



Un-Tea for Tech Trek

Please look to your snail mail in February for an invitation to the annual Los Alamos Branch "**Un-Tea Party**". Make a cup of tea, sit back and relax while sipping, and write a check to support the **2026 Tech Trek Camp** sponsored by AAUW Tech Trek New Mexico. The camp broadens the STEM horizons of the talented girls who attend, introduces them to a college campus (New Mexico Tech), and gives them an opportunity to make friends with other girls who also enjoy science, math, engineering, and technology.

When many of our branch members respond, we demonstrate to the camp organizers the depth of our support. That depth can be important in securing other grants.

Your contribution is tax exempt.

If you prefer not to wait, make your check out to **AAUW Tech Trek NM** and mail to:

**AAUW Tech Trek New Mexico
PO Box 90322
Albuquerque, NM 87199**

Tech Trek New Mexico is a week-long camp at New Mexico Tech campus in Socorro, NM for girls who are passionate about Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM). Twin sisters, Anjolie and Aubreyanna Gallegos from Pojoaque Valley Middle School attended the 2025 Tech Trek camp; at our Fall Lunch they shared both highlights and takeaways from their camp experiences. It was wonderful to hear the enthusiastic report. Our branch hopes to support other girls' wishes and aspirations to experience Tech Trek.

Tech Trek is looking for **volunteers to read essays** that the girls have submitted in their applications. Please contact Judy Prono if you are available to help in this capacity, or any council member. (djprono@msn.com or 505-412-3769)

!! Our gracious, organized and talented Hospitality Chair, Karin Roberts, is moving to Colorado. It goes without saying that she will be missed! The board is looking for a replacement. Please consider taking on this important role. !!

Public Policy Report

Branch members, Karin Roberts professionally coordinated refreshments from the branch, and Margo Batha moderated the proceedings at the Legislative Preview co-sponsored with LWV. If you missed the Preview, there is a link to a recording of the proceedings at: <https://youtu.be/1cTMj-ACPw0>.

Christine Chandler, our state representative, focused on AI and consumer protection and on Medical Malpractice and a Loan repayment package for health workers. Dist. 5 Sen. Leo Jaramillo (LA) spoke about interstate medical licensing compacts and support for rural communities. Dist. 6 Sen. Roberto Gonzales (WR) was unable to attend due to weather, but asked Sen. Jaramillo to speak about his issues: expanding fire crews to 6 full time crews, funding teacher medical insurance, and funding for rural transportation.

NM Legislature 2026: The 30-day session began Jan. 20 and is expected to focus on the budget with dollars for childcare for all being highly contentious. AAUW is watching several initiatives supporting medical care in our state, also initiatives to regulate the use of Artificial Intelligence and distribution of deepfake images.

AAUW-NM supports:

- NM joining all ten of the interstate medical personnel compacts. NM has been a part of the nurses compact for many years. While there is strong support for legislation allowing NM physicians to join these compacts, there is less enthusiasm for including other medical professionals, such as physicians' assistants, therapists, dentists, EMTs, psychologists, etc.
- HB 99 Medical malpractice (sponsored by Rep. Chandler) to include capping punitive damages and clarifying definitions. Between 2019-2024, NM was the only state to lose practicing physicians and the cost of malpractice insurance was the most cited cause. (Survey published in the Albuquerque Journal, Jan. 20, 2026)
- Distribution of Deepfake Images, HB22 and AI Transparency Act, HB28, both sponsored by Rep. Chandler.

AAUW-NM Bill Tracker

- Here is the link to the Bill Tracker that Meredith Machen and our Public Policy Committee are using to track all bills of interest to AAUW-NM: nmlegiswatch.org Open link, click "Trackers" along the top, then select American Association of University Women. Bills, their content and their status are updated daily. Note, you may also track League of Women Voters bills.
- This site pulls data from nmlegis.gov but is in no way associated with that site or the state of New Mexico. It's just a labor of love by Ed Santiago, a Los Alamos resident, volunteer and computer guru.
- If you choose to "Subscribe" or register you can make your own list of bills to track and there are a few other handy features. Otherwise, no information is needed to view.

Nina Thayer, Branch Public Policy Chair

The AAUW State Winter LTM/Advocacy Day will be on Saturday, January 31st on Zoom.

It will begin at 8:30am and is scheduled to end at 2:30pm.

