



# The Advocate

## March 2024

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*“I would like to be known as an intelligent woman, a courageous woman, a loving woman, a woman who teaches by being.” – Maya Angelou*

## Third Thursday Member Meeting – March

### Quality Public Education for All Get The Facts, Protect It, Support It

March 21, 2024, 6:15-7:30 pm  
San Ramon Community Center – Terrace Room  
12501 Alcosta Boulevard, San Ramon

Instead of holding our usual Third Thursday Program, DAW branch members are invited to be guests of the San Ramon branch at their March program.

Join our sister branch for a relaxed conversation focused on the current climate and public education issues in the San Ramon Valley School District. School Board President Laura Bratt will be interviewed by Ravneet Julka, local PTA leader, parent, and lawyer. This educational and inspirational program will expand on the AAUW CA initiative, The School Board Project, plus National’s recent presentation [School Boards: The Battleground for the Education Culture Wars](#).



Don’t miss this opportunity to gain a better understanding of what SRVUSD School Board and other School Boards around the nation are facing. Learn what you can do to support quality public education in our community. For more information on the School Board Project, visit the San Ramon branch website - [click here](#).

The event is FREE and open to the public as well as to AAUW members.

Please email [aauwsr@gmail.com](mailto:aauwsr@gmail.com) to RSVP as a courtesy so we know to expect you.

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## Third Thursday Member Meeting – April



### DEI (Diversity Equity Inclusion): Gender 101

Thursday, April 18, 2024, 6:00 – 8:00 pm  
Danville Congregational Church



Join our branch on April 18 for a timely presentation from two key members of the local PFLAG organization. In addition to familiarizing us with some common terms relating to LGBTQ+ people and issues, they will provide us with guidance in understanding and supporting transgender and gender non-conforming individuals.

One of the speakers will be **Taylor denBroeder** (he/they), the current President of the Danville/San Ramon PFLAG chapter and a proud member of the LGBTQ+ community who draws on his own experiences and past to advocate for and educate others. The other will be **Elisa Tinker** (she/her/hers), a board member of the Danville/San Ramon PFLAG chapter and the mother of three young adult children including a son, a daughter, and a non-binary child.

**PFLAG** is the nation's largest organization dedicated to supporting, educating, and advocating for LGBTQ+ people and those who love them. It was founded in 1973 as the Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays. To learn more about PFLAG, [click here](#).

**Save the date!**

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## Co-Presidents' Messages

*By Ogie Strogatz and Monika Witte, Co-Presidents*

Hi everyone,

We can be proud of what we're accomplishing this year in DAW! Being present at school board meetings, increasing our understanding of what *Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion* means, expanding our Local Scholarships criteria to include financial need and special circumstances, bringing insightful programs to our members and the public are examples.



Monika Witte



Ogie Strogatz

We are in the planning stages for our largest fundraising event, the **Garden Tour**. We have six beautiful gardens identified, and now it's time for all of us to roll up our sleeves. **Many hands make light work – we need everyone to sign up to help!** It will take place, as usual, on the Friday and Saturday of Mother's Day weekend, May 10 and 11. We'll need lots of volunteers, including about 100 docents (who each work a 3-hour shift in a lovely garden), a few volunteers to recruit sponsors from the local business community, a couple of people to deliver sandwich board signs to the garden neighborhoods, etc. Most of these jobs are on the days of the event, but if you are traveling or otherwise unavailable on those days, we'd still like your help!

Please sign up now using our online [Garden Tour Volunteer Interest](#) form. Thank you for helping to make the Garden Tour possible!

Monika and Ogie

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## March Checklist

- **March 5, 5:30 pm – San Ramon Unified School District Meeting**  
[Click here](#) for more information
- **March 12, 6:00 pm – DEI Meeting** via Zoom  
Discussion of AAUW dropping degree requirement for members

- **March 15 – Closing of See’s Fundraiser -**  
Order your treats now through the “DAW-AAUW Yum Yum Store” - [click here](#)
- **March 21, 6:00 pm - DAW Third Thursday Member Meeting – Quality Public Education for All Get The Facts, Protect It, Support It**  
[Click here](#) for more information
- **April 2 and 3 – AAUW California Lobby Days**  
[Click here](#) for more information and to sign up  
Save the dates and plan to participate!
- **April 8, 4:30pm – 8:00pm – Gianni’s Fundraiser**  
Save the date and make your dinner reservation – [click here](#)
- **April 16, 5:30 pm – San Ramon Unified School District Meeting**  
[Click here](#) for more information
- **April 18, 6:00 pm - DAW Third Thursday Member Meeting – DEI (Diversity Equity Inclusion): Gender 101**  
Save the date!
- [Donate here](#) to support DAW branch programs



## Candy Fundraiser for AAUW National Fund

### Time is running out!

DAW is collaborating with **See’s Candies** to have a “DAW-AAUW Yum Yum Store” for ordering of treats online. Using the link below, you can place orders for shipment to family and friends anywhere, with a portion of each sale going to the **AAUW Fund**. This spring promotion only runs through March 15<sup>th</sup>.

