



Calendar of April Events

Saturday 4/5 Book Group

No Happy Hour this month

Saturday 4/13 Lunch Bunch

Wednesday 4/24, Annual Meeting

April 2024 Newsletter



Co-President Report

To those who celebrated Easter and those who will celebrate Passover later in April, our best wishes. Both of these holidays have ancient roots in the celebration of spring, a time of renewal.

AAUW is also in a time of renewal and transition. You probably received a postcard from a Maui Branch member with the caption “A Yes Vote for Open Membership is a Vote For Women and Girls of Hawai’i.” National AAUW is lobbying strongly for an amendment to the bylaws to “Open AAUW”, meaning that anyone, with or without a college degree, who supports AAUW’s mission and goals will be able to become a member. We hope that nationwide the affiliated branches will support this. Opening up the membership is driven by the importance of diversity and inclusion but also, frankly, because membership organizations like AAUW are not thriving nationwide.

The AAUW National Board strongly supports open membership, and it will be beneficial to our branch. In 2021, more than 60% of the voters approved the change. Fewer than 10% of the members voted against it. But, fewer than 25% of the members voted.

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This bylaw change requires a 2/3 vote in favor of the amendment. A “yes” vote is an opportunity to honor our stated value of Inclusion. This is so important as diverse, particularly younger, people consider joining us.

Online voting commences on April 3 and will end on May 15. If anyone has questions or concerns about the impact of Open AAUW on our branch, feel free to contact either of us. Let’s have a goal of 100% of our branch voting on this important bylaw amendment. You will receive emails from AAUW National when the vote kicks off.

In other news, we are honored to announce that our Maui Branch board membership has increased and we have filled important branch officer positions that were vacant due to resignations. Please join us in welcoming our new Vice President of Programs, Shawna Pabingwit (UH Maui College Title IX Coordinator), Co-Vice Presidents for Membership Yukari Murakami (Deputy Corporation Counsel and former longtime Managing Attorney at Legal Aid) and Bevanne Bowers (Executive Director of Maui Mediation Center and per diem District and Family Court Judge), and Public Policy Interest Group Chair, Sonya Toma (Deputy Prosecuting Attorney for Maui County). Also, we welcome new member, Marceline (“Marci”) Burgess

See below for bios of our new members and officers.

After over two years as President and Co-President, Pat will be stepping down at the end of May and will remain on the Board as Immediate Past President. Lauren will be sole President come June, and along with the addition of these powerhouse women on the Board, we see tremendous opportunities for our Branch for the future.

Mahalo,
Pat and Lauren

Annual Meeting, Wednesday April 24

The Annual Meeting of AAUW Maui will be held via Zoom on Wednesday, April 24 starting at noon. We are required to hold a meeting in April per our Bylaws to present our budget. There will be no elections and no action on the budget, just a presentation for informational purposes. We expect this meeting to be a quick 10-15 minutes. A zoom link will be sent before the meeting.

April is Sexual Assault Awareness Month

Welcome!

To New Members and New Officers

Marceline Burgess



Marceline (“Marci”) Burgess has been working in real estate on Maui since 2015. She loves staying connected with her community and assisting local families with their housing needs. Marci is also a strong advocate for children with special needs and their families, particularly in regards to equity in our schools and community.

Outside of real estate and community service, she can be found with her family (4 kids, 3 cats and 2 dogs) enjoying island life!

The Honorable Bevanne J. Bowers

Membership Co-Vice President

Bevanne J. Bowers was appointed Per Diem Judge in the District and Family Courts of Hawaii’s Second Judicial Circuit on December 20, 2021, becoming the first African American female appointed Judge in Maui County, Hawaii. She has served as Executive Director of Maui Mediation Services since May 2015. This 501 (c)(3) nonprofit organization provides alternative dispute resolution, facilitation, and training to residents of Maui, Molokai, and Lanai. An integral part of her professional career has been advocacy, encompassing the legal, social service, and entertainment sectors.



A native of St. Louis, Missouri, Bevanne obtained her undergraduate degree from Southern Illinois University-Edwardsville as a Presidential Scholar and her law degree from the University of Memphis, Cecil C. Humphreys School of Law. She is a past president of the Maui Non Profit Directors Association, a Board member of the Hawaii Alliance of Nonprofit Organizations (HANO), a member of the Maui County Bar Association, the African American Law Association of Hawaii, and a member of the Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority.

