



March 2022 News

Celebrate

WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH!

Dear NOW members,

Women's rights are human rights and March is Women's History Month. On our [Facebook](#) page, we have been highlighting our foremothers from this county and nationally. However, this edition of our newsletter is dedicated to featuring several incredible women making history now, on our local bilingual station, KBBF 98.1 FM. If you have been a member of our chapter for any length of time, you know that Elaine B. Holtz (our past president and current treasurer) hosts [Women's Spaces](#) every Monday. Our February issue focused on that. What you may not realize is that there are two other programs created by women on the same station. I had the privilege of interviewing all of them and want you to meet them as well: Amalia Contardi (who is also a Spanish teacher of mine), Maria Mendoza, and Maria de los Angeles, hosting [Voces de Mujeres](#) (*Voices of Women*), while Ana Salgado and Patricia Moreno created [Compartiendo y Aprendiendo](#) (*Sharing and Learning*). Below are their stories.

One of the questions I asked was what they wanted to see our chapter do in the way of activism, and we all need to pay attention to their answers: Linguistic Justice and Immigration Reform. We'll talk further

about them in meetings and more details follow in this newsletter. Take a look also at what NOW stands for; at the bottom of each newsletter, we've clearly delineated our mission.

NOW already is doing great things. Ana wrote me, after our interview, the following words:

I would like to add that thanks to your example (NOW) we are starting the difficult work of allowing us to vote. As a foreigner and being 32 years in this country without being able to cast my vote, finally I have done it for the first time. This was a great achievement and I am proud to share it. Thank you for this wonderful opportunity.

I'll end with these words: "To coincide with powerful women is no accident . . . it is a reflection of that which you are."

I was so blessed to have had the privilege of meeting with these five women and I hope you enjoy reading about them.

Our monthly meetings are changing from the third Thursday to the third Monday evening, beginning at 7:00. This shift is due to changes in my schedule, and I do hope the new day is a good one for you, too. While we will be advertising this, please tell your friends and community members too. Note that this month, the board meeting will be

on **March 21**, since tomorrow is too soon to spread the word. We will be discussing ways to reach out to our marginalized communities, including the undocumented.

Finally, for our April and May meetings, we will be hosting some of our local candidates and discussing their views, so look for more details soon!

—Amy Nykamp

The photo is of United Nations women in Chile in 2015, taken by Mario Ruiz. I liked the banner behind them as the words are appropriate for what I learned in these interviews ("Women in Power—Building a Different World").

[View this email in your browser](#)

***Join us on Zoom, Monday, March 21 7:00 PM
Board Meeting***

Join Zoom Meeting:

[https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82846374496?pwd=WIA0cE5CaFczUUtg
a1Nkc2tYQXkydz09](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82846374496?pwd=WIA0cE5CaFczUUtg
a1Nkc2tYQXkydz09)

Meeting ID: 828 4637 4496 **Passcode:** 035853

Phone in Numbers:

+1 669 900 9128 (San Jose)

Locations outside the United States

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/kebNSIm8Js>

Meet Women Making History on KBBF!

Amalia Contardi and her *compañeras*, María Mendoza and Maria de los Angeles, together have created a bilingual show, *Voces de Mujeres*, that features shared stories by women of color, in particular, Latinas. Here are the hosts' stories.

Amalia grew up bilingual in Los Angeles, with much of her Spanish fluency learned on the streets of the city. Her family was full of strong matriarchs, from her great-grandmother on down. She was taught that women are the leaders and as such, we carry the world on our shoulders. Amalia met Alicia Sanchez (the

president of the of the station's executive board) over 20 years ago and learned about *Voces de Mujeres*. She was asked to run the program and has been there these past two decades, where she has brought on other co-hosts, trained them, and emphasized the importance of giving voice to women. She says it is important to hear women's voices on the radio, not just men's.

Amalia began her pursuit of social justice when she was around 11 or 12 years old, seeing her neighbors and friends fighting for equality in wages, education, and housing—areas where they were discriminated against because of the color of their skin. This was when Cesar Chavez spent time in Los Angeles. Amalia and her mother would go to rallies and concerts by political activists. She became an avid radio listener and found her voice as she grew. Eventually, Amalia made her way to Sonoma County and the rest is history.

María Mendoza experienced first-hand the injustices for migrant workers. Her father, José Pilar Mendoza, was one of the earliest members to benefit from the [Bracero Program](#) that ran from 1942 to 1964. Owners of large farms and agricultural organizations hired men who were strong enough to perform the grueling work. While this program was created to allow millions of Mexicans to legally work in the United States, injustice was rampant. Those in the program had no rights or security. The work was seasonal and those employed traveled from state to

state depending on what crop was ready to be harvested. José worked in Sebastopol and other parts of the state. He never received the compensation that was his due. María only saw her father for one month each year, when he was given leave.