To access the online store, [click here](#).

Thanks in advance for your support!



## April 8 at Gianni’s - Fundraising for Tech Trek

### ★ “Tips for Change” Fundraising Evening at Gianni’s Italian Bistro! ★



**Coming soon!** Join us at Gianni’s Italian Bistro on Monday, April 8<sup>th</sup>, from 4:30 to 8:00 pm for a delicious Italian meal with a purpose! Your evening indulgence will support our branch’s Tech Trek students; we’ll be sending 12 girls to camp this year. Our organization will get 10% of Gianni’s food and alcohol sales and all tips that night.

Please bring your friends and neighbors to make this event a rousing success. If you can’t dine in, no problem! Take-out orders for pick-up at the door are available.

Make a reservation now with Gianni’s for the time you would like to dine. To see Gianni’s menu and to make your reservation for April 8 – [click here](#) or call them at (925) 820-6969.

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## Progress for Tech Trek 2024

*By Deborah Wechsler and Lee Garverick, Tech Trek Co-Chairs*

Teachers have chosen their camper nominees, a hard decision with many deserving girls. As of the time we write this, the girls are writing their application essays. The DAW AAUW Selection Committee will soon be interviewing these girls, with dual goals of selecting campers while giving all the girls practice and encouragement in the skill of being interviewed.

To learn more about the Tech Trek program, [click here](#).

- We seek your help in enlisting donations from local businesses to raise the remaining funds needed to pay for the students’ camps.
- Remember to RSVP for dinner at Gianni's on April 8. All tips and 10% of proceeds will be donated to Tech Trek!
- Would you like to get involved? Email either Lee or Deborah at [leegarverick@gmail.com](mailto:leegarverick@gmail.com) and [deborah.wechsler@gmail.com](mailto:deborah.wechsler@gmail.com).
- Are you interested in donating directly to our Tech Trek program? Please [click here](#) for more information.



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## Diversity Equity and Inclusion (DEI) In Our Branch

*By Ogie Strogatz, Co-President*

Our February DEI Committee meeting was hosted by Teresa Roeder, who graciously opened her home and treated us to the most delicious dinner! We had robust dialogue about “The Future of Academic Freedom”, an article by Harvard Law School professor Jeannie Suk Gersen, published in *The New Yorker* on January 27, 2024. We discussed the crucial role of debate and critical thinking in the educational process — well aligned with AAUW’s Public Policy commitments to academic freedom, protection from censorship, and bias-free education.

We also discussed takeaways from the National DEI Officers’ monthly online meeting, with a focus on AAUW's upcoming vote to determine whether the degree requirement for membership will be dropped. Although our committee has already unanimously agreed that the requirement should be dropped, we acknowledge and respect that there are divergent views on the topic within our branch. We decided to devote our March meeting to an online discussion about the pros and cons of dropping the requirement. **We welcome all branch members to participate on March 12, at 6:00pm via Zoom!** We look forward to connecting with one another and lifting up the importance of turning out to vote on this potential change to AAUW bylaws. Your vote is your voice!

Last, as a reminder, the DEI Committee is hosting the program at our April 18th “Third Thursday” branch membership meeting. Taylor denBroeder and Elisa Tinker, leaders of Danville/San Ramon



PFLAG (Parents, Families, and Friends of Lesbians and Gays) will lead a presentation to deepen our knowledge and understanding about people who identify as transgender. Please join us!

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## Third Thursday Member Meeting – February Recap

*By Monika Witte, Co-President*

Our February program included an excellent presentation by Krystal Song, an AAUW Fund Fellow and an award-winning author, who spoke about how she became a writer of stories and novels for



children, young adults, and adults. Krystal talked about having early access to a library as a child, and loving books and reading throughout her childhood. She started writing at an early age, and because she only saw white children in the books that she was reading, she thought that to be a writer of children's literature meant writing about white children.

