



The Advocate

April 2024

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“It took me quite a long time to develop a voice, and now that I have it, I am not going to be silent.” – Madeleine Albright

Third Thursday Member Meeting – April



DEI (Diversity Equity & Inclusion): Gender 101

Thursday, April 18, 2024, 6:00 – 7:30 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.



To RSVP [click here](#)

\$10 donation for non-AAUW members

Since Danville Congregational Church hosts our monthly meetings,
members of DCC may attend our meetings without cost

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](#).

April 8 at Gianni's - Fundraising for Tech Trek



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

The time is here – don’t miss out! Join us at Gianni’s Italian Bistro on Monday, April 8th, 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**, so please be generous!

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.

2024 LIFT UP PUBLIC SCHOOLS SUMMIT

Attend this summit to network across school districts, share challenges and successes in the fight to protect excellent public education, and build the collective impact of our emergent coalition.

SPEAKERS INCLUDE

- Liz Mikitarian Founder, Stop Moms For Liberty;
- Daniel Gross, Student, Monte Vista High School;
- Erin Choin, Sunol Unified School District Board Recall Committee
- Dianne Jones, Trustee, Fremont Unified School District Board;
- Heidi Gatty, President, Walnut Creek School District Board;
- Chad Curran, Parent, Orinda

Plus District Breakouts, Networking, & Resource Area.

Are you ready to make a difference?

Saturday, April 13, 2024
1:30-4:30pm
Location: Walnut Creek, CA

Cost: Complimentary
Register: <https://tinyurl.com/LUPSsummit2024Reg>

Registration required. Deadline April 10th. Limited Space.

REGISTER TODAY.

QR code and social media icons for Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter. Website: LiftUpPublicSchools.com

Lift Up Public Schools – Summit

You’re invited to the **Lift Up Public Schools Summit** on April 13 from 1:30-4:30 pm at Rossmoor! Members of dozens of organizations (including DAW) who are passionate about protecting public education in Contra Costa and Alameda counties will meet to review the challenges at hand for school districts in the Bay Area. Learn about the activities of coalition organizations. Be inspired by speakers who are advocates for quality, inclusive education. And we will strategize about actions we can take together to re-elect or elect ardent champions for public education to our local school boards.

Don’t delay, you must register by April 10 to attend!

[Click here](#) to register.

The Lift Up Public Schools coalition has been created by a diverse group of volunteers including our tenacious DAW Public Policy Chair, Laurinda Ochoa. To learn more about this newly formed organization, [click here](#).

AAUW DAW 22nd Garden Tour

Gardens That Inspire

Friday and Saturday, May 10 & 11, 2024
10 am to 4 pm, rain or shine



Get ready to refresh your spirit – the AAUW DAW Garden Tour is returning for the 22nd time in 2024!

Continuing last year’s theme of *Gardens That Inspire*, the 2024 tour will feature six lovingly curated landscapes for tour attendees to visit. The gardens are located in Walnut Creek, Danville, and Alamo and will cover a fascinating range of styles from California natives, to extravagant flowers, to a beautiful rose garden.

Tour tickets may be used to visit either Friday, Saturday, or both days. You may start your tour at any of the gardens and visit them in any order. Please be aware that any children visiting the gardens must be over 12, and no pets will be allowed.

All proceeds from the tour will go directly to support DAW’s college and graduate school scholarships for local students, STEM camperships for middle school girls, and DAW branch programs advancing equity for all.

Purchase your tour tickets now!

For more information and to order your tickets, [click here](#).

Tickets bought by April 30 are \$40, those bought on May 1 or later will be \$45. Registrants will be emailed their tickets once their order is processed. The 2024 Garden Tour Guide will be emailed starting May 2nd. This guide will provide the garden addresses, a map to the home locations, and descriptions of key features of the six tour gardens that will surely inspire you!

Volunteers Needed!

Of course, the Garden Tour won’t be possible without the help of our gracious branch members. With six beautiful gardens, each needing two shifts of docents and helpers for the two days of the tour, there are many opportunities for volunteers, no gardening expertise required – we need you!

[Click here](#) to volunteer for the tour. Thank you in advance!

