



September 2023 Advocate

Online at <https://daw-ca.aauw.net/newsletter/>

Membership Brunch
Saturday September 23, 2023
10:00 am – 1:00pm
Crow Canyon Country Club, Danville



Please join us for the **2023 Membership Brunch** – it’s our annual branch meeting that you won’t want to miss! There will be a lovely buffet meal and time to visit with members and guests after our summer break in branch activities. The program will include branch business, provide information about plans for the coming year, and have opportunities to connect with branch committees and Interest Groups. In addition, some of the Tech Trek campers will be present to share their takeaways from their STEM camp experiences this past summer.

A highlight of the brunch program will be our **keynote speaker, Cindy Silva, mayor of Walnut Creek** and DAW branch member, providing her perspective on “A Local Lens on Women’s Leadership”. What are the obstacles to more women in government leadership roles? What are the core challenges and opportunities for women in government? What does it take to succeed? In conversation with **Walnut Creek Transportation Commissioner Samantha Caygill**, Mayor Silva will share insights drawn from her distinguished career in public service.

For more information about the brunch and keynote speaker, [click here](#).

Make your Brunch reservation now! The deadline is September 13 and space is limited.

- To **reserve by mail**, send your check for \$49, payable to DAW AAUW, to P.O. Box 996, Alamo, CA 94507. Please include your email address to receive confirmation of your reservation.
- To **reserve on-line**, click [HERE](#). The cost is \$54.38 which includes a service fee.

Co-Presidents' Message

By Ogie Strogatz and Monika Witte, Co-Presidents

Over the summer, the new DAW Board met for our annual one-day "Strategy Session" to plan for the coming year. We talked about where we're headed as a branch, our programs for FY23-24, and opportunities to engage with our community. We also discussed some of the challenges we face - such as declining membership and unbalanced fundraising (with a very successful Garden Tour benefiting Local Scholarships, but an anticipated need to really step up this year for Tech Trek).



Monika Witte



Ogie Strogatz

We committed to continue striving to make a difference as champions for public education, to help realize AAUW's mission: advancing gender equity for women and girls.

Board members shared why belonging to DAW is important to them. The list of reasons is wonderfully wide-ranging! Members expressed their resonance with the mission, the opportunity to promote STEM careers for women and girls, to meet and support like-minded women, to engage with them in leadership, friendship, learning, and service with a meaningful impact on our communities.

Why is belonging to DAW important to you?

We look forward to partnering with you all to explore the many ways in which DAW membership can be rewarding. *Welcome to the year ahead!*

September Checklist

- **September 21, 7:00 pm – The School Board Project** - CA AAUW webinar
For details and to RSVP, [click here](#)
- **September 23, 10:00 am – Membership Brunch**
For details and to RSVP, [click here](#)
- **October 19, 6:00 pm - DAW Third Thursday Member Meeting:**
Protecting Honest, Inclusive Education: SRV Unified School District
Save the date!
- [Donate here](#) to support DAW branch programs
- **Volunteer!** – Board and committee positions are open for 2023-24! Learn more [here](#)

DAW Public Policy - Advocacy Opportunities

Two important events are coming soon – a Sept 21 CA AAUW webinar, and our branch member meeting on Oct 19 – that are very relevant to our branch commitment to advocating for equity and balance in public education. These programs will help ground us in awareness and understanding to respond to the mounting controversy facing local school boards, so we can help ensure inclusive, honest public education for all students. The following are descriptions of the events; plan to attend and get involved in helping our community's students.

Book Banning and Curricula Censorship in California? AAUW California to the Rescue! September 21, 7:00 pm - Webinar



Will Lester, Inland Valley Daily Bulletin/SCNG

State Superintendent of Public Instruction, Tony Thurmond
at Chino Valley Unified School District Board

Local school boards across the country are being challenged aggressively by an anti-democracy movement of individuals and groups who seek to prevent students from receiving a diverse, comprehensive education, in the name of protecting children and parents' rights. The movement aims to censor the history, perspectives, and current oppression of historically marginalized groups, including Black, Native American, Latino, and LGBTQIA+ communities.

These challenges have hit California, including the San Ramon Valley Unified School District.

As a leading organization advocating equity for women and girls, AAUW is fully committed to equitable access to education and accuracy in historical representation.

[REGISTER HERE](#) for the webinar to learn more about CA AAUW's recently launched **School Board Project**, and what we all can do to ensure inclusive, honest public education for all students.

