



# The Advocate

## June 2024

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*“Tell me, what is it you plan to do with your one wild and precious life?”*  
 - Mary Oliver, American poet

## Third Thursday Member Meeting - June

### Installation and Member Recognition

*Thursday, June 20, 2024, 6:00 – 8:00 pm  
Danville Congregational Church*



Join us at our annual event to spotlight all that we do with AAUW and celebrate the past year's accomplishments! We'll also welcome our new branch officers for the 2024-25 fiscal year and honor some very deserving, special branch members. **All current and prospective members are welcome and encouraged to attend.**

We'll have social time to start, along with an opportunity to provide input to plans for branch activities in 2024-25. As we share ideas, we'll enjoy free margaritas and a complimentary Mexican-themed buffet dinner as a treat to all of our wonderful, loyal branch members. It will be a great opportunity to touch bases with old and new AAUW friends before our summer break in branch activities.

Once we've gotten refreshments, the formal program for the evening will include:

- A final call for our branch elections
- Recognition of our newest 50-year members and of members with outstanding service
- An update about our 2024 Local Scholarship awardees
- Recognition and thanks to our 2023-24 outgoing board members
- An introduction and the installation of our incoming 2024-25 board members

**You won't want to miss this fun and informative event!**

**Don't delay, please RSVP - [click here](#).**

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## Co-Presidents' Messages

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

Hi everyone,

What an amazing year it's been! We are deeply grateful for the opportunity to have served as your Co-Presidents. The branch's 2023-24 activities featured thought-provoking presentations sparked by your requests, including: the challenges facing our local school districts; the negative impact of social media on girls; opportunities to strengthen our support for the LGBTQ+ members of our community; and the San Ramon Valley School District's approach to incorporating Artificial Intelligence into the learning process. We honored AAUW's commitment to gender equity for women and girls through branch support for 15 local Tech Trek campers, and the



Monika Witte



Ogie Strogatz

awarding of 6 Local Scholarships, 3 Renaissance Scholarships, and our first Single Parent Scholarship. Our Garden Tour and Gianni’s fundraising events were shining successes. We intensified our advocacy in pursuit of AAUW’s vision, equity for all, through our presence at monthly SRVUSD Board meetings, our participation in AAUW California’s School Board project, the launch of the local Lift Up Public Schools Coalition, and the launch of our branch’s Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Committee.

**You** are the phenomenal, renewable energy that powers all of the above. Your dedication, smarts, experience, savvy, drive, compassion, collaborative spirit and good humor make everything possible. We appreciate you!

On to the future! What are your dreams and hopes for DAW in 2024-25? Please join us at our Installation and Member Recognition Dinner on Thursday, June 20. In addition to celebrating our many successes, we’ll be soliciting your input to next year’s priorities.

Hope to see you then,  
m & o

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## June Checklist

- **June 18, 5:30 pm – San Ramon Unified School District Meeting**  
[Click here](#) for more information
- **June 20, 6:00 pm – Installation and Member Appreciation**  
[Click here](#) to RSVP
- **September 14 – Membership Brunch at The Greenery, Walnut Creek**  
Save the date!
- [Donate here](#) to support DAW branch programs

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## Branch Elections

Ballots have been emailed to all branch members – please be sure to vote by June 19! The results will be finalized at our Installation and Member Recognition meeting on June 20.

Here’s the slate of candidates:

<b>Board Position</b>	<b>2024-25 Candidate</b>
President	Deborah Wechsler
Programs Co-VP	Ogie Strogatz
Programs Co-VP	Monika Witte
Secretary	Kate Waters
Treasurer	Chris Ritter
Membership VP	open

Funds VP	open
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Give back to your community! Bring your leadership talent to our elected board positions! We have yet to fill the two open spots listed for the coming year. The branch needs a complete board to run smoothly and thrive.

The open positions could be filled by two people. Many of the incoming board members have held diverse AAUW leadership roles at branch and state levels and are eager to mentor and support one another. We invite you to join the team that guides DAW toward a vibrant future.

**Let's talk! Please contact Co-presidents Monika Witte (aauwmonikawitte@gmail.com) or Ogie Strogatz (ogstrogatz@gmail.com) to learn more.**

### AAUW DAW 22nd Garden Tour Recap - *Gardens That Inspire*

We had two beautiful days to enjoy the six wonderful gardens in the 2024 Garden Tour. Over 550 attendees were inspired to see the diversity of landscaping and the details of all the many plantings.

