



The Advocate

July-August 2024

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“One child, one teacher, one book, one pen can change the world.”
 Malala Yousafzai, education activist and Nobel laureate

DAW General Membership Meeting and Brunch

September 14, 2024
10:00 am – 1:00 pm
The Greenery, Walnut Creek



Dr. Kendra Carr

We are rapidly forming plans for the 2024 Membership Brunch - our annual branch meeting that you won't want to miss! There will be a lovely meal and time to gather, learn, and join branch committees and Interest Groups while we visit with members and guests.

The event's agenda will include:

- Presentations from Tech Trek Campers
- A talk by featured speaker **Dr. Kendra Carr**, Co-Director, Contra Costa County Office of Racial Equity and Social Justice
- Branch business meeting to finalize the year's budget
- A preview of our branch strategy and plans for coming year

Save the date!

Get Out the Vote - Postcard Session

By Ogie Strogatz

The November 5th election cycle is in full swing, with so very much at stake to protect and strengthen our democracy.

Let's help get out the vote! Please join us on **Monday, August 19th, from 10:00 am to noon** to write postcards that will drive voter turnout among BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color) communities in battleground states. We'll provide postcards, messaging, addresses, pens, and stamps. You bring the energy!

We're collaborating with the Center for Common Ground's [Reclaim Our Vote](#), a grassroots, non-partisan, non-profit initiative dedicated to increasing BIPOC voter turnout. The postcards will provide critical information about early voting locations and times, voter registration deadlines, information for free rides to the polls, and phone numbers for county election officials. For many folks in Reclaim Our Vote's targeted communities, this is the only voting-related information they receive.



We're eager to have the chance to pitch in together; see you then!

[Click here](#) to RSVP so you will get information about the event's location.

President's Message

By Deborah Wechsler, President

Welcome to the start of our year! Like all of you, I am often overwhelmed with the “busyness” of my life. Was this what I really wanted retirement to be like? Nevertheless, I volunteered to be the DAW Branch President again. I did this for several reasons:

- I do not want to lose the momentum and energy created by our most recent past presidents, Monika Witte and Ogie Strogatz. Our branch has been strengthened by their dedication to Advocacy, Public Policy, and modification of our approach to one of our main mission projects – Local Scholarships. I think that their work enabled us to become more attractive to potential members, as well as carry out a very successful Garden Tour fundraising for our mission projects.
- Our branch membership (you!) has been showing up – at our Third Thursday Programs, at the School Board meetings, and volunteering for our committees. The energy and dedication is inspirational.
- It is always an honor and sometimes even fun (!) to meet and work with intelligent, caring women.



My goal for this year is to tone down the “busyness” but maintain the energy! I will continue to need your help and support to make this another great year.

July-August Checklist

- **August 13, 5:30 pm – San Ramon Unified School District Meeting**
[Click here](#) for more information
- **August 19, 10:00 am – Get Out the Vote Postcard Session**
[Click here](#) to RSVP
- **September 10, 5:30 pm – San Ramon Unified School District Meeting**
[Click here](#) for more information
- **September 14, 10:00 am – Membership Brunch at The Greenery, Walnut Creek**
Save the date!
- [Donate here](#) to support DAW branch programs



Attention Local Scholarship Donors!

Be sure to note a very important change in how donations for Local Scholarship should be directed. Since our AAUW DAW Branch has recently become a 501(c)(3) organization, **all future Local Scholarship donations must be made directly to AAUW DAW.** This new direction will ensure that your donations will be processed in a timely and reliable manner.

Local Scholarship donations can now be made by sending a check to AAUW DAW, P.O. Box 996, Alamo CA 94507, or by clicking on the **DONATE** button on our website and giving through PayPal.

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

Many thanks for your past generosity and we hope that our revised process will facilitate your future donations!