María chose a career as a social worker, but realized that what she learned was not reality. She awoke to the inequity, largely due to her working in unions. Her mother died and María went through an abusive marriage. She learned to use her voice, to say what needed to be said. One of the co-hosts of *Voces de Mujeres* convinced her to join the program and to bring voices from the background to the foreground, by way of the microphone. She continues to pursue this work in honor of José , who died eight years ago.

María adamantly stated during our interview that "while our older relatives are living, write down their stories before it's too late! Unfortunately, María missed that opportunity.

The third of the trio of hosts, María de los Angeles, was raised in the Canal District of San Rafael. She was a shy girl, an observer, as she describes herself, but underwent a series of experiences that have turned her into the social activist she is today. María's mother was an advocate for a better life and María learned a great deal from shadowing her at meetings. When María reached ninth grade, she attended her first march—it was an assembly against California's [Proposition 187](#), which,

according to *Encyclopedia Britannica*, sought to keep "social services, non-emergency health services, and public education" inaccessible to undocumented immigrants. This was in place from 1994 to 1999, when it finally was voided by the federal government. Maria remembers chanting, "¡Sí, se puede!"

This was a turning point for María. She majored in sociology in the community college in Berkeley and during school, participated in a lot of rallies, campaigns, and other community actions. No longer the reserved child she had been, María has found her voice has power. She joined *Voces de Mujeres* two years ago; while unexpected, it has been motivating and encouraging. She never imagined herself as being a host on a radio, and was intimidated at first, but with the mentoring she has received, she can pass that training on to others. She invites guests from all walks of life and the highlights are when they share their stories of encouragement and of empowerment.

Voces de Mujeres airs on Saturdays from 1–2 p.m.

Ana Salgado and Patricia Moreno formed *Compartiendo y Aprendiendo* three years ago—January 2019—before the world was turned entirely upside down, but have performed a vital

service since then.

Ana came to the United States 32 years ago, from the State of Morelos, Mexico. She was the first in her family to cross the border; two cousins had tried and had not succeeded. She was raised in a family of women and her mother had to make many sacrifices for them due to poverty. The patriarchal society was the cause of many problems and Ana said she has been advocating for social justice since birth. Ana related that she was expected to be a boy and, because she was a girl, she had to be submissive. However, Ana fought hard to make her voice heard and did express herself, subtly, in the face of being told her opinions didn't matter. She believes that there are lessons to be learned from oppression.

It is this strength that brought her to the United States and to KBBF. She learned that the "microphone doesn't bite" and that she can give voice to the voiceless. She has also learned that she has gained strength through comradeship of other women. One of the show's highlights for her was when a young listener called into the program as part of a homework assignment. She wouldn't have otherwise been able to finish the assignment because her parents were migrant workers and were too tired at the end of a long day to take their daughter to the library for research. Ana was able to answer her questions and so she could complete the homework!

Patricia Moreno describes herself as 50 years old, a mother who has dreams, worries, and fears about the world and local situations, just a "normal" woman. She lived for 21 years as undocumented in this country and for the last two years has been a legal resident. The experience of being an immigrant, undocumented, and a woman, has given her a unique perspective and has allowed her to make changes.

In October of 2014, she became an advocate for social justice because an unbelievable situation took place in southern Mexico: 43 students disappeared, never to be found. These were mostly poor men who were studying to become teachers, fighting their way out of poverty in the best way they knew. Patricia was able to feel connected to the mothers in their anguish, imagining what it would be like to lose her child, and to the students themselves. She was a student and knew of that kind of poverty. As a result, Patricia began attending vigils and Sonoma County activist organizations. She collected some three thousand (3,000!) signatures and brought the plight of the students to the attention of the Mexican community in our county. What she found was that many organizations came together in solidarity, even when the members had never met or worked in tandem.

Patricia has a memory that she and Ana met during one of the vigils following Andy Lopez's murder. They found an immediate connection (partially because they "looked like each other"—i.e.,

not Caucasian—and over the next several years ran into each other at various vigils and other gatherings. Once again, Alicia Sanchez appeared and invited them both to join the family at KBBF. They accepted because both knew that the radio station is a focal point for activism. Their news is local and is a place where the immigrant community can gather.

From the beginning of their show, the women have worked tirelessly to bring critical information to the immigrant community, many of whom wouldn't otherwise receive the news. For instance, two years before their show was conceived of, Patricia knew that Alicia had provided minute-by-minute details during the fires, ensuring that listeners knew where they could go for safety and resources. When the pandemic arrived, Patricia and Ana felt responsible to continue that work to keep the community informed and safe.

Patricia is motivated to continue to inform listeners and to encourage them to take the next step: instead of worrying, or being angry, or complaining about a situation, get involved! She sees *Compartiendo y Aprendiendo* as a jumping-off point and hopes to ignite curiosity in her listeners so that they can find out more on their own.

Both Ana and Patricia underscored that they would like to see Sonoma County NOW help with implementing two things: "linguistic justice" and immigration reform. The former would

allow the opportunity for non-English speakers to be able to use their own languages in every level of public service (local, state, federal), so that when someone who, for instance, from Guatemala, needs to speak with a city council, they can do that and be understood. We need to stop forcing people to learn English, while not attempting to learn their native tongues. We have many indigenous languages in this county, more than we realize. As members of a national organization endeavoring to ensure equality, we need to ensure that those most in need of rights are not overlooked. If you know of anyone with whom we can connect, please write to info@nowsonoma.org.

