



The Advocate

October 2024

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“Someone struggled for your right to vote. Use it.”

Susan B. Anthony, women’s rights activist

DAW Branch's 2024 School Board Candidate Forums

Get informed about the important School Board elections coming up in November!

A team from our DAW branch worked together with local groups of the League of Women Voters, the PTA, and with our neighboring branch, AAUW San Ramon, to plan three non-partisan school board candidate forums for the San Ramon Valley Unified School District (SRVUSD) and the Acalanes Union High School District (AUHSD). These sessions, moderated by the League of Women Voters, will provide a great opportunity to meet the candidates and hear directly from them about their positions on critical issues facing the school districts.

These informative events are free and open to the public as well as to AAUW members. Everyone who's interested in our area schools is encouraged to attend the following sessions.

Tuesday, Oct 1, 10:00 am - SRVUSD School Board Candidate Forum

San Ramon Community Center, Terrace Room
12501 Alcosta Blvd, San Ramon

Presented by the AAUW San Ramon and AAUW Danville-Alamo-Walnut Creek Branches, featuring the candidates for Board of Education trustees –

- **Shelley Clark**, Area 2 Candidate
- **Karin Shumway**, Area 2 Candidate
- **Laura Bratt**, Area 3 Candidate
- **Sukriti Sehgal**, Area 3 Candidate

No reservations are required for this event.

Wednesday, Oct 16, 6:30 pm - SRVUSD School Board Candidate Forum

Iron Horse Middle School
12601 Alcosta Blvd, San Ramon

Presented by the San Ramon Valley Council of PTAs and the AAUW DAW branch, featuring the candidates for Board of Education trustees –

- **Shelley Clark**, Area 2 Candidate
- **Karin Shumway**, Area 2 Candidate
- **Laura Bratt**, Area 3 Candidate
- **Sukriti Sehgal**, Area 3 Candidate

You may submit questions for the candidates in advance by [clicking here](#).

No reservations are required for this event.

Thursday, Oct 17, 7:00 pm - AUHSD School Board Candidate Forum

Walnut Creek Library
1644 N. Broadway, Walnut Creek

Hosted by the Las Trampas Creek Council PTA and the AAUW DAW branch, featuring the six candidates running for two board positions –

- **Andrew Fontan**
- **Sibyl Minighini**
- **Wendy Reicher**
- **Paul Chopra**
- **Peter Catalano**
- **Stacey Schweppe**

Registration is required for this event.

[Click here](#) for more information and to RSVP.

Third Thursday Member Meeting – November



Taking a Breath: Wellness in the Schools and for Us

Thursday, November 21, 2024, 6:00 – 8:00 pm
Danville Congregational Church

Join us for two presentations in one evening that will be grounded in well-being! We'll open with a focus on the importance of nurturing wellness in public schools. **Jessica Coulson, Coordinator, Social Emotional Learning and College and Career**

Readiness for SRVUSD, will discuss the what the curriculum for mental health in the school district includes and how it fits in with the overall strategy for educating K-12 students.

Then our favorite local yoga instructor and practitioner, **Praveena Chinthluri**, who guided a session for us last year, will return to guide us in a 30-minute healing chair practice. Please dress comfortably if you wish to participate. All levels of ability are welcome, no prior experience required.

See you on November 21 as we resume our Third Thursday Member Meetings

[Click here to RSVP!](#)

Jessica Coulson is Coordinator, Social Emotional Learning, and College and Career Readiness, for the San Ramon Valley Unified School District. Jessica previously served as a school counselor and a high school English teacher.

Praveena Chinthaluri is a passionate practitioner of Pilates, Yoga and GYROKINESIS®. She is a certified Pilates trainer, a registered Yoga Alliance teacher, and a certified GYROKINESIS® trainer.

President's Message

By Deborah Wechsler, President

I am writing this from the Eastern Sierra, where I'm camping with my husband and dog. The colors of aspens changing bring me joy.

At this season though, I am thinking about how I can make a difference. With so many on all sides of issues conveying impassioned rhetoric of fear and suspicion of anyone or anything "other", what actions can we take? I think supporting our core AAUW mission, we can educate ourselves and then advocate and vote accordingly. This month our branch is helping to publicize several school board candidate forums, where you can learn about the people running for the school boards and support those who share our value of quality public education for all. Also, we know that school boards are often the first step for a political career, so voting for candidates now makes a difference for who you may see running for political offices in the future. A place for AAUW DAW members to take action!



Enjoy the autumn weather, and stay aware, stay kind, and support your community as we move into the election season.

October Checklist

- **Oct 1, 10:00 am - SRVUSD School Board Candidate Forum** at San Ramon Community Center
[Click here](#) for details
- **October 12, 9:00 am to noon – OML Shred Day for Tech Trek**
[Click here](#) for details
- **October 15, 5:30 pm – San Ramon Unified School District Meeting**
[Click here](#) for more information
- **Oct 16, 6:30 pm - SRVUSD School Board Candidate Forum** at Iron Horse Middle School
[Click here](#) for details
- **Oct 17, 7:00 pm - AUHSD School Board Candidate Forum**
[Click here](#) for more information and to RSVP
- **November 19, 5:30 pm – San Ramon Unified School District Meeting**
[Click here](#) for more information
- **November 21, 6:00 pm – Third Thursday Member Meeting – Wellness in the