There will be a morning Break, a Lunch Break, and a Stretch Break in the afternoon.

Zoom Link: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/83291219485?pwd=HKAaSV7IvV5awZBDJ5v3kTlwvb5pS2.1>

Great Decisions

This group meets on Tuesdays 2:00-3:30 at the White Rock library. Meetings are hybrid: in-person and by Zoom. Branch members who have not joined the group are welcome to sample a Zoom session; Denise (denisegeorge@icloud.com, 505-690-3534) will be happy to send out a link if asked. Three topics remain to be assigned dates and topic leaders: Ruptured Alliances and the Risk of Nuclear Proliferation, Multilateral Institutions in a Changing World Order, The Future of Human Rights and International Law.

Jan 27	U.S. Engagement of Africa #7	Denise George
Feb 10	Ukraine and the Future of European Security #5	Karin Roberts
Feb 24	Trump Tariffs and the Future of the World Economy #2	Judy Prono
Mar 10		
Mar 24	America and the World: Trump 2.0 Foreign Policy #1	Mona Wecksung
April 14		
April 28		
May 12	U.S. China Relations #3	Marilyn Doolen

Nonfiction Book Group

The next two books have been chosen, Art Spy by Michelle Young: discussion leader Denise George, and Birding to Change the World by Trish O'Kane: discussion leader: Carol Neal. Dates for the meetings TBD.

Book Group

The February book is The Women by Kristin Hannah. Angela Coop will review at both meetings.

The February 2nd, 7pm meeting will be hosted by Angela Coop at 332 Aragon, WR. Please let Angela know if you will attend (505 672-1073, acwalkercoop@yahoo.com).

The February 3rd 1pm meeting will be held at Sherrill Hall Trinity on the Hill. Please let Roselle Wright know if you are coming (bandrwright@yahoo.com, 505-662-5490)

Science Fair

The Los Alamos County Science fair has been rescheduled for Saturday, January 31, still at Barranca School; we will meet at 8:00. New volunteer judges welcome; contact Karen Henderson at 505-695-0247.



DEI VICTIM: BREE FRAM

Colonel, SPACE FORCE, 2021–2025

As a kid, Bree Fram dreamed of becoming an astronaut. After 9/11, she joined the Air Force and deployed to the Persian Gulf, where she tested new technologies to protect convoys from improvised explosive devices. That assignment led to her specialty: managing teams that built novel systems. (One came up with tools that could be used to take over an attacking drone, forcing it to fall from the sky.) The military kept sending Fram back to school, and her advanced degrees piled up. When the Space Force was created, she drafted its blueprint for acquiring the technologies of the future and ensured that new initiatives didn't get smothered by bureaucracy. Her mission was cut short by a biographical fact: Fram is transgender. Upon arriving in office, Trump barred from service anyone who did not identify with their birth gender.

[The Atlantic, "The Purged", February 2026](#)

Fruit Project Report

We received a lovely thank you note from LA Cares for the fruit bags distributed during the December holiday food distribution; the letter is included at the end of this newsletter. The cash donation listed as \$811.54 includes \$400 donated last year but not entered into their books until January of 2025. In 2025, our branch collected \$1400; we spent \$988.06 on fruit (10% discount). All other supplies (bags, ribbons, candy) were contributed, leaving \$411.54. The \$811.54 donation is the sum of the \$400 from 2024 and the \$411.54 from this year to be used where most needed. Be sure to read the thank you letter, it summarizes the valuable work accomplished by this volunteer organization.

Denise George, Fruit Project Committee Chair

Future Programs

- March: "Understanding Unconscious Bias"
- April: Out 'n About to New Mexico Heritage Arts Museum and lunch at museum hill cafe
- May: Spring Tea

AAUW-Los Alamos LTM Report January 2026

In December, our members donated \$1400 to add fruit to LA Cares' monthly food distribution to families facing food insecurity in our community. Almost \$1000 was used to fill 117 bags with bananas, pears, mandarin oranges, and apples; the remaining funds were given to LA Cares to purchase fruit in January. Members decorated colorful holiday bags, stuffed them with fruit, and delivered them to the distribution site (see photo). This is an annual event that has become our branch project for the holidays.



