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AAUW honors 2020-21 Distinguished Woman

Submitted by Alison Mackenzie



Dr. Jan Cushman Photo provided

since 1978 and they have two children.

After she retired in 2011, she joined AAUW. Her primary focus as an AAUW member has been the Tech Trek program.

The AAUW Tech Trek program sends middle school girls to a weeklong science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) camp. The OML branch traditionally has sent six or seven girls from the three local middle schools (Orinda, Stanley and Joaquin Moraga) to a camp that has been held at Stanford. The purpose of the Tech Trek program is to show young girls how exciting STEM can be and connect them with other girls interested in science, before they get to high school and think STEM is only for boys. Tech Trek was canceled in 2020 and held virtually in the summer of 2021.

Cushman has headed the OML Tech Trek committee and has been responsible for accepting applications, interviewing applicants, providing a social orientation both before and after camp, as well as acting as a dorm mom at Stanford for four years.

Cushman is also the president of the OML branch for 2021-22. In addition to her work with AAUW, Cushman is also the local Girl Scout Gold Award Coordinator, responsible for helping over 100 girls attain the Girl Scouts highest honor.

Every May, the Orinda-Moraga-Lafayette Branch of the American Association of University Women (AAUW-OML) honors one of its members as the Distinguished Woman of the Year, for services to the community and the branch.

In April 2020, Dr. Jan Cushman of Orinda was named AAUW-OML Distinguished Woman for 2020. Due to COVID restrictions, the May 2020 luncheon in her honor was postponed to September 2020, then postponed to May 2021. Dr. Cushman was finally honored at an in-person, outdoor, masked and vaxed? brunch in September 2021. She thus became the first honoree to hold the title for two years, 2020 and 2021.

Cushman got a BS in biology from Cornell, an MS in zoology and physiological ecology from Colorado State and a PhD from Utah State in toxicology. She was employed by Chevron for over 30 years working in Toxicology. She has been married to husband, Bruce,

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