Welcome DAW's 2024-25 Board

With the branch election completed at the Installation meeting in June, the new DAW board members have taken office as of July 1st. Here's the full roster -

Elected Positions

President	Deborah Wechsler
President Elect	Open
Programs Co-VPs	Ogie Strogatz, Monika Witte
Membership Co-VPs	Judy Lauper, Monika Witte
Funds VP	Open
Secretary	Kate Waters
Treasurer	Chris Ritter

Appointed Positions

Advocate Editor	Joanne Quijano
Advocate Circulation Manager	Susetta Welm
Communications Manager	Deborah Wechsler
Corresponding Secretary	Julie Grisham
Database Manager	Joanne Quijano
DEI Officer	Ogie Strogatz
Directory Manager	Joanne Quijano
Fundraising Chair	Pat Morris
Garden Tour Chair	Open
Graphic Designer	Open
Hospitality Chair	Open
Local Scholarship Co-Chairs	Holly Sauer, Ann Willoughby
Local Scholarship Treasurer	Open
Membership Treasurer	Open
Nominating Committee	Holly Sauer
Operations Team Chair	Deborah Wechsler
Parliamentarian	Open
Publicity Chair	Linda Jimerson
Public Policy Chair	Laurinda Ochoa
Social Media Manager	Isabel Lau
Sponsorship Manager	Open
Tech Trek Co-Chairs	Lee Garverick, Kate Waters
Web Master	Joanne Quijano

There are still open board positions for interested members who'd like to get more involved with the branch. It's a great opportunity to hone your leadership skills and help the organization in our mission to advance equity for women and girls. The branch needs engaged and energetic board members to run smoothly and thrive. Current and past board members are eager to mentor and support newer members. Please contact President Deborah Wechsler to learn more or [click here](#) to visit the branch website.

July Board Strategy Meeting Recap

By Deborah Wechsler, President

The 2024-25 branch board began the year with a strategy meeting at my home on July 12. First, I want to thank Monika and Ogie for putting together the content for the meeting. As Monika noted in her introductory remarks, with our efforts for AAUW we are giving a gift to women and girls, to our local and extended community, and to ourselves.

AAUW California's theme for 2024-25 is **"Standing Together for Equity"**. We decided to adopt this theme for our branch as well since it inspires our strategic objectives and goals for the year. Our DAW T-shirts (with "Equity for All" printed on the back) fit right in!

Our branch activities for the coming year will be guided by four key strategic concepts:

- 1) Advocacy
 - Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI)
 - School District Board meetings and support of public education
 - Voting initiatives
- 2) Education for our members and the public
 - As a unifying theme, we'll tie potential programs on climate crisis, civil discourse, AI, and the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals to the importance of Public Education.
- 3) Focused philanthropy
 - Continuing support for our mission-based projects: Local Scholarships, Tech Trek and possibly add National Conference for College Women Student Leaders (NCCWSL).
 - Fundraising is key to this effort; determine how the annual Garden Tour fits with other potential fundraising opportunities, and pursue more robust outreach to branch sponsors.
- 4) Fostering community
 - Continue our monthly **Third Thursday Programs**. A preliminary calendar is posted on our website; [click here](#) to see it. There may be some date changes as we finalize shared meetings with other organizations.
 - Partner with the League of Women Voters and other local AAUW branches for some of our programs. This will lessen the organizational load while helping extend our community.
 - Hold occasional "Salons" for informal group discussions and socializing.

The DAW Board will finalize the 2024-25 budget to support our many activities in early August. Once it's ready, it will be emailed to all branch members for your vote of approval. Watch for this in your email, and please be sure to review it and vote before our general meeting at the Member Brunch on September 14th.

The DAW Branch's strategy for 2024-2025 related to AAUW National and California



Tech Trek Updates

Tech Trek Alumna Is a National Merit Scholar

By Deborah Wechsler, President and past Tech Trek Chair

A past DAW Tech Trek scholar, Emily Kalin, is one of three Danville students awarded a National Merit Scholarship. The awards are financed by the institutions they plan to attend and range from \$500 to \$2500. Emily will be attending Purdue University to study aerospace engineering.

Emily was one of our Tech Trek campers in 2019. Lee Garverick, Tech Trek Co-Chair, and I met her at the TT Ice Cream Social in June. She is a delightful young woman and shared her experiences and thoughts with the Tech Trek campers, families and branch representatives. She is also one of the Senior Counselors for the Tech Trek Sonoma Camp this year. She is very excited about her plans at Purdue.

It is gratifying to have this follow-up with one of our Tech Trek Alums! We also have some other former Tech Trekkers from our branch who are dorm moms and counselors this year.