Yukari Murakami

Membership Co-Vice President



Yukari is a Deputy Corporation Counsel for Maui County. She previously served as the Managing Attorney for the Legal Aid Society of Hawaii, overseeing the Maui, Lanai, and Molokai offices. She was first employed at Legal Aid in 2008 as a staff attorney for the Maui office, practicing mainly family law. While at Legal Aid, she represented families as parents' counsel and guardian ad litem for children in Child Welfare cases.

Yukari has been living on Maui since 1993 and graduated from Maui High School in 1997. She obtained her undergraduate degree at Bryn Mawr College in 2001. She graduated from University of Hawai'i William S. Richardson School of Law in 2005.

Sonya Toma

Public Policy Interest Group Chair

Sonya Toma is a graduate of the University of Oregon (BS) and the William S. Richardson School of Law (JD). She is licensed to practice law in Hawaii, Indiana, and Nevada.

Sonya was raised in Honolulu and Maui and is a graduate of Baldwin High School. She is a Deputy Prosecuting Attorney for the County of Maui. Sonya has previously worked for the County of Maui Department of the Corporation Counsel, State of Hawaii Department of the Attorney General, and the State of Hawaii Office of the Public Defender on Maui and Hilo. She has practiced Family Law on Maui and in Las Vegas, Nevada.



She is a member of the Maui Okinawa Kenjin Kai. Sonya enjoys spending time with her family, friends, and pets. She enjoys golfing, traveling, watching sports, and learning to play the Sanshin.

Shawna Pabingwit

Programs Vice President



Shawna Pabingwit has been an AAUW member since 2021. She started working for the University of Hawai'i Maui College (UHMC) as a Human Resources Specialist in 2016. Then in January 2021, Shawna transitioned into her new role as UHMC's Title IX/Equal Employment Opportunity/Affirmative Action Coordinator. Shawna graduated from UH Manoa with a Master's Degree in Human Resources Management. She currently serves as UHMC's Student Behavior Intervention Team Chair, UH LGBTQ+ Commissioner, Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society Psi Sigma Chapter Advisor, and Wailuku Federal Credit Union Board Member. Shawna is also a member of the following committees: UHMC Professional Development Advisory Committee, Threat Team Hawai'i, UH PAU Violence, Society of Human Resource Management Maui District, and Association of Threat Assessment Professionals.

AAUW Book Club, Saturday, April 5

NOTE the new time: 10:00 a.m.

For the April meeting we are discussing **Women Talking: a Novel** by Miriam Toews.

In May the book will be **Tomorrow, and Tomorrow, and Tomorrow** by Gabrielle Charbonnet. Two friends - often in love but never lovers - come together as creative partners in the world of video game design, where success brings them fame, joy, tragedy, and, ultimately, a kind of immortality. To get the zoom link, please email Dorothy Tolliver at 2425047@gmail.com

Lunch Bunch, Saturday, April 13

Tail's Up Maui - Freshest fish to be found!

Maui Now shared:

"Tails Up Maui, a restaurant in Paukūkalo, reopened on Jan. 26 after a transformative period of community service. The restaurant, which temporarily closed due to labor shortages one month before the Lahaina fires, found a new purpose by converting its restaurant into a food hub for the houseless community and those displaced by the fires in the months that followed. Tails Up Maui produced more than 450 meals a day, seven days a week, for the houseless community during its closed period. The establishment also provided support to the Lahaina community during Thanksgiving, Christmas, and meeting direct-to-'ohana feeding needs."

Date: Saturday, April 13 at 1:30 pm

Location: 372 Waiehu Beach Road, Wailuku

(On the makai side just after Lower Beach Rd splits into Lower Main & Waiehu Beach Rd, before you get to the old Sack & Save location)

Their daily menus & pics: [Tails Up Maui in Wailuku](#)

Their chef's special for the day will be posted the day before on Instagram.

RSVP to Marty-Jean by Wednesday, April 10.

Text (or phone call) preferred: 808-385-1807

Email okay: mjb@unforgettable.com

Great Decisions

Meetings are the 1st Friday of the month at 1:00 p.m. HST

Contact Diane Pure - dpure@hawaii.rr.com for more information
(808)793-2661

Note: *Great Decisions is not an official AAUW Maui Branch interest group but there is a substantial overlap of membership and common concerns.*
