



## HOLIDAY GET-TOGETHER BRUNCH

**Monday, December 11**

*At the new Home of Jean Yale*

**1035 Lakeside Drive, Grand Junction 81506**

*Lakeside Drive is accessed from Horizon Drive...between 7<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> Streets*



**Promptly Arrive at 11am with your Potluck Item of Choice**

**RSVP's (Yes or No) Are Required by December 8**

(Jean will be hauling a table and chairs from another location based upon the number of attendees.)

Contact Jean via text at 970-623-4578 or email [jeankyale@gmail.com](mailto:jeankyale@gmail.com).



### *Your Holiday Feel-Good Activity*

Jean Yale, our hostess, has requested we bring donations for the **GJHS Tiger Boutique and Haberdashery**. Teacher Jodee Kronk has asked that we provide items that the kids can pick out for their families for the holidays ..... things like candles, bath stuff, slippers, fun socks, coffee mugs, jewelry, games, puzzles, card games, small toys, art supplies, journals, cute notebooks, etc., rather than things for the students themselves.

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**Branch President** Jane Fitzgerald 970-241-9684

**VP Programs** Karen Pieper Hildebrand 432-312-4747

**Secretary** Loralee Kerr 970-523-5510

**VP Membership** Lori Wood 970-234-5674

**Treasurer** Carol Airoidi 530-949-4448

**Newsletter** Jane Fitzgerald 970-241-9684

## WHAT YOU MISSED LAST MONTH

It is too bad that more members were unable to make this meeting. Learning about the WCCC's (Western Colorado Conservation Corps) **All-Women Fire Crew** was very enlightening. The program is a division of the Partners organization. The speaker was Marcus Kissner, the Associate Director of the program, and who also does much of the training.

WCCC had been training men in fire fighting for several years in conjunction with the BLM. In 2019 a separate women's crew was started as the BLM wanted to incorporate more women into the program. This coming year there will be an additional Women's crew working with the US Forest Service.

WCCC recruits nationwide for women from 17 to 25 years old. Candidates must pass a personal interview, a medical screening, a PAC test and a physical exertion test in order to be accepted. Marcus said that the women come from various backgrounds...some right from high school, some from other jobs, some college grads...and one who was taking a gap year before entering med school. So far, there have been 34 graduates of the program and 2 dropouts.

The training begins in May and goes 12-13 weeks until about Thanksgiving. Trainees not only learn to use chain saws, but work on various projects such as clearing brush. The training is geared to BLM standards for persons to receive a "Red Card", which would certify that the person has sufficient experience with firefighting. Persons holding a Red Card can easily join the men on other fire crew jobs with various agencies, or become land managers. The extensive WCCC program is one of only 3 in the US; the others are in California and Oregon.

During training the women receive a "living wage" ...but have to pay for their own food and housing. WCCC staff helps them find communal apartments. There is no medical insurance for them. Funds to pay them come from a grant. However, in case of an active fire, they may be reassigned to BLM to go fight the fire in which case they become a temporary employee of BLM.

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### Coffee & Chat Special Interest Group



This fun and informative group will meet on **Saturday, December 23 at 9:30 am**. We will again be at **Four Winds Coffee and Tea**, 1235 Bookcliff Avenue, Grand Junction. (near corner of 12<sup>th</sup> Street and Bookcliff Avenue) We have reserved the Meeting Room on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor, which has a door that closes for privacy and restaurant sound blocking. Parking is limited in the lot by the back doors; plan to park along Bookcliff. Come when you can; bring a friend. Call Jane at 970-241-9684 with any questions.

This month's **Discussion Topic** will be regarding what we can do toward the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal #2: End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture.

**SAVE THE DATE****NEXT GENERAL PROGRAM MEETING****MONDAY, JANUARY 8, 2024  
11:30 AM****RIVERSIDE EDUCATION CENTER**

Meet at their warehouse location at 1177 Winters Avenue

Plan to bring a brown-bag lunch

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**News from AAUW Action Network**

Last week, the U.S. Department of Education released the Civil Rights Data Collection which provides key data and analysis pertaining to educational equity. “Sadly, the inequities that have long persisted in our education system are on full display,” commented Education Secretary Miguel Cardona.

All children should have equal opportunity to succeed. [Ask Congress to invest in keeping all kids safe at school and support students to ensure their educational success.](#)

The latest findings show that Black students are more likely to attend schools staffed with law enforcement, but without counselors, social workers, nurses, or school psychologists. Law enforcement in schools doesn't lead to safer schools, it leads to students with disabilities and students of color being disproportionately criminalized. Just look at the numbers:

- Black girls make up 16% of the female student population but were 39% of girls arrested in school.
- Native American girls had a school arrest rate 3.5 times that of White girls.
- Students with disabilities were arrested at a rate 2.9 times that of students without disabilities.