Third Thursday Member Meeting Protecting Honest, Inclusive Education: San Ramon Valley Unified School District October 19, 6:00 pm

**Danville Congregational Church
989 San Ramon Valley Blvd, Danville**

The October branch meeting will feature a panel moderated by our Public Policy Chair, Laurinda Ochoa. The panel will focus on the current experience of the San Ramon Valley Unified School District (SRVUSD) regarding the issue of honest and inclusive education. They will provide context to enrich our understanding and action, including: California education code regarding parental rights and the Board of Education duty to educate; the local PTA's goals, role, and perspective; the student perspective; and our branch's historic involvement in advocating for quality public education in SRVUSD.

The following distinguished panel will be featured:

- Shelley Clark, SRVUSD Board Trustee, Area 2
- Ravneet Julka, parent of four and attorney
- Lisa Gross, President of 32nd District PTA
- SRVUSD Student - to be announced
- Leslie Vilhauer, retired teacher, branch member and Past President, DAW AAUW

We look forward to an informative, energizing presentation!

Save the date!

We are updating the format of our member meetings after our summer break. In addition to the formal program, there will be 30 minutes to ***Mingle, Munch, and Make a Difference*** at the start of the evening. We've also moved to a convenient, spacious new location – the *Danville Congregational Church*. For more info and updates about the meeting, [click here](#).

DAW Represents at a Local School Board Meeting!

The San Ramon Valley Unified School District (SRVUSD) Board will have two seats up for election/re-election in 2024. Consequently, this district is a prime target for extremist groups right now. The groups are organizing locally to cultivate support for “parental rights” to control curriculum, school libraries, and school culture such as clubs and activities.

Thanks to the [CA AAUW School Board Project](#), our branch learned that at the August 15, 2023 meeting of the SRVUSD Board, members of one or more these groups (such as Moms For Liberty) were expected to attend and make public comments in favor of "parental rights." Groups advocating honest, inclusive education also were expected to be in attendance (Stop Moms for Liberty, PFLAG, a few student groups).



New member Susan
Hildreth



DAW Represents!



Laurinda Ochoa

Fifteen motivated DAW members rallied to attend the board meeting. Our goals were to:

- Be a visible local community presence to witness the comments and the SRVUSD Board response.
- Make a public comment - “we express our concern about restricting books and limiting curricula content.”

Laurinda Ochoa, our incoming Public Policy Chair, spoke eloquently for our group. You can listen to her comments in a video taken of the entire meeting. [Click here](#) and go forward to 3:30:51.

Feedback from our branch members who attended was overwhelmingly positive. A few comments:

"I think our presence was important and appreciate your organizing us!" – Lee Garverick

"Thank you for organizing us to make a point at this important event. I am proud to be a part of this group!" – Chris Ritter

"I was proud to stand up with all of you representing AAUW." – Tena Gallagher

"Thank you for organizing, it was eye-opening and I now plan to attend more of the meetings. I was really glad there were a good number of AAUW members present." – Barbara Blalock

DAW plans to continue having a presence at local school board meetings this year. Please come to our monthly Third Thursday Member Meetings, beginning in October, to learn more about opportunities for advocacy and action.

Apply Now! Funds Offered by National AAUW

By Roseann Krane, DAW VP Funds

With a **"Career Development Grant"** from National AAUW, awardees can receive from \$2,000 to \$20,000. The grant application period opens on August 1 every year and the deadline is November 15. Career Development Grants provide funding to women who hold a bachelor's degree and are preparing to advance, or change careers, or re-enter the workforce in education; health and medical sciences; science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM); or social sciences. Are you or is someone you know interested? [Click here](#) for more information.

Or maybe you want to do something for the community - and for that AAUW offers a **"Community Action Grant"**. These grants are also open for applicants from August 1 until November 15. Community Action Grants provide funding to individuals, AAUW branches and AAUW state organizations as well as community-based nonprofits for general operating support and innovative projects that promote education and equity for women and girls. Since 1972, AAUW has provided support to hundreds of communities across the United States. Are you interested? [Click here.](#)

For more information about these and many other funding programs from National AAUW, please [click here.](#)

Membership Corner

There's Still Time to Renew!

Current DAW branch membership renewals were due by July 1st – but if you haven't renewed yet, don't worry, there's still time to get it done. Just visit the branch website – [click here](#) – and look for the instructions for "Renewing Members".

Thank you for your continued membership and your support of advancing equity for women and girls!

And for those who have recently joined or renewed, as part of a special partnership with National AAUW, we're pleased to offer a free, **one-year membership to the legendary Ms. Magazine** which includes four print issues. If you haven't already, [sign up](#) to get your subscription today!

DAW Branch Membership Directory Is in The Works

With the start of a new fiscal year, our 2023-24 DAW Branch Membership Directory is in the works. Take a moment now to review your information in the old Directory. Is your email address out of date? Is your photo missing or could it be more recent? Please send any and all new photos and updates to Database and Directory Manager, Joanne Quijano at jtq@sbcglobal.net.

