.

If this occurs

- For emails, go to your own email site and type in the email address
- For websites, go to Google and type in the website address

We apologize for this inconvenience; however, we have been unsuccessful in correcting this occasional glitch.

The **Grapevine** is published online each month, except in July and August. Please submit articles, announcements, and photographs by the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month to the **Grapevine** editor, **Diane Burnley**, [dburnley@aol.com](mailto:dburnley@aol.com)