Krystal made the compelling case for having diverse representation in media, so that children especially can see themselves in what is published. Krystal spoke about the challenges of publishing as a woman of color in a world where

the diversity of published authors is low. Krystal joined us by Zoom from Stanford, which brought her larger-than life into our Third Thursday meeting space.

In order to make a difference, Krystal encouraged us to:

- Support marginalized authors by reading diverse literature
  - even if outside your typical genre
  - or from an author you've never heard of before
- Review your favorite books online on sites like Amazon or Goodreads!
- Buy from independent bookstores, or borrow and request books from your local library

You can learn more about Krystal [at this link](#).

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## Branch Membership Corner

### Great Decisions Group – New Meeting Time

*By Asha Bajaj, Great Decisions Group Leader*

Since so many members are choosing not to drive at night, we now have a new schedule and venue. Please join us for a brown bag series from 12:30-2:30 pm each Tuesday for a lively discussion on topics ranging from the Mideast to climate technology, to US-China trade rivalry.

**Location:** Sycamore Southside Clubhouse - 1101 Greenbrook Dr, Danville

**Time:** 12:30-2:30 pm Tuesdays, ongoing through the end of March

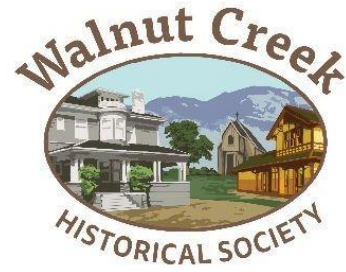
Bring a bag lunch; sweets and treats and beverages provided.

For more details, please contact Asha Bajaj at [ashakiran@gmail.com](mailto:ashakiran@gmail.com)

## Walnut Creek Downtown Historical Walk with the Art and Garden Interest Group – Rescheduled!

*By Tena Gallagher*

Join the **Art and Garden Interest Group** on March 22 at 9:15am to learn some fascinating background about Walnut Creek. This easy, 90-minute Downtown History Guided Walking Tour on city sidewalks brings to life the early times and development of what has become a Bay Area destination city. It's a new way to experience the city — and a perfect chance to spend a morning followed by lunch at True Kitchen and time to stay and enjoy all that downtown Walnut Creek has to offer. The Heritage Walk features some 60 sites — from Botelho's Island (now Broadway Plaza) to the Nuthouse (now the Leshner Center for the Arts). It involves walking approximately 5 city blocks with opportunities to sit along the way.

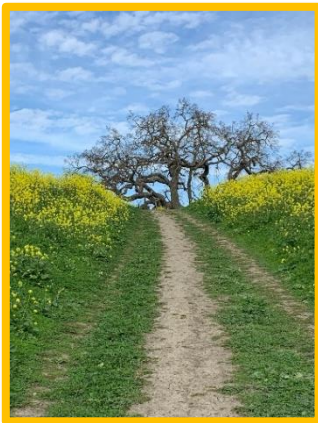


Intrigued? Join us for the historical walking tour with lunch at True Kitchen!

The cost is \$5.00 per person, cash or check payable to Walnut Creek Historical Society. Contact Tena Gallagher for reservations and details at [mstena@gmail.com](mailto:mstena@gmail.com).

## Mitchell Canyon Wildflower Walk

*By Tena Gallagher*



It's a great time for spring wildflowers! Come along for a walk with both the Art & Garden and the Hiking Interest Groups on Friday, March 15, from 8:45 am to about 1:15 pm.

We will meet at 8:45 am at Sycamore Park and Ride and will arrange carpools from there. Dress appropriately for the weather, bring water, and wear comfortable walking/hiking shoes. We'll cover four or so miles of easy paved wide fire road and have an optional section of single track, slightly hilly, trail that parallels the fire road.

Contact Tena Gallagher for reservations at [mstena@gmail.com](mailto:mstena@gmail.com) or 925 878-5161.

## In Memoriam

We are saddened to report the passing of long-time member **Sandy Hoffman** in late February. She was active in AAUW for many years, and was most recently an enthusiastic participant in the bridge interest groups until her failing health — at over 90 years old - made it too difficult for her. She moved away from our area about a year ago. Our sincere sympathy goes out to her family.

Another former branch member, **Kathy Gage**, passed away in January after a prolonged battle with cancer. Many knew her as a Master Gardener as well as an AAUW member, a hiker, and a Tech Trek volunteer. We offer heart-felt condolences to her husband, Bill, and the rest of her family.

