

Good Day AAUW Tampa-

I hope each of you are well. April is filled with a multitude of opportunities to get involved, to learn, and to vote on AAUW Tampa Board Members and AAUW National's open membership amendment. More information is shared about these two topics on pages 5 and 6, respectively.

You will also find the following within the newsletter:

- Our speaker for this month will be Dr. Rukmini Potdar, who is an AAUW Tampa Member & Volunteer Recruiter and Certified Child Advocate Manager/Guardian ad Litem. She will share about the program and its impact on the children of Florida. Revisit Dr. Potdar's *Critical Need for Volunteers and Mentors for Children in Foster Care* (p. 2)
- Important dates and birthdays of AAUW Tampa Members (p.3)
- A sample copy of the 2024 AAUW Tampa Elections Ballot and related details. (p. 4)
- A call for Ribbon of Honor Nominations, to be submitted to Dr. Ebony Shoemo, by April 15, 2024 ; general AAUW news including the push for AAUW members to vote on the open membership amendment between April 3 – May 15 & congratulations to the students selected for the Summer 2024 Teck Trek Camp (p.5).
- Access to AAUW career tools and resources, and links to support students who will be attending Teck Trek (p. 6)
- An invite to register for AAUW Public Policy Forum #7- Voting and Voting Rights in Florida, being held on April 18 (6pm) via Zoom ([Click here to get to a direct link to RSVP](#)) and a "Did You Know" segment to ponder. (p. 7)



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THURSDAY, APRIL 18, 2024 AT 6 PM

**AAUW Public Policy Forum #7- Voting and Voting Rights in Florida**

Online event

[Go To Link](#)

Until we meet again, take care, and enjoy this month's newsletter!

Demetrix Rostick-Owens, Ed.D.

AAUW Tampa

Director of Communications 2022-2024

**PRESIDENT: Shella Miller**

**VICE PRESIDENT: Catherine Clark Martin**

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**Dr. Demetrix Rostick-Owens**

**DIRECTOR OF FINANCE: Dr. Ebony Shoemo**

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**DIRECTOR OF TECH TREK: Kimberly Rostick**

**DIRECTOR OF DIVERSITY, EQUITY, & INCLUSION: Vacant**

**PARLIAMENTARIAN: Dr. Gloria Hilton**

**SECRETARY: CORRESPONDING: Paula Thomas**

**SECRETARY: RECORDING: Paula Huzella**

**SOCIAL MEDIA MANAGER: Solana Rostick**

# Let's Get Together!!!



Saturday  
April 20, 2024



## Guest Speaker

### Dr. Rukmini Potdar

AAUW Tampa Member & Volunteer Recruiter/Certified Child Advocate  
Manager/Guardian ad Litem; Statewide Guardian ad Litem Office/Circuit  
Thirteen



Dr. Potdar came to the United States from India in 1998 for her doctoral program at Cornell University and graduated with a PhD in Sociology, followed by a post-doc in Public Health from Johns Hopkins University School of Public Health; she spent several years in academia, before moving to Tampa, FL in 2016, mainly to flee the cold of upstate NY. She joined the Florida Guardian ad Litem Office - 13<sup>th</sup> Circuit as a volunteer in 2018 and was a full-time staff member within six months. She came to this country as a single mom with two children, aged 12 and 8; today, her daughter is a successful lawyer, just having celebrated her law firm's fifth anniversary, and her son is in the U.S. Navy's Nuclear Engineering Program. Serving the mission of the Statewide Guardian ad Litem Office of representing Florida's abused, abandoned and neglected children is a small way Rukmini gives back to the country of her adoption. (Retrieved from: <https://business.southtampachamber.org/list/member/statewide-guardian-ad-litem-office-circuit-thirteen-8683>). Below, see the March 2024 Tiempo article written by Dr. Potdar about the Florida Guardian ad Litem Office!