Tena Gallagher and Monika Witte led the team that enabled this year's event to come together. The six homeowners were very generous to get

their gardens in top shape and share them for the tour. Carol Highton and



Some of the many roses at El Pintado

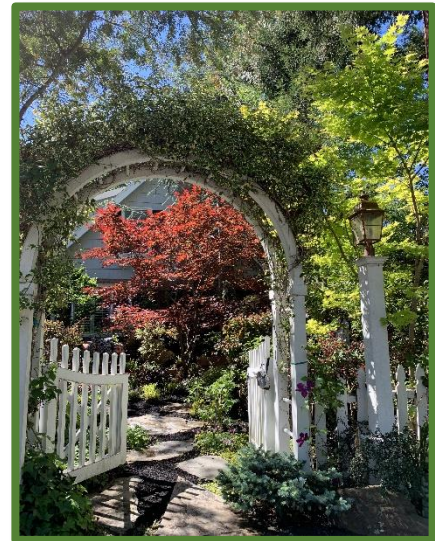


The entrancing view at Viking Place

Julie Grisham created five amazing gift baskets to tempt people to try their chances with raffle tickets, while Kathy Harkins organized the refreshments. And, of course, the many branch members who volunteered as docents were critical to making the event a success.

A very sincere "THANK YOU" to one and all!!

See more photos from the 2024 Garden Tour on the branch's website – [click here](#).



The welcoming front gate at Entrada Verde

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## Third Thursday Member Meeting – May Recap

### Notes About “AI Unlocked”

*By Ogie Strogatz, Co-President*

The May Member Meeting was great! We were treated to a superb presentation about the San Ramon Valley Unified School District’s use of Artificial Intelligence (AI). Superintendent John Malloy grounded us in the strategic context for the district’s work with AI. Then Director of Technology Kelly Hilton walked us through the details of the plan to incorporate AI into the district’s teaching process and the status of the plan’s implementation to date.

The presentation was a masterful case study in change management. In particular, one of the five aspects of SRVUSD’s vision of the Learner Profile for each student is that each student - in addition to being a Critical Thinker, Intentional Collaborator, Creative Contributor, and Effective Communicator - will be an Adaptable Learner. The district’s response to AI illustrates why it is so important to be an adaptable learner, and what adaptable learning looks like. Brilliant.

To see the presentation slides from the meeting [click here](#).

To learn more about the SRVUSD plans and progress toward “Embracing AI for Deep Learning” [click here](#).



John Malloy and Kelly Hilton

## Tech Trek 2024 Update

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

### Final stages of Tech Trek planning for Camps 2024

We are making final plans for the Tech Trek camps in 2024 and there are still openings for volunteers. This could be a great opportunity for a college student to earn a little money during summer break! Also there will be some days when branch members can visit – we will keep you informed. We are sending girls to the following camps:



**Fresno State University June 16-22:** Contact Rebecca Jennings ([Fresno.techtrek@gmail.com](mailto:Fresno.techtrek@gmail.com)) to volunteer. They are short on staff this year. Here is a description of positions still needed:

- Dorm mom - monitors a group of students for the week, taking them through their various activities. It really can be a job for anybody, ages 20 to 60+. This role is offered a small stipend of \$300, plus extras for running some of the activities for their group.
- Teacher - Core classes are ~15 hours over the week on a STEM subject (in the afternoon). Rebecca can help develop or borrow a curriculum from many different classes done in the past. Current graduate students, current and retired teachers, as well as STEM professionals have been in this role. They would accept a college student going into a senior year who is really motivated. This role is offered a stipend of \$1400 for the week and has a great deal of free time when they are not teaching.
- Camp nurse - This position helps to distribute medications to campers, as well as deal with any health issues that come up during the week. They do not have to have a nursing degree, although that is a benefit (past camp nurses have been nursing students, school nurses, and a nursing home employee).

**Sonoma State University June 23-29:** Contact Diane Coventry ([coventrydiane638@gmail.com](mailto:coventrydiane638@gmail.com)) if interested. A dorm mom recently cancelled so they could use help with that.

**Virtual Camp July 21-26.** They may still need some virtual coaches. Contact Dr. Mary Isaac ([drmimibonkisaac@gmail.com](mailto:drmimibonkisaac@gmail.com)) if interested.