Co-Presidents' Messages

By Ogie Strogatz and Monika Witte, Co-Presidents

Hi everyone,

April is blossoming with opportunities to enact our mission “to advance gender equity for women and girls through research, education, and advocacy”, and our vision, “equity for all”. A few highlights:

You'll find details about “Open AAUW” under the DEI Committee section. “Open AAUW” is an

initiative to amend our national bylaws to drop the degree requirement for membership – an

important move to demonstrate our commitment to inclusion. Bylaw changes require a nationwide membership vote, which is taking place between April 3 and May 15. Be sure to [learn about the initiative and vote.](#)

A reminder that **April 16 is the next meeting of the San Ramon Valley Unified School District (SRVUSD) Board, 5:30 pm at the District office, 699 Old Orchard Drive in Danville.** This is our monthly opportunity to cultivate support for public education simply by showing up, and for those of us who wish to offer comments to the Board about our commitment to public education, to do that as well.

Last, please see the announcement about our **April 18 “Third Thursday” general membership meeting,** being hosted by our branch’s Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Committee and conducted by local leaders of PFLAG (Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays). I look forward to joining you there!

Ogie

Dear friends and colleagues,

The hills are verdant; I feel and breathe calm renewal, tempered by holding serious concern about what lies in front of us. How can we fit the puzzle pieces of our lives, (family, community, actively supporting what we believe in, hobbies and social activities) together? I don’t have the answer; one step at a time is all I know. These beautiful days are definitely a balm. I hope you will join me at Gianni’s on April 8, and sign up to help with the Garden Tour at the link below.

I am proud to let you know that our DAW board endorsed the two upcoming parcel taxes for SRVUSD, Measures E and F. To learn more about these measures go to the [SRVUSD](#) and the [Yes on E&F](#) websites. To request a sign for your front yard go to [this link](#), and **please vote yes!**

In friendship, Monika



Monika Witte



Ogie Strogatz

April Checklist

- **April 2 and 3 – AAUW California Lobby Days**
Our branch members participated!
- **April 8, 4:30pm – 8:00pm – Gianni’s Fundraiser**
Make your dinner reservation – [click here](#)
- **April 13, 1:30 pm – “Lift Up Public Schools” Summit**

- [Click here](#) to register (registration deadline is April 10)
 - **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**
[Click here](#) for information and to RSVP
 - **April 27, 9:00am - 2024 Annual AAUW California Event**
[Click here](#) to register
 - **May 10 & 11, 10:00 am to 4:00 pm – 22nd Garden Tour**
[Click here](#) for details and to purchase tickets
 - **May 14, 5:30 pm – San Ramon Unified School District Meeting**
[Click here](#) for more information
 - **May 16, 6:00 pm - DAW Third Thursday Member Meeting – AI Impact on K-12 Students**
Save the date!
 - [Donate here](#) to support DAW branch programs
-

Third Thursday Member Meeting - May



AI Impact on K-12 Students

Thursday, May 16, 2024, 6:00 – 8:00 pm
Danville Congregational Church

Our speaker for this very timely topic will be John Malloy, Superintendent of the San Ramon Valley Unified School District.

Save the date!

Diversity Equity and Inclusion (DEI) In Our Branch

By Teresa Cheung, DEI Officer

We had a very productive DEI (Diversity Equity and Inclusion) Committee Zoom meeting on March 26 that was organized and led by branch co-president Ogie Strogatz. We are very pleased that our newest branch member, Rhiannon Shires, joined us and was ready to push forward for DEI. The evening's topic was the **National AAUW vote to open membership** to anyone who believes and wants to fight for our cause of "Equity for All", not just those who have a degree.

To see the PowerPoint presentation from the meeting about this **Open AAUW Membership** initiative, [click here](#). Please review carefully; it addresses the history of our membership and why we are pushing harder than ever for a “yes”



vote this year. Up until the 1940’s, members had to hold approved degrees from a small list of accredited schools, and prospective members had to be voted upon for admission. **We are changing slowly from exclusive to inclusive.** In 2021, 63% voted yes for open membership but it was short of the 66.7% vote required to change the organization’s by-laws.