## Critical Need for Volunteers and Mentors for Children in Foster Care

*Submitted by Dr. Rukmini Potdar, AAUW Tampa Member*

The Florida Guardian ad Litem Office represents abused, abandoned, and neglected children in court and the community. Through the collaboration of a multi-disciplinary team that always includes a Guardian ad Litem Attorney, a child welfare professional, and hopefully a trained volunteer or pro bono attorney from the child's community, if one is available, our team provides quality, independent legal representation for Florida's most vulnerable children while assisting the child in expressing their needs and wishes. Our unique approach allows us to support the whole child, addressing their physical, educational, mental, emotional, social, and legal needs. We need more community volunteers and mentors for the children we represent.

**What is a Guardian ad Litem Volunteer?** A Guardian ad Litem Volunteer is a team member that collaborates to provide proactive, child-centered advocacy for children in foster care. Currently, there are more than 2,500 abused, abandoned, and neglected children in Hillsborough County who are the subject of dependency proceedings. When you join our Florida Guardian ad Litem Office Team, you positively impact a child's life. No experience is needed, and training is free.

**What is a Mentor?** Our Hope Florida – A Pathway to Promise mentors help youth aging out of the foster care system, many with nobody to turn to. Youth are partnered with a mentor who will serve as a committed, caring adult as the youth transitions to adulthood, providing a lifeline for questions and advice related to living independently. It is easy to become a Mentor; training is online, self-paced and free.

**Need for Donations:** Your tax-deductible donation to the Florida Guardian ad Litem Foundation is a wise investment in the future our foster children deserve. Your donation will assist with much-needed normalcy needs.

To learn more, please visit [www.guardianadlitem.org](http://www.guardianadlitem.org).

# Important Dates in April

*April Is...*

*Cesarean Awareness Month, Informed Women Month,  
National African-American Women's Fitness Month, Women's Eye Health and Safety Month*

*Click on the Names to Learn More!*

Date	Activity
1	April Fools' Day ( <a href="https://www.cbsnews.com/news/how-did-april-fools-day-start/">https://www.cbsnews.com/news/how-did-april-fools-day-start/</a> )
2	World Autism Awareness Day ( <a href="#">Why is April 2 Autism Awareness Day?</a> )
3	Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander (AANHPI) Women's Equal Pay Day April 3 is the first of first of several Equal Pay Days which acknowledge the disparate impact of the wage gap for women of color. AANHPI women with professional degrees lose \$800,000 compared to non-Hispanic white men over the course of a lifetime. (AAUW National)
9	National mature Women's Day
4	National Vitamin C Day
5	National Self Care Day
April 7-13: National Library Week	
8	International Feng Shui Awareness Day
9	End of Ramadan
10	National Siblings Day
12	National Only Child Day
15	Notification to 2024-25 AAUW Fellowships and Grants Awardees
16	Good Deeds Day
17	It's My Vote! AAUW Priorities in the 2024 Election Webinar
18	<a href="#">National High Five Day, Tax Day</a> & AAUW Florida Event: Public Policy Forum: Voting And Voting Rights (on Zoom) April 18, 6 pm <a href="#">Click here to get to a direct link to RSVP</a>
April 21-27: Administrative Professionals Week & Neurodiagnostic Week	
22	Earth Day & Passover begins
23	World Book Day
24	National Bucket List Day
25	National Take Our Daughters and Sons to Work Day
26	Administrative Professionals Day & Arbor Day
27	<a href="#">World Women's Wellness Day</a>
30	International Jazz Day



Kim Rostick  
April 8  
Joyce Ellsworth  
April 17  
Irene Bembry  
April 26



# AAUW Tampa Elections 2024: Ballot

In our upcoming meeting, we will vote on and elect AAUW Tampa Board Members for the upcoming membership year. At quick glance, there are 11 positions available. Currently, seven (7) positions have candidates, while 4 remain without candidates. If you are interested and/or know a fellow AAUW Tampa member who would be interested in being nominated for one of the positions below, follow up immediately with Vice-President Catherine Clark-Martin ([ccmartinaauw@gmail.com](mailto:ccmartinaauw@gmail.com)) today. Also, nominations will be welcomed during our meeting as well for any of the open positions.