Let's be clear: Disproportionately high disciplinary rates for students of color and students with disabilities constitutes discrimination. This is why AAUW supports the [Counseling Not Criminalization in Schools Act](#).

The Counseling Not Criminalization in Schools Act establishes a \$5 billion grant program to invest in school districts that remove law enforcement so that schools can provide adequately trained personnel and trauma informed services to improve the learning environment for children and prohibits the use of federal funds to support the hiring, recruitment, and placement of police officers on K-12 school campuses.

Ask your member of Congress to support federal funding for school counselors, nurses and social workers, not school-based law enforcement.

## More Messages from “Mary’s” Scholarship Recipients

Dear American Association of University Women,

My sincere thank you for the scholarship of \$2050 for the 2023-2024 academic school year. It is a great honor to receive this scholarship. Your generosity enables me to take out fewer loans to finance my education. I will also be able to focus better on my studies because of your help and I will not have to work as many hours to cover my tuition, books, and fees. Once again, thank you for your generosity and support in making my dreams come true. I could not finish my degree without your help.

I plan to graduate, and not waste the opportunity that you and your generosity has provided. I hope one day I may be as generous to somebody else as you have been with me. I plan to work towards my goal of being a university instructor of fine arts. This will help me immensely. I work 3 jobs just to pay for tuition and to support my son who has autism and my husband who has a physical disability. My husband was injured and received a disability income for his physical health, but I am financially responsible for most of our bills, and this scholarship will help me. Thank you so much for your generosity to support my education.

Sincerely,

*Meka Ullerick*

Meka Ullerick  
Senior  
BFA of Art: Studio Art

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Dear American Association of University Women,

Thank you so much for this \$2050.00 scholarship. I believe this money will really assist me throughout the 2023-2024 school year. This past year of school has been a financial struggle for my family, and we are incredibly grateful. Last year, I did not realize the high expenses full time college required and had to take out a loan. In the future, I am going to try extremely hard not to take out any other loans and this money will help me in that goal.

I have been accepted into the teaching program and I am excited to start the more specialized classes in my special education degree. After I graduate, I will continue to live here in the Grand Junction area to raise my daughter and start my career. This is a beautiful and caring community, so in one way or another, I hope to pay back the generosity I have received from so many. Thank you again for this opportunity, I deeply appreciate your kindness.

Sincerely,

*Cristal Ferguson*

Cristal Ferguson  
Junior  
BA of Pre-ECE: Early Chld Special Ed

## And a Message from the CMU Tech Scholarship Recipient

Dear AAUW Members,

I wanted to express my gratitude in receiving this scholarship. It means a lot to me especially from coming from a diverse background. I want you to know that I am involved in extracurricular activities such as the Associated Student Government, the Ho'olokahi Polynesian Alliance, and the Latino Student Alliance. I am grateful for the opportunities that are given to me. I appreciate the time and consideration for this scholarship.

How I will show my appreciation is being involved in student-led organizations on campus. I will work hard to study and maintain a high GPA. Education is very important to me and I am extremely appreciative that I have the opportunity to attend University as I know there are many people out there that don't get this same opportunity and this scholarship is essential to continuing my education.

Thank you again for this scholarship.

Sincerely,

*Leilani Domingo*

Leilani Domingo

Freshman

AAS of Pre-EMT: Paramedic

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## Notes from Branch President Jane Fitzgerald

Those in attendance at the last Coffee & Chat thought that celebrating **International Women's Day on March 8, 2024** might be a good way to increase our visibility in the community and establish our "brand". .... See November Newsletter for more information. In January we will be setting up a committee to make plans. Let me know if you want to be included.

I had a phone call from Rick Adleman of the Colorado Mesa University Foundation. He said we now need to refer to our AAUW WCCC Scholarship as AAUW CMU Tech Scholarship due to a name change for the school. He said it would not be necessary to redo the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).

**Important:** There will be another AAUW National Vote, beginning in April, 2024, regarding membership and if we want to keep the membership degree status as it is or vote for all inclusive membership where anyone...degree or not is allowed to join. This will change our AAUW quite a bit.... some members will come and some will go if it passes this time. Be prepared for that. What do you all think? What are advantages or ideas for both sides of the issue. The big push is to get people to vote! About only 10% of the membership voted 2 years ago.