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## Local Scholarships Update

*By Ann Willoughby and Monika Witte*

### The 2024 Local Scholarships Are Awarded!

The Local Scholarship Committee is pleased to announce the awarding of \$20,000 to ten local college women through our 2024 DAW branch scholarship program. Each of these amazing students will receive \$2,000 to help them complete their degree programs. This year the branch has three types of scholarships for these deserving students.

**An AAUW DAW Single-Parent Scholarship was added this year.** It is open to a student who is a single parent enrolled at Diablo Valley College (DVC) who has completed at least twelve units. This scholarship is administered by the Diablo Valley College Foundation; they selected Alexa Chamorro, a very impressive student, for this year's award. Alexa graduated this spring from DVC with a double major in Administration of Justice and Political Science, and will be heading to UCLA in the fall with a goal of continuing in the same two fields of study. Alexa plans to eventually attend law school to become a criminal defense attorney. She is the first person from her family to graduate with a college degree.



Alexa Chamorro and Ogie Strogatz at the DVC scholarship awards ceremony on May 10, 2024

**AAUW DAW Community Local Scholarships** are open to women who will be juniors, seniors, or graduate students in the upcoming academic year. Applicants must have graduated from high school in Danville, Alamo, or Walnut Creek, or currently reside in these communities. Six exceptional women were selected - five who will be attending graduate school and one who will be a junior.

**AAUW DAW Renaissance Scholarships** are available to women who are participating in the California State University East Bay (CSUEB) Renaissance Scholars Program (RSP) for former foster youth. Students might be undergraduate or graduate students at CSUEB or be graduating from CSUEB and entering graduate school in the upcoming academic year. Three outstanding women were selected - two who will be attending graduate school and one who will be a junior.

The names and stories of the Community and Renaissance scholars will be coming in the next Advocate and on our branch website once they have been notified about their awards.

### ***Congratulations to the 2024 AAUW DAW scholarship awardees!***

The DAW Board would like to thank the **Local Scholarship Committee** for their extensive community outreach to secure applicants and their comprehensive review of the 23 applications received for the Community Local and Renaissance Scholarships. Their hard work resulted in the selection of ten highly qualified awardees. Committee members were Debbie Koos, Judy Lauper, Holly Sauer, Ogie Strogatz, Ann Willoughby and Sarah Williams. We are additionally grateful for our new partnership with the DVC Foundation that resulted in the award of one Single-Parent Scholarship.

### **Take Note – Local Scholarship Donations Are Simplified!**

Our branch works hard to raise funds for our Local Scholarships and until now, donations for this area have gone to a separate fund. This year, since we've become a 501(c)(3), we no longer need to use this CA Special Projects Fund (CA SPF) to raise tax-deductible donations. This special type of account, administered by AAUW California, serves as a non-profit entity that enables donations to be tax-deductible. However, the SPF scoops 5% off the top and is inconvenient in other ways, so we will close our account with them this summer.

**Important: All future Local Scholarship donations should be made directly to AAUW DAW.** This can be done by sending a check to AAUW DAW, P.O. Box 996, Alamo CA 94507, or by going to the **DONATE** link at our website and giving through PayPal.

Instructions are on our website at <https://daw-ca.aauw.net/donate/>

Thank you for your generosity!

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## AAUW California Public Policy Update

*By Amy Hom and Missy Maceyko, Co-chairs AAUW California Public Policy Committee*

### AAUW CA Advocates for its Priorities with the Legislature

*By Sue Miller and Joy Frew, AAUW CA Public Policy Committee*

This year's Lobby Days event, held on April 2nd and 3rd, was exciting and action-packed. 140 women on 43 teams from 63 AAUW California branches met with 39 Assembly offices and 27 Senate offices. 11 meetings took place in person in Sacramento, 55 meetings took place via Zoom, and the majority took place without a hitch.

While most meetings were conducted with legislative staff, we were able to hold eight meetings with the members themselves - five Assemblymembers and three Senators. We were not able to get a meeting for Zoom Team 7 with Assemblymember Hart, but they did even better when one of their members, Judy Frost from the Santa Maria branch, joined Assemblymember Hart on a hike and lobbied him on the hiking trail.

We were happy to learn that our organization was known to many of the legislative staff and legislators with whom our members met. Some staff had looked up our website prior to meeting and were impressed with programs such as Tech Trek and Gov Trek. Most were supportive of advancing women's equity.