## What is the AAUW Fund?

*By Roseann Krane, Fund VP, and Monika Witte, Co-President*

Our branch works to raise funds primarily for three projects: Tech Trek, Local Scholarships, and the AAUW Fund. While Tech Trek and Local Scholarships are managed locally by our branch and are very visible to us, activities related to the AAUW Fund are managed at the national level where we send money raised through our branch. You may wonder, what happens to this money? In this article we'll provide some insight into the Fund.

The Fund was created by AAUW in 1888 to provide fellowships and grants to women. In the 2023-24 award year, AAUW is providing more than \$6 million to 285 fellows and grantees. Today, donations to the Fund support three main classifications of awards. These include:

1. **Post-graduate Fellowships**, including several categories – the largest of which is the *American Fellowships* which form AAUW's largest fellowship program and are the oldest non-institutional source of graduate funding for women in the United States. Another category is *Selected Professions Fellowships*, which are awarded for study in a designated degree program where women's participation traditionally has been low.
2. **Grants**, including *Career Development Grants and Community Action Grants* – awarded for projects that promote education and equity for women and girls in the community - and *International Project Grants*. One famous example is that in 1920, a recipient was Madame Curie, who received funds for the purchase of one gram of radium.
3. **Research Report Grants**, which include *Research Publications Grants* in engineering, medicine, and science.

Donations to AAUW's Greatest Need Fund also support advocacy efforts, Public Policy, communication efforts for AAUW, and operations at National necessary for programs and services.



Marilyn Milam

In the past, a few of our own DAW members have been recipients of fellowships or grants. Marilyn Milam is an AAUW Career Development Grant recipient. She says about her grant:

*"I would not have paid for Saint Mary's out of pocket at that time, because I had two children about to attend college and would not have wanted to drain their college funds. My masters was in educational leadership and all my work in AAUW was responsible for my deciding that leadership was an area I wanted to pursue."*

AAUW branches used to recognize members who had made extraordinary contributions of effort by funding a fellowship in their name. DAW did this a number of times, and honored members with Named Fellowships or Grants. These branch honorees include Connie Cady, Tena Gallagher, Jo Harberson, Alicia Hetman, Roseann Krane, Chris Winter, and Rita Wustner. Thinking of her endowment, Chris Winter said:





Chris Winter

*“An endowment in your name is an incredible honor. It's a living legacy because once it is completed, the interest generated provides continuous funding for AAUW's annual fellowship and grant awards.” “I have met several women studying under my endowment, and it's a thrill each time.”*

Thanks DAW members for donating to the AAUW Fund! You can still make a difference in the following ways:

- Donate to the AAUW Fund and designate a specific fellowship or grant
- Participate in our DAW-AAUW Yum Yum Store See's Candy Fundraiser - [click here](#) to link to the store to order your candy

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## AAUW California Public Policy Update

### The Role of California School Boards

*By Seena Trigas, Member AAUW California Public Policy Committee School Board Project*

AAUW California is concerned about the censorship of classroom material, the heightened enforcement of board policies rejecting diversity, and providing discriminatory policies against gay and minority students. This concern now leads me, as a former school board member, high school teacher/department chair and adjunct college professor, to reflect on the role of school boards in California and their limitations.

The State Board of Education (SBE) is the controlling structure for K-12 and is the governing and policy-making body of the state for public education. Among its duties is the adoption of statewide academic standards for content and of curriculum frameworks. These inform and guide the local school boards in the development and implementation of specific curricula for K-12 students, and serve as the basis for the adoption of instructional materials. School board members represent districts within the school district boundaries.

In 2023, AB1078 was passed, which requires the California State Department of Education to assess if school boards are in compliance with state laws requiring public schools to provide diverse and comprehensive education. It requires local school districts with insufficient instructional materials to correct this and authorizes the department to purchase (at district expense) adequate curricula if the district restricts students from learning about important topics like racism, sexism, and gender-based marginalization.

AAUW branch members play a critical role in ensuring all California school boards are governed by board members who will follow AB 1078, and who oppose policies that infringe on the civil rights of LGBTQ+ students.

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## **AAUW California News**

### **AAUW Funds**

*By Karen Vanderwerken, AAUW Fund Committee chair, [aaufund@aauw-ca.org](mailto:aaufund@aauw-ca.org)*

*Greatest Needs Donations Exceeding Expectations!* Congratulations to branch members, leaders, and fund chairs! Preliminary California donations to the Greatest Needs Fund for 2023 (the total of all AAUW donations) is \$512,514 which is \$65,000 above our projected amount! The final report will be in March.