AAUW National News

Commemorate Women’s Equality Day by Urging Action on The Equal Rights Amendment

August 26 was Women’s Equality Day, commemorating the passage of the 19th Amendment which gave women the right to vote - in theory. The reality is that millions of women - particularly women of color - remained disenfranchised for decades. Even today, we continue to fight for access to the ballot box.

Join us in marking Women’s Equality Day by [contacting your members of Congress](#) and urging them to affirm the Equal Rights Amendment.

AAUW Lobby Corps Is Back on Capitol Hill!

We’re grateful to the AAUW Lobby Corps for going to Capitol Hill on July 27 to meet with lawmakers and urge them to affirm the Equal Rights Amendment. It was their first visit since 2019 - but certainly not their last! The Corps is planning more visits this year to advocate for the passage for AAUW’s policy priorities, including the Paycheck Fairness Act.

Tell Congress: Women Deserve Equal Access and Opportunity

Women—especially women of color—are unfairly burdened by the student loan debt crisis. After the Supreme Court’s misguided ruling that struck down student debt relief, the fight for equity in education is more urgent than ever.

Take part in AAUW’s [Two-Minute Activist](#) campaign and add your voice to the call for Congress to pass legislation that gives Americans equal access to education and equal opportunity to achieve financial security.

STEMEd For Girls Fall Season Starts September 6 with “Pathways To STEM” Session

AAUW’s successful STEMEd for Girls program is back! We’re proud to offer another full season of lively, informative, and engaging virtual workshops that will pave the way for girls’ success as they move through high school, into college, and eventually on to a career in a STEM field. This program is designed especially for girls in grades 9 through 12 and their caregivers and is completely free. Share with your local communities and professional groups to expand our reach! [Learn more and register](#).

“Stay Home” Policy Statement

While we understand that people want to participate in person at our branch events, we also want to foster consideration for all members in creating a safe environment for everyone. Please consider this direction when you plan to attend a branch meeting.

If you are feeling ill in any way, or have been in close contact with someone known to have tested positive for COVID in the last 10 days, please do not attend any meeting!

Remember that COVID exposure remains a serious issue and that we need to be constantly vigilant. If you plan to attend a branch event, please stay home if you feel ill or if you have been exposed to COVID or any other significant communicable disease. We encourage you to be considerate of everyone attending a function, some of whom might be more susceptible than others. If you have any doubts, test, wear a mask, and err on the side of caution.

While there are inherent risks in attending an in-person event, with your help we will do our best to keep everyone safe at our meetings.

From the Editor - *Joanne Quijano*

Contribute to the Advocate - Send ideas, articles, and pictures by the 23rd of the month to appear in the next issue. Please use the [Submittal Form](#) on our website to direct your contribution to the Advocate, or other DAW social media, to our communications team.

Submissions should be in the following format:

- Articles in a .doc or .docx file, or in the body of an email
- Calibri font, size 12
- Pictures in .jpg format (compressed)
- Permissions set to enable editing

Find contact information about people mentioned in the Advocate on our [branch website](#) and in your directory. If you do not have a directory, contact Tena Gallagher.

From the Treasurer – *Chris Ritter*

Handle money matters here - Please send expense vouchers or deposits to our AAUW mailbox at: P.O. Box 996, Alamo, CA 94507 for expedited processing. Refer to our branch website for specific forms and instructions – Click on [Members Page](#)

From the Corresponding Secretary - *Julie Grisham*

Know someone who needs a note? - Julie Grisham, our Corresponding Secretary, sends cards on behalf of our branch. If you know of an AAUW-DAW member in need of a get well, condolence or congratulations card, contact Julie via email [here](#).

Our Wonderful Sponsors

We're always looking for new advertisers. Funds go toward branch expenses such as printing, creating the Membership Directory, and postage. Advertisers' names and businesses will appear in our fall Membership Directory, the monthly Advocate, and on our branch website. For more information, please visit our website at <https://daw-ca.aauw.net/support/>

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The American Association of University Women (AAUW) is the nation's leading voice promoting equity and education for women and girls.

Mission: AAUW advances equity for women and girls through advocacy, education, and research.

Value Promise: By joining AAUW, you belong to a community that breaks through educational and economic barriers so that all women and girls have a fair chance.

Vision: AAUW empowers all women and girls to reach their highest potential.

The Danville-Alamo-Walnut Creek branch promotes and supports our AAUW mission through local scholarships, AAUW program support, panel discussions, Tech Trek, AAUW Fund, and topical guest speakers.

Joanne Quijano, Editor
AAUW Danville-Alamo-Walnut Creek Branch

P.O. Box 996, Alamo, CA 94507