Tech Trek 2024 Wrap Up

By Lee Gervarick, Tech Trek Co-Chair



Tech Trek Sonoma campers sponsored by DAW

The final Tech Trek camp, which was a virtual session running from July 21st to July 26th, just wrapped up. In total we sent five girls to camp in Fresno on June 16th to the 22nd, six girls to camp in Sonoma on June 23rd to 29th, and three girls to the virtual camp. Thank you again to our generous donors and volunteers who made this possible.

Quotes from Tech Trek 2024 Sonoma State Campers

“My knowledge on the topics we addressed (environmental processes and management) has, to say the least, tripled. My experience at Tech Trek has been the best academic experience of my life”

“We did an intro to robotics that was really cool because I love coding and hardware. And the astronomy night was amazing.”

“I really enjoyed building water towers in my Civil Engineering Core Class. The Professional Women Panel was also very inspiring.”

“I got to meet new people and learn about forensics and how science can help solve crimes.”

“I have really enjoyed learning [about] new STEM careers that I have never heard of before. I have really enjoyed my time here at camp and this has really helped me come out of my shell.”



All of the campers sponsored by our branch thanked our branch for giving them the opportunity to attend Tech Trek!

Public Policy – School Board Meeting Update

By Joanne Quijano, Advocate Editor

DAW branch representatives attended the San Ramon Valley Unified School District (SRVUSD) board meeting on July 23rd starting off the school year and continuing our advocacy with the district. Twelve members and two guests represented AAUW – most of us in our distinctive DAW t-shirts – to visibly support the board in providing high quality, equitable education for all students.



Nancy Dowell and Tena Gallagher

Chris Ritter spoke to the board on our behalf to introduce our organization to the new SRVUSD superintendent, CJ Cammack. Chris recognized that the district is ranked as one of the best in the state and explained that “AAUW members believe that high-quality public education is the foundation of a democratic society and a key to improving economic prosperity and equity for all. The entire AAUW National Organization strongly supports protection from censorship and bias-free education.”



Chris Ritter

After noting that some groups have attacked the school board recently to demand that some books be censored, she called out their tactic of reading passages they find objectionable at board meetings as disrespectful and unproductive. For AAUW’s position, she said “We respect the right for parents to opt out of content for their children. We also agree with the school board and the elected representatives of the people of California that parents do not have the right to censor content for other people’s children.”

In conclusion, she assured the board that “We will be here to support you, our local school board, as you continue to lead our excellent public school system.”

Join DAW branch members at future SRVUSD board meetings! Be part of our presence to help show support for providing equal access to quality public education for all students.

[Click here](#) for more information about attending school board meetings with DAW.

AAUW National News

Act Now to Support New Title IX Rules

On July 11, the U.S. House of Representatives voted to pass an AAUW-opposed Congressional Review Act resolution (H.J. Res. 165), overturning new Title IX rules that provide strengthened protections against gender-based discrimination in school. The party-line vote (210-205) would also prevent future efforts by federal agencies to reinstate a substantially similar rule. In a statement of condemnation, AAUW CEO Gloria L. Blackwell commented, “Representatives who voted for this resolution are continuing to subject students to policies that stack the deck against survivors of sexual assault and harassment”. [Click here](#) to read our full statement.

[Tell your Senators to support Title IX and vote NO on S.J. Res. 96!](#)

Opponents of the new Title IX rules have included language in the House version of the FY 25 education spending bill which would prohibit the U.S. Department of Education from using federally appropriated funds to enforce the new Title IX rules. Due to legal challenges, preliminary injunctions are preventing the rules from being implemented in 14 states. Additionally, the U.S. Department of Education is blocked from enforcing the new rules in “the schools attended by” the children of the members of Moms for Liberty – potentially impacting schools in all 50 states.

Membership News

There’s Still Time to Renew!

If your renewal was due by June 30th like most of our branch members, you should have received an email for the National office explaining how to renew. We certainly hope you’ve renewed already, but if you haven’t, there’s still time!

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 Monika Witte, Membership Co-VP at aauwmonikawitte@gmail.com.

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

Editor’s Note

This is a combined summer edition of the Advocate. The next edition will be our usual monthly publication in September.

“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
- 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.

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 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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