At our December DEI committee meeting, we joined the National AAUW DEI monthly zoom meeting and heard their discussion of open membership and the upcoming vote this April. At that time, we had a

lively discussion and **all 10 of us agreed unanimously for the committee to endorse "open membership for AAUW for the future"**. Personally, while I have been an AAUW member since 1987, this is the first time I will be voting “yes” to open membership to all. I abstained from voting in 2021 because I can see both sides of the issue and could not take a stand. After learning about Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, I will be working to convince everyone to vote “yes” this year for open membership.

Look for your National ballot in your email. Voting starts April 3 and ends May 15. **Break our own barrier, VOTE YES for Open Membership.**

For more information, please visit:

- Our DAW website - <https://daw-ca.aauw.net/openmembership/>
- The Open Up AAUW Network - <https://openupaauw.org/>
- AAUW National - <https://www.aauw.org/resources/member/open-membership-toolkit/>

Please feel free to contact Ogie at ogstrogatz@gmail.com or me at AAUWTeresa@gmail.com if you want to discuss this topic one-on-one. We are available to hear your concerns and thoughts.

Lastly, we don’t have a DEI committee meeting scheduled for April. Instead, we hope to see you all at the program we are hosting for our **Third Thursday Member Meeting on April 18**. It’s titled **DEI: Gender 101** and it will feature two excellent speakers from PFLAG to inform us about supporting and understanding people who identify as transgender. For more information and to RSVP [click here](#).

Third Thursday Member Meeting – March Recap

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

DAW branch members joined the San Ramon branch at their March program which focused on the current climate and issues surrounding public education in the San Ramon Valley Unified School District (SRVUSD). The program was led by DAW Policy Chair Laurinda Ochoa, in her additional capacity as a member of the AAUW CA School Board Project Team. SRVUSD Board President Laura Bratt was interviewed by Ravneet Julka, local PTA leader, parent, and attorney. The specific calls to action included:

Educate – Educate people you know about the May 7 vote on parcel tax Measures E & F. Visit the **Yes on E & F** website to learn more about why these measures are vitally important for our schools – [click here](#).

Advocate – Attend SRVUSD Board of Education meetings and join DAW in making public comments. For more about attending the meetings, [click here](#).

Collaborate – Register for the April 13 “Lift Up Public Schools” Summit in Rossmoor (Registration deadline is April 10) – [click here](#)

To learn more about the evening’s program, the presenters, and valuable resources to advocate for quality public education, [click here](#) to view the presentation slides.



AAUW California Public Policy Update

How One Branch Has Put the School Board Project into Action

By Laurinda Ochoa, Member AAUW California Public Policy School Board Project Committee

Last year the AAUW Danville-Alamo-Walnut Creek branch said “Yes” to the AAUW California School Board Project (SBP) call to action. In August our branch members started to attend monthly local school board meetings and witnessed attacks by local religious and political extremists on books, curriculum, teachers, librarians, and district staff.

Based on social media statements by people who want to “return schools to local control of concerned parents,” we believe our school district and adjacent districts are being targeted by groups intent on changing public education in California. As AAUW members we support our state and national public policy priorities of providing honest, equitable, and inclusive, quality public education for all students.

To implement the SBP and work toward these public policy goals, our branch has taken a three-step approach:

1. **Educate** our members and the public about the issues facing public education by hosting issue programs and, later, candidate forums;
2. **Advocate** for our public education priorities by speaking up at local Board of Education (BOE) meetings to support board decisions that are consistent with AAUW policies and values;

3. Collaborate by forming coalitions with local groups to educate the public about the importance of supporting public education and those candidates that believe in honest and equitable quality education for all.

EDUCATION:

We encourage all branches to host an SBP program by inviting local experts to speak about what is happening in your districts. Often, accurate information is not available from local media and we need to hear from people actually engaged in public education to understand the local issues. PTA, BOE members, district superintendents, librarians, teachers and informed parents can provide valuable insights.

ADVOCACY:

We hope all branches attend BOE meetings and have one speaker advocating AAUW values. Board members and school staff have voiced appreciation to AAUW members for speaking up in support of public education. Often AAUW is one of the few voices of reason and civility at these meetings. Our voices can change the tone of the public discussion.

COLLABORATION:

We've learned our Education and Advocacy efforts naturally lead to other people and groups being interested in working together with AAUW to protect public education. We're now working with others in a two-county area to "Lift Up Public Education" by educating the public, advocating for public education, and demonstrating community support for our local school districts. For more information on how we organized our coalition and distributed the workload, visit our website [here](#).