The reception of our "Top 3" bills - AB 2843, AB 2326 and AB 2099 – was generally favorable. The offices were more familiar with the first two, both of which are sponsored by AAUW California. AB 2099 was new to them. You can find more information on these and all the bills we are supporting here: [Bill Tracking Report - 2024 Legislative Session](#).

In short, AB 2843 eliminates cost sharing, including deductibles, from being imposed on any rape survivor seeking medical treatment following a rape. Insurers will be required to cover the full cost of medical care. AB 2326 requires the chancellors or presidents from the University of California (UC), the California State University (CSU), and the California Community Colleges, to provide an annual report publicly and orally to the Assembly and Senate Subcommittees on Education Finance on each institution's compliance with Title IX, including sexual assault. AB 2099 would make it possible for the D.A. to file a felony charge for sharing personal information or images of reproductive health care providers or patients, including on the internet, with the intent of causing them harm, if the posting and subsequent action results in bodily injury.

During our Lobby Days event, we were able to get our message across to those who make our laws and to highlight AAUW, our mission, accomplishments and the benefits we bring to our communities throughout California. It was an empowering exercise in advocacy and for those of you who participated, AAUW California thanks you!

**Check out our Public Policy Page on the [AAUW California Website](#).** You can read our current 2023-2025 Public Policy Priorities which can be viewed here: [2023 - 2025 Public Policy Priorities \(PPP\) - AAUW California](#). Find information on the Legislative Agenda, Lobby Days, Legislative Calendar and Coalitions with other organizations. You can also learn the latest about the School Board Project!



## AAUW California News

### AAUW Goes Back to School

Pop quizzes, fire drills, and Star Pupil Awards were a hit at the AAUW California Annual Event on Saturday, April 27th. If you were unable to attend, you can still go back to school by watching the recording on the [AAUW California website](#).

Congratulations to the following honorees:

- State Named Gift Honoree: Jane Niemeier
- Equity Champion: LA County Supervisor Holly J. Mitchell
- President's Award: Mary Isaac
- 18th Speech Trek Competition Winner: Addison Horn from the Auburn Branch
- Gov Trek Winning Team: Vote Eliana

Petaluma took the honor as the top Branch Activity of the Year award winner for their program on gun violence and protection. They were joined by representatives from Napa County and La Mesa-El Cajon. Their presentations sparked interest in audience participants.

### State Named Gift Honoree Announced!

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

It's an honor to present Jane Niemeier with the 2024 State Named Gift Honoree!

- She is an active dual member of the San Diego and the La Mesa-El Cajon Branches.
- She serves as the San Diego IBC liaison.
- She has served in most branch positions including President, Treasurer, and Program Chair.
- She was the 2021-2023 State Nominating Committee chair.
- She served as the 2014 AAUW California Convention Chair.
- She served six years on the AAUW California State Board as Co-President, Program Chair, and State Oversight Committee.
- She has been appointed a director to the AAUW California Special Project Fund (SPF).

Congratulations, Jane, and thank you for your leadership. Another big shout-out to 54 branches that nominated Branch Named Gift Honorees to 127 members!

### Good Things Come in Threes! 2024 Branch Activity of the Year (BAY) Winners!

*By Sharyn Siebert, Director, Branch Support [branch@aauw-ca.org](mailto:branch@aauw-ca.org), Sigrid Moranz, Director, Leadership, [leader-dev@aauw-ca.org](mailto:leader-dev@aauw-ca.org), Marsha Swails, Director, Membership, [membership@aauw-ca.org](mailto:membership@aauw-ca.org)*

We received 20 submissions from 16 branches, and all were wonderful ideas. Click [HERE](#) to see summaries of all the entries and to learn about the winning submissions.

**Congratulations to the three winning branches for their excellent programs:**

- **First Place** - Petaluma: Normalizing Safety: Gun Violence Prevention
- **Runner Up** - Napa County: Tech Trek 25th Anniversary Celebration
- **Runner Up** - La Mesa-El Cajon: Is the Judicial System Fair and Unbiased?

## Living Our Mission Of Equity And Inclusion

Charmen Goehring, Director, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, [diversity@aauw-ca.org](mailto:diversity@aauw-ca.org)

This is a good time to give a shout-out to the idea of one person making a huge difference. As I mentioned during the Annual Event, **AAUW Berkeley president, Karen Weinstein**, learned about **Mary Church Terrell** and her involvement in the fight to integrate AAUW. She spent nearly two years lobbying AAUW to include Terrell on the national website as a Trailblazer. She then enlisted the Oakland Branch to join with her branch in hosting Terrell biographer, Alison Parker, in Oakland for a talk.