We started January with our annual Legislative Preview at Fuller Lodge. We co-sponsor this event with LWV-Los Alamos, bringing our state legislators together to share their goals and expectations for the upcoming session and to answer questions from community members. Rep. Christine Chandler and Sen. Leo Jaramillo spoke to us, along with Kristina Fisher, Associate Director of Think New Mexico. Despite snowy conditions, we had a good turnout.

Presentations and discussions focused on healthcare issues, especially medical compacts and malpractice insurance reforms. Rep. Chandler spent much of her summer studying the malpractice issue and looking at what nearby states, like Colorado, have done to limit punitive damages. She is working on a bill that would cap these damages. Both malpractice reform and medical compacts are also among the top legislative goals that Think New Mexico will be pursuing this session, along with eliminating GRT on healthcare expenses.

In preparation for the upcoming Legislative session, Nina Thayer, our Public Policy Chair, discussed AAUW-NM's bill tracker (nmlegiswatch.org) at a recent Coordinating Council meeting. We will explain the online bill tracker and provide a link to it in our upcoming branch newsletter. This will give members direct access to the status of legislation AAUW-NM is following and help promote interaction with legislators on bills that need our support.

On January 24, we will again help judge in the Los Alamos Public Schools annual Science Fair, evaluating elementary-grade level projects. We write notes to encourage kids to remain scientifically curious and include small cash awards to recognize success in conducting and documenting their science projects.
Judy Prono, AAUW-Los Alamos

Calendar

Jan 27	Great Decisions, Africa
Jan 31	Legislative Day -Zoom
Jan 31	Science fair
Feb 2,3	Book Group
Feb 9	LTM
Feb 10	Great Decisions - Ukraine
Feb 24	Great Decisions - Tariffs

AAUW Los Alamos Council Members

Council Voting Members	
Judy Prono	Facilitator
Linda McLellan	Secretary
Mary Ann Lindahl	Membership/Treasurer
Judy Prono	JEDI justice, equity, diversity, inclusion
Denise George	Newsletter/WEB
Nina Thayer	Public Policy
Marilyn Doolen	Historian
Bev Cooper	Publicity
Appointed positions	
Carol Neal	UNM-LA Scholarship
Helena Whyte	STEM
Karin Roberts	Hospitality
Open positions	
	University Relations
	Nominating
contact: AAUWLA@icloud.com	

LA Cares

PO Box 248, Los Alamos, NM 87544
Lacaresnm.org
505-661-8015

AAUW
Denise George
411 Cheryl Ave.
White Rock NM 87547

December 31, 2025

Dear Friends of LA Cares,

You are amazing! Especially this fall, when the need has been far greater, you and the generous people of Los Alamos stepped up...big time!! We have many new donors, as well as returning contributors. Many are recurring monthly givers, which we greatly appreciate. We have been able to increase our food offerings each month, and to help more families with their rent or utility payments.

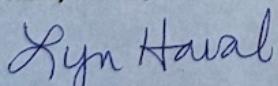
Your generous donation of \$811.54 (plus the beautiful fruit bags in December!) in 2025 is important to our mission of "preventing homelessness in Los Alamos County." With the food, rent and/or utility assistance we hope to help families remain in their houses with the pantry stocked and the heat on. Without your support, many struggling households in Los Alamos would be even more unstable.

Highlights of 2025:

- *Monthly food distributions served approximately 100 families each month (1,143) (2,649 individuals). We supplement food offerings from the Food Depot in Santa Fe with fresh fruits and vegetables, meat, cheese, eggs, butter, bread, cereal, juice, diapers, kid snacks, personal care items, dog and cat food, and special dietary needs. These items amount to approximately \$4,000 per month.
- *77 households received rent assistance (a total of \$37,222.00)
- *74 households received utility assistance (a total of \$30,924.00)
- * 12 large food drives (businesses, churches and synagogue, civic organizations, and schools) and many smaller ones held by individuals or families
- *Our active Board of Directors and cadre of volunteers donated over 5,000 hours to make all this happen. (At \$20/hour, that's \$100,000 worth of efforts put into making sure our neighbors can remain in their homes.) We have no paid staff; we are 100% volunteers. Our operating costs are only 4% of our budget—essentials like insurance and phone.

We can only accomplish this amazing work of generosity because of you and other concerned community members like you. We are pleased to be the conduit through which your donations result in real life changes.

With many thanks,



Lyn Haval,
President,
LA Cares, Board of Directors