TWO WOMEN'S HISTORY SPECIALS UPCOMING on NORTH
BAY PUBLIC MEDIA

MONDAY, MARCH 21 and MONDAY, MARCH 28:

I noticed in the printed monthly TV calendar these two specials coming up. But just now on their website they only have access to the next week or so, so one cannot give a direct link. Please do mark the dates, spread the word, and catch these free showings if you can! —Carol Singer

*Votes for Women: History of Women's Suffrage
through Song*

Monday, March 21, 9 p.m., KRCB TV

Link for general info [here](#).

Revolution of the Heart: The Dorothy Day Story

Monday, March 28, 8 p.m., KPJK TV

Link for general info [here](#).



March dates to celebrate

- **March 8 – International Women's Day**
- **March 10 – Harriet Tubman Day** (c. 1822–1913)
- **March 12, 1908 – Maria Rifo** (1908–2006), cofounder Alternatives to Violence Project, farmworkers' translator, Sonoma County activist
- **March 13: Daylight Savings Time starts: spring forward!**
- **March 13, 1892 – Janet Flanner** (1892–1978), author, journalist
- **March 14, 1887 – Sylvia Beach** (1887–1962), author, publisher
- **March 15, 1932 – Ruth Bader Ginsburg** (1932–2020), trailblazing Supreme Court Justice
- **March 16, 1917 –Marjorie Downing Wagner** (1917–1997), first female California state university president
- **March 17: St. Patrick's Day and NOW meeting!**

- **March 20 – Spring begins, Spring Equinox**
- **March 22, 1848 – Sarah Latimer Finley** (1848–1937), Sonoma County educator, suffragist
- **March 24, 1826 – Matilda Joslyn Gage** (1826–1898), suffrage leader, native rights leader
- **March 24, 1881 – Alma de Bretteville Spreckels** (1881–1968), Bay Area philanthropist, reformer
- **March 25, 1934 – Gloria Steinem** (1934–), women's rights leader, author, activist
- **March 26, 8:30–9:30 p.m. worldwide: EARTH HOUR. Turn off the lights and give the earth a break!**
- **March 26, 1930 – Sandra Day O'Connor** (1930–), first female Supreme Court Justice
- **March 27, 1924 – Sarah Vaughan** (1924–1990), singer
- **March 28, 1861 – Wilhelmina Kakelaokalaninui Widemann Dowsett** (1861–1929), Hawaiian suffrage leader
- **March 28, 1886 – Clara Lemlich** (1886–1982), union leader, suffragist
- **March 29, 1918 – Pearl Bailey** (1918–1990), actor, singer

Visit our Sonoma County NOW site for news and lots of links and information:

<http://www.nowsonoma.org/>

(707) 545-5036

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Santa Rosa, CA 95406

About NOW

As the grassroots arm of the women's movement, the National Organization for Women is dedicated to its multi-issue and multi-strategy approach to women's rights, and is the largest organization of feminist grassroots activists in the United States. NOW has hundreds of chapters and hundreds of thousands of members and activists in all 50 states and the District of Columbia. Since our founding in 1966, NOW's purpose is to take action through intersectional grassroots activism to promote feminist ideals, lead societal change, eliminate discrimination, and achieve and protect the equal rights of all women and girls in all aspects of social, political, and economic life.

Core Issues

NOW is a multi-issue, multi-strategy organization that takes a holistic approach to women's rights. Our priorities are winning economic equality and securing it with an amendment to the U.S. Constitution

that will guarantee equal rights for women; championing abortion rights, reproductive freedom and other women's health issues; opposing racism; fighting bigotry against the LGBTQIA community; and ending violence against women.

Reproductive Rights and Justice

NOW fully supports safe and legal abortion, affordable and effective birth control and other contraception, and reproductive health education for all.

Economic Justice

NOW advocates for a wide range of economic justice issues, women's freedom and success and intertwined with racial justice, reproductive freedom, and other systems of oppression.

Ending Violence Against Women

NOW recognizes violence against women as the broad and interconnected issue that it is, addressing oppressive structures and attitudes in our nation.

Racial Justice

A leader in civil rights since 1966, NOW continues to fight for equal opportunities for women of color in all areas including employment, education, and health care.


LGBTQIA+ Rights

NOW is committed to fighting discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity in all areas.

Constitutional Equality

NOW is a proud supporter of the Equal Rights Amendment and prioritizes giving women explicit protections in the United States Constitution.

For additional information go to: <https://now.org/about/>

 **MEMBERSHIP AND RENEWAL FORM**

Regular membership \$40/year \$75 2 yrs \$115 3 yrs
 Reduced dues: \$10–30/year

Name _____


Address _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Sonoma County Chapter #CA0660

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1/2021