<b>Instructions: Mark your choices by filling in the box or placing an "X" in the box. Please see the examples: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> or <input type="checkbox"/>. You may only fill out one box, per candidate.</b>		
<b>Note: You may write in a candidate's name for any position listed, as each are open for all members of AAUW Tampa. Please make sure you have spoken with the write-in candidate and received their approval first.</b>		
OFFICE	CANDIDATE	VOTE
President (2-year position)	Shella Miller	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Vice-President (1-year position)	Dr. Ebony Shoemo	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Director of Program Development (1-year position)	Carolyn Austin	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Director of Tech Trek (2-year position)	Kim Rostick	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Director of Communications (2-year position)	Dr. Demetrix Rostick-Owens	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Director of Public Policy (2-year position)	Nominee Needed <i>Self-Nominate or Nominate Someone</i>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Director of Scholarships (2-year position)	Dr. Gloria Hilton	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Recording Secretary (1-year position)	Nominee Needed <i>Self-Nominate or Nominate Someone</i>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
D.E.I. Chair (1-year appointed position)	Nominee Needed <i>Self-Nominate or Nominate Someone</i>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Website and Facebook Manager (1-year appointed position)	Nominee Needed <i>Self-Nominate or Nominate Someone</i>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Corresponding Secretary (1-year appointed position)	Nina Thomas	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>



# Call for Ribbon of Honor Nominations

AAUW Tampa members, we are looking to recognize, honor, and celebrate leaders in the community, through our Ribbon of Honor Award, which was established during our Branch's 100<sup>th</sup> Year Celebration. This award is provided to women in the Tampa and local bay area who have contributed to building, strengthening, and contributing meaningfully to their community. Nominations are fielded by AAUW Tampa members, and all nominations will be due to Dr. Ebony Shoemo ([weddinginvy@gmail.com](mailto:weddinginvy@gmail.com)) by April 15, 2024.



Ribbon of Honor candidates must be a:

- Model of leadership in implementing or promoting the principles of advocacy, education, and or research in the interest of acquiring or sustaining equity for women and or girls.
- Leader within their community with a sustained status of at least three years.
- Non-partisan selection, nor an AAUW Tampa Member.

## Bylaw Vote

Learn everything you need to know about the AAUW National Bylaw Amendment Vote that will determine the definition of AAUW Membership going forward. As stated on [aauw.org](http://aauw.org), "The AAUW Board of Directors and Governance Committee recommend approval... to eliminate the degree requirement for membership in AAUW. This change will align our membership practices with our purpose of advancing equity for women and girls and enable us to include members with the diverse backgrounds and perspectives needed to achieve our purpose in today's world."

VOTING  
OCCURS  
APR 3-MAY 15



[Learn more about open membership](#) before voting.



*Thank You!!!*

Thank you AAUW Florida for meeting the need of keeping girls in STEM! It is with great appreciation, we proudly send 5 young 7<sup>th</sup> graders to the [2024 TECH TREK CAMP!!!](#)



# AAUW Member Election 2024

**National Voting:** Voting begins on April 3rd for AAUW National Bylaw to remove the education requirement for membership. Branch members eligible to vote will receive an email with a link that allows them to Vote. Paper ballots with instructions will be sent to those members without email addresses. Voting ends May 15, 2024. Voting results will be announced soon after.

The AAUW National website, [AAUW.org](http://AAUW.org) is the best source of information about the proposed Bylaw change. Some Branches are holding special round-table discussions to explore the change in the membership requirement. The State Board encourages every eligible member to cast an informed VOTE!

(AAUW Florida News, 04.02.2024 (AAUW Florida President, Bea Holt)



## AAUW Career Tools & Resources

The Women's Economic Empowerment Initiative of AAUW "gives women the skills they need to thrive and build strong financial futures." Through a series of training models, AAUW is "showing women everywhere how to negotiate their salaries, grow in their careers, and bolster their financial literacy." Take a moment to familiarize yourself with AAUW's Career & Leadership Tools, and other resources which can help you fund your graduate program and/or navigate your career.