Your support of the AAUW mission with generous donations matters! Thanks to each of you.

### **Communications**

*By Dawn Johnson, Director, Communication Committee chair, [communications@aauw-ca.org](mailto:communications@aauw-ca.org)*

*HELP, I CAN'T FIND IT!* Our website is a vast repository of resources. We know sometimes it's hard to find what you're looking for. We're always working on making it easier. Recently, we reorganized the webinar recordings (and their predecessors, the PowerPoint presentations). Previously they were listed by year, often with titles that were delightfully clever, but gave no hint about the topic. They have been reorganized into a table that is searchable and sortable in several ways: by subject area, title, host, etc. The listings now include a brief description of the content and, of course, links to the actual presentations. In addition, we went behind the scenes and added multiple tag words, such as "strategic planning" or "fundraising" or "taxes" to each presentation. Now they are more likely to be displayed if you do a global search on the main website (the magnifying glass) by using keywords like those. The webinar table has been moved to the newly designed Branch Tools page, which now also boasts a similar new sortable and searchable table for the Leadership Resources materials.

Go forth and find!

### **Public Policy**

*By Amy Hom and Melissa Maceyko, Directors, Public Policy Committee Co-chairs, [publicpolicy@aauw-ca.org](mailto:publicpolicy@aauw-ca.org)*

*Website Refreshed!* Check out the new Public Policy section of the [AAUW California website](#)! It has a fresh look and feel, and updated content. We hope you will enjoy the ease of use as you explore it. Please let us know your feedback and suggestions at [publicpolicy@aauw-ca.org](mailto:publicpolicy@aauw-ca.org).

### **Gov Trek**

*By Shauna Oenning Ruyle, Gov Trek Program Director and Gov Trek Committee chair, [govtrek@aauw-ca.org](mailto:govtrek@aauw-ca.org)*

*Introducing Gov Trek 2024!* Our second annual leadership program for girls in their junior and senior years of high school is underway. We are excited to announce that nearly 60 girls from California with diverse backgrounds have enrolled in the program. Thank you for your outstanding work in recruiting the next generation of leaders from your community. We are incredibly grateful and confident that the future is bright with the young women and girls you've galvanized.

## AAUW National News

### March 12 is Women's Equal Pay Day

This symbolic day is used to raise awareness around and combat the impact of pay inequities. Equal Pay Day 2024 marks the current state of the gender pay gap: 84% for full-time workers and 78% for all workers (including part-time and seasonal).

**Take action!** Call on your lawmakers to support pay equity, and work to pass the Paycheck Fairness Act. This legislation can help lift families out of poverty and will align the fight against workplace gender discrimination with other federal anti-discrimination laws. [Use our toolkit](#) to urge your members of Congress to do their part by supporting the Paycheck Fairness Act today!

### Pay Equity Policies Should Not Depend on Where You Live Or Work

To make salary transparency a standard practice that benefits all workers in the United States, Congress must pass the **Salary Transparency Act** (H.R. 1599). This bill would advance pay equity for everyone by requiring all employers to share salary or wage ranges at any point in the hiring process and employment period, protect employees from retaliation and establish civil penalties for violators.

Salary transparency is one critical component of pay equity—along with equal pay for equal work, pay data collection, salary history bans, and protections against retaliation for workers who disclose or discuss their wages.

**Take action!** Use our [Two Minute Activist action form](#) to urge your representative to co-sponsor and pass the Salary Transparency Act now.

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## **“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.

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### **From the Editor** - *Joanne Quijano*

**Contribute to the Advocate** - Send ideas, articles, and pictures by the 23<sup>rd</sup> 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 are preferred 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, [click here](#) to send us a request.

**Comments about the Advocate?** – How do you like the new table of contents and title page? I’m always interested in making improvements to the newsletter to better meet our members’ needs. Please let me know your comments and suggestions at [jtq@sbcglobal.net](mailto:jtq@sbcglobal.net).

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### **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](#)

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### **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 at [juliegrisham@sbcglobal.net](mailto:juliegrisham@sbcglobal.net).

## 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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\* DAW AAUW members are marked with an asterisk



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.



## The Advocate

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

Joanne Quijano, Editor  
AAUW Danville-Alamo-Walnut Creek Branch  
P.O. Box 996, Alamo, CA 94507