Collaboration with a wide range of local organizations (The African American Museum and Library of Oakland, Oakland/Berkeley LWV, Emerge California, Berkeleyside (newspaper), YWCA Berkeley, The National Women's History Alliance, and several chapters of Delta Sigma Theta—an historically African American sorority) contributed to the success of the event.

From this, they worked with me to create a statewide webinar about Terrell with Alison Parker. That successful webinar has now been viewed by members and branches across the country. And National included references to Mary Church Terrell in a webinar they presented a couple of months ago. An idea that started with one woman created inclusion ripples across AAUW. Let's continue and create some waves!

You can watch the recording of the webinar about Mary Church Terrell [HERE](#).

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## AAUW National News

*By Julia T. Brown, Esq., Board Chair, 2017-2024, and Cheryl Sorokin, Board Chair, 2024-2025*

The 2024 AAUW election is now complete and we are grateful for all those who took the time to vote. Congratulations to Melissa LaDuke, Dianne Owens, Sona Pancholy, and Christine Schmitz on their election to the AAUW Board!

On behalf of the AAUW Board of Directors, we are disappointed that the initiative to open AAUW's membership did not pass. We understand that this outcome may feel exclusionary to some. But AAUW's history is one of continual change and growth, even in the face of challenges. That same resilient spirit must guide us now as we seek to fulfill AAUW's purpose to advance equity for women and girls.

There are many ways to engage with AAUW and support our mission beyond membership. Please encourage your fellow members and non-members alike to engage with us — to become [Two-Minute Activists](#), to attend our webinars and events, to apply for a [fellowship or grant](#), and to share the information and resources from our [website](#), which support women's economic empowerment.

The AAUW Board of Directors is committed to AAUW's future and to strengthening the connection with all our members and our community of branch and state organizations. We can all do more to support AAUW's efforts — and we won't stop working for an equitable future for women and girls.

To access the full election results and FAQ (including the potential to vote on this issue again in the future), please visit the [AAUW Election page](#).

## Membership News

### Time to Renew!

Once again, it's time for most branch members to renew their memberships; if your renewal is due by June 30, you will have received an email for the National office already. If you are a newer member,



your renewal fee is due by the end of the month when you joined AAUW. Either way, when your fees are due, you'll receive an email about renewing from National AAUW.

Membership dues for the 2024-25 fiscal year are the same as last year. National dues are \$72, all of which is now tax-deductible. State dues are \$20 and are not tax-deductible. Our branch dues are \$28 and are also tax deductible. This means regular DAW branch members pay a total of \$120 for their National, State and Branch membership.

There are three ways to renew:

- *Online:* Send your renewal fee using your credit card via PayPal. (There is a convenience fee of \$4.85.) To use PayPal, [click here](#).
- *With AAUW National's Community Hub app:* Sign on to the National Community Hub and follow the instructions to renew online. (Note that our branch ID is CA 0154). There's no fee for paying with a credit card this way. To access the Hub [click here](#).
- *By Mail:* Write your check for \$120, payable to AAUW-DAW, and mail to:  
AAUW-DAW - Membership  
PO Box 996 Alamo, CA 94507

Any questions? Please contact Tena Gallagher at [mstena@gmail.com](mailto:mstena@gmail.com).

Thank you for your continued membership - we appreciate your interest and energy, and your support for advancing equity for women and girls!

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### Editor's Note

This edition of the Advocate is being published later in the month than usual. We wanted to be able to incorporate the latest information about the 2024-25 board election as well as up-to-date news of the Local Scholarship awards.

We will take a break from our monthly publication schedule over the summer while the new board members hold a strategy session and plan the branch calendar for the 2024-25 year. We intend to have an Advocate edition later in the summer to report more details about the 2024 Local Scholarship recipients and to preview our plans for branch events and advocacy in the fall.

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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
- 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?** – 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).

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## Our Wonderful Sponsors

We are proud to acknowledge our new branch sponsor, Monica Perrone, Landscape Architecture. We appreciate their support, which goes directly to DAW projects that include scholarships for local college students, Tech Trek camperships, and community education programs. For more information about becoming a sponsor, please visit our website at <https://daw-ca.aauw.net/sponsorships-2024/>



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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/>

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