- [Start Smart](#): These workshops teach college and university students how to negotiate salaries
- [Work Smart](#): These trainings show early and mid-career professionals how to negotiate on their own behalf—for fair salaries, better benefits, and advancement opportunities.
- [Money Smart](#): This program provides women with the personal finance information they need to ensure their own financial security.
- [Empower](#): This program is designed to enhance women's leadership skills at every stage of their careers.
- [Get Your Resume Straight](#): This resource guide encourages job seekers on tailoring their resume for the job they want.
- [8 Great Job Boards for Diverse Professionals](#): This resource provides 8 diverse and inclusive job boards which can be viewed to navigate when job seeking.



Retrieved from: <https://www.aauw.org/resources/programs/womens-economic-empowerment-initiative/#programs>

## Continue to Support Tech Trek

From AAUW Florida, branches should be working hard to raise funds for the camps. Each camper costs about \$1200 for housing, food, classes, and supplies. We look to all branches to help fund this statewide initiative but branches who participate should provide for their girls. Funds should be sent as soon as possible as bills will need to be paid starting in April. Your help is needed. See options below!

**Access the donation letter here!!!**

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1TOdbJnEDynfmpMxRHKxp-70Z8T9DO6gK997jdIVAmsE/edit?usp=sharing>

**Make your online Tech Trek donations here!!!**

<https://www.zeffy.com/en-US/donation-form/9e097894-8842-4c4f-bf3a-3fe5cb750ba7>

**Do not want to donate online? Send you checks or money orders here!!!**

AAUW FL Supporting Foundation  
PO Box 126, Palm City, FL 34991

# Voting Forum: April 18 (AAUW Florida)



THURSDAY, APRIL 18, 2024 AT 6 PM

## AAUW Public Policy Forum #7- Voting and Voting Rights in Florida

Online event

[Go To Link](#)

We are excited to have Debra "Debbie" Chandler join us via Zoom on Thursday, April 18 at 6pm to talk about voting and voting rights here in Florida. Debbie is the co-President of the League of Women Voters of Florida and will share important information on voting here in Florida. Come learn about the latest in voter rights, restoration and what you need to know as we approach the elections in August and November.

**Please attend this VERY important discussion!** [Click here to get to a direct link to RSVP.](#) (AAUW Florida)

## Did You Know?

### STEM Careers on the Rise

- In 1970, women made up **8%** of STEM\* workers and **38%** of workers overall.
- By 2019, women in STEM occupations had more than tripled to **27%**, and women made up about **48%** of the workforce.

Note: STEM is science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. STEM jobs include computer specialists, mathematicians, and engineers. STEM-related occupations consist of architects and healthcare workers.



### Educational Attainment

Women 25 years of age and older have the following as their highest degree:

- **25%** have a high school diploma or equivalency.
- **10%** have an associate degree.
- **22%** have a bachelor's degree.
- **15%** have a graduate or professional degree



### Average Age of Women Giving Birth Is Going Up

In 2022, more women ages 30 to 34 had a recent birth than women ages 25 to 29; In 2011, the reverse was true - more women ages 25 to 29 had a recent birth than women ages 30 to 34.

(Retrieved from: <https://www2.census.gov/programs-surveys/sis/resources/whm-ff.pdf>)

# Keep Connected!

AAUW Tampa:

<http://tampafl.aauw.net/>

AAUW Tampa Membership:

<https://tampafl.aauw.net/membership/>

Access the AAUW Tampa Branch Bylaws:

<https://tampafl.aauw.net/bylaws/>

Share the benefits of membership with others:

[aauwkampmembership@gmail.com](mailto:aauwkampmembership@gmail.com)

Access the AAUW Community Hub to renew membership:

<https://my.aauw.org/onlinejoin>

Learn more or find out how to donate to AAUW Tampa Tech

Trek: [aauwkampatechtrek@gmail.com](mailto:aauwkampatechtrek@gmail.com)

Share your interests related to forming a Special Interest Group:

[aauwkampainfo@gmail.com](mailto:aauwkampainfo@gmail.com)

Stay in the Know with AAUW Florida:

<https://aauw-fl.aauw.net/>

Stay in the Know with AAUW National:

<https://www.aauw.org/>