

**January Branch Meeting, Joint with LWV  
Legislative Preview  
Fuller Lodge  
Thursday, January 4, 2024  
7pm (6:30 for refreshments)**



Our state legislators—Rep. Christine Chandler and Sens. Leo Jaramillo and Roberto Gonzales—will discuss their priorities and expectations for the upcoming 30-day Legislative session. In addition, Rep. Susan Herrera, Dist. 41, will talk about efforts underway to modernize our legislature, in particular by providing more paid staff to support legislators. Several plans have been proposed to finance such support. All speakers will answer questions from the audience. Branch member Margo Batha will be moderator for the preview. Come learn what issues are important to our legislators and to our community—and offer your own input.

**LA Cares Project**

104 fruit bags were packed for our LA Cares fruit project. Thank you to all contributors of funds critical to the success of this project and to the volunteers who ordered, packed, delivered and distributed the bags. We supplied fresh fruit to more families that ever before, and, considering price inflation and our branch’s dwindling membership, our contributions still exceeded the cost of the fruit.



Here are the numbers:

104 families, 267 individuals

\$ 990. Contributions

\$ 923. Cost of fruit

\$ 67. Contribution to LA Cares for Feb. fruit



## Los Alamos Schools Science Fair, Saturday,

**January 20:** Karen Henderson has signed us up but will be out of town for the event. Mary Ann Lindahl has agreed to organize the judging committee. If you would like to join the committee, please let Mary Ann know at ([moonbeamx@comcast.net](mailto:moonbeamx@comcast.net), (505) 660-2259).

We will be judging elementary level projects and will be looking for basic understanding of the scientific method. You do not need to be a scientist to volunteer. Mary Ann is a chemist and a teacher and provides excellent guidance. Plus, it is fun to enjoy the creativity of even the youngest of our students.

**Book Group.** There is no book group meeting in January. The February book is The Collectors Apprentice by B.A. Shapiro

## Nonfiction Book Group

The next meeting is on February 12; the book is Susan, Linda, Nina, and Cokie: The Extraordinary Story: of the Founding Mothers of NPR by Lisa Napoli.

## Great Decisions 2024

The books are being distributed. We will meet in the White Rock Public Library every two weeks, beginning on January 18 at 2:00 pm. If you wish to reserve leadership for a given topic, let Denise ([denisegeorge@icloud.com](mailto:denisegeorge@icloud.com), 505-690-3534) know. Zoom will be available.

**Mid-east Realignment** by Marc Lynch (reserved by Carroll Thomas)

**Climate technology and competition** by Bud Ward  
**Science across borders** by Mila Rosenthal (reserved by Denise George, Jan. 18)

**U.S. -China trade rivalry** by Jonathan Chanis

**NATO's future** by Sarwar Kashmeri

**Understanding Indonesia** by Charles Sullivan

**High Seas Treaty** by FPA editors (reserved by Carol Neal)

**Pandemic preparedness** by Carolyn Reynolds

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## AAUW's Advocacy Day at the Legislature Monday, Jan. 29, 10 am-noon

NM Land Office, Morgan Hall, 310 Old Santa Fe Trail  
and by Zoom

### Strengthening Education and Career Pathways

This year we have a short session where only budget items and items on the governor's call will be germane. Education spending accounts for over **half** of our state's budget, so we know it is always germane. We have made historic investments to improve early childhood programs, teacher salaries, scholarships, and much more, but we still remain at the bottom in terms of outcomes. We are especially concerned about math and science education and the lack of coordination between high school, post-secondary education, and careers. This year we are honored to have four professional women share their perspectives on the challenges, opportunities, and policy recommendations with us. Here's a snapshot of the program.

At 10 am, State Land Commissioner **Stephanie Garcia Richard**, former state representative, math teacher, and district curriculum director, will briefly explain how the distributions from NM's immense Land Grant Permanent Fund and the Severance Tax Permanent Fund support our early childhood programs, pre-K-12 education, and other designated state beneficiaries. At 10:15, **Dr. Lina Germann**, SFCC Board Member, founder and former STEM Santa Fe Director, and AAUW-Santa Fe member for 18 years, will talk about ways to engage youth in STEM careers and develop partnerships with community groups, parents, volunteers, scientists, businesses, and higher ed. At 10:30 **Dr. Kersti Tyson**, LANL Foundation's Director of Research and Evaluation, will discuss legislation and programs aimed at improving math instruction and learning outcomes. Kersti and her colleagues recognize that the way math is currently taught contributes to our alarmingly low math proficiency scores, our high dropout rates, and our severe shortages of science, engineering, health care, and technology professionals.

Handouts about math instruction, dual credit, and the Foundation's vision that were presented at the Legislative Education Study Committee's July meeting are available here: [https://nmlegis.gov/Committee/Handouts\\_List?CommitteeCode=ALESC&Date=7/26/2023](https://nmlegis.gov/Committee/Handouts_List?CommitteeCode=ALESC&Date=7/26/2023). Kersti will share her insights on math methods instruction from her experience as a Teacher Education faculty member at UNM and NNMC, and her former administrative position at PED.

At 11 am, **Kristina Fisher**, Associate Director of **Think NM**, will discuss their legislative proposals to reduce elementary class sizes, improve teacher education training, require school board candidates to report significant campaign contributions, and require school board members to get more annual training in budgets, student performance, educator accountability, and other matters. First in her UNM Law School class, recipient of a national Truman Fellowship, Kristina is known for her thorough research and expertise on education policy.

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We have worked with our premier statewide nonpartisan Think Tank in some of their past successful legislative efforts, including repealing taxes on food, ending predatory lending, and creating the Strategic Water Reserve. We will continue to advocate along with Think NM to oppose misguided legislation to reduce graduation requirements from 24 to 22 credits and eliminate Algebra 2. Knowing how essential Algebra is for STEM careers and competitive colleges, we believe that schools can offer relevant, rigorous options, including practical math and/or financial management, foreign languages, civics, and career pathways.

We invite you to join the Advocacy Team (**A-Team**) and help us testify on legislation aligned with our national and state Public Policy Priorities for 2023-25 (reprinted below). We need a full team to follow legislation, cover committee hearings, and speak for AAUW on what we support or oppose. Please see more information and links to resources on our website under the Public Policy tab and Explore Legislative Issues tab: <https://aauw-nm.aauw.net/>.

We will share more at our annual event, which is open to your friends and colleagues. If you can't be with us in person, join us on Zoom.

For more information, please contact AAUW State Public Policy Chair, Meredith Machen, [Meredith.Machen@gmail.com](mailto:Meredith.Machen@gmail.com), 505-577-6337.

**Zoom Link for AAUW NM Advocacy Day, Jan 29, 2024, 10-Noon, MT**

Click here:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84107659060?pwd=ekJSWCtmVnUrUTN5UotQRSs5TEFvUTo9>

Or enter in Zoom: Meeting ID: 841 0765 9060; Passcode: 069196.

No computer nearby? You can call 346 248 7799 (Houston) and enter the Meeting ID and Passcode when prompted. The Zoom features are a bit limited, but you can participate virtually from almost anywhere.

We will send out the Zoom link again with information about the Leadership meeting in mid-January.

**Calendar**

Jan 4	Legislative Preview
Jan 18	Great Decisions
Jan 20	Science Fair
Jan 29	AAUW Avocacy Day

**Coordinating Council 2023-2024**

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<b>Open</b>	Nominating		