We encourage other branches to support quality public education and promote critical AAUW values by taking these simple steps to build member and community support for Quality Public Education.

Editor's note: Laurinda Ochoa, our branch Public Policy Chair and member of the AAUW CA School Board Project Team, wrote this article that appeared in the AAUW California's March Public Policy newsletter to encourage branches statewide to take action.

Tri-Valley Innovation Fair – Family Event



The **Quest Science Center in Livermore** is hosting their 6th annual **Tri-Valley Innovation Fair** on Saturday, April 13, from 10:00 am to 5:00 pm at the Alameda County Fairgrounds in Pleasanton. This fun family-oriented event attracts more than 3,000 people and offers exciting, hands-on science, engineering, and technology exhibits and activities for children 5 and up, teens and adults. Admission is free; the fairgrounds charges for parking.

Tell your family and friends! For more information [click here](#)

AAUW California News

AAUW Funds

By Karen Vanderwerken, AAUW Fund Committee chair, aaufund@aauw-ca.org

Fund chairs and branches exceeding donation expectations! Thanks to your continued efforts, California had donations to the Greatest Needs Fund of approximately \$534,200! This is \$84,000 more than projected. Contributions from all of our branches make this possible. Continued donations keep AAUW strong for our mission.

National has a new Senior Manager of Planned Giving, Nadia Daghistani. Contact her with questions about Required Minimum Distributions (RMD) and trust donations. (daghistanin@aauw.org)

If you would like to see the fellows who have been sponsored by your grants, see: "AAUW 2023 Fund Fellows and Grant Recipients" on the AAUW California website. Sponsorship IDs and Sponsorship Names are now available on this page. Thanks to our leader, Sandi Gabe, for providing this update.

AAUW California Annual Event Is Coming on April 27

You've got a VIP hall pass! Find out what's happening in the hallways of AAUW California at the 2024 Annual Event. Join the state leadership team online for a campus tour, classroom visits, pep assemblies, and awards to star pupils. Learn what AAUW California is doing for your branch. View the winning Speech Trek and Gov Trek videos. Find out who was awarded Branch Activity of the Year and State Named Gift Honoree. Then choose an "elective" for extra study in breakout rooms with state leaders. Warning: there will be pop quizzes!

Pack a snack and register [HERE](#) to meet us in the virtual principal's office. Don't make us hand out detention notices - mark your calendar to attend the 2024 Annual AAUW California Event on Saturday, April 27th from 9 am to noon.

AAUW National News

AAUW Priorities in the 2024 U.S. Election

As part of our [It's My Vote! 2024 voter engagement campaign](#), let's dive into the policy issues at stake in this year's national elections, including pay equity, equity in education, reproductive rights, and the Equal Rights Amendment. Learn how AAUW members can engage in local voter education efforts Wednesday, April 17 at 7 p.m. ET. [Join the call here.](#)

AAUW's Impact in 2023: Read the Report

In the face of persistent challenges hindering women's progress, AAUW stood unwavering, advocating for gender equity in 2023. Despite enduring discrimination and disproportionate burdens, particularly affecting women and girls of color, AAUW members actively engaged in advocacy, sent messages to legislators, and championed legislative change on Capitol Hill.

Learn more about some of AAUW's organizational achievements by reading [AAUW's 2023 Year in Review](#) now on our national website.

AAUW Annual Art Contest Winners

We're thrilled to announce the winners of our annual art contest, showcasing the immense talent within the AAUW community.

If you haven't already, we invite you to explore the winning entries displayed in our [Art Contest gallery](#).

Stay tuned, as this month members will receive these captivating artworks featured on our spring note cards. Join us in celebrating creativity and the incredible achievements of our talented artists!

Get Ready! National Election Opens April 3

Check your email for the National Election voting beginning on Wednesday, April 3! AAUW will again this year use a third-party vendor to administer voting. You'll receive an electronic ballot with your unique voting credential from vote@simplyvoting.com. Please add this address to your safe sender list now to ensure your ballot reaches you. Members without an email address on file will receive a paper ballot.

Voting closes Monday, May 15, at 900 am.

“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 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.

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 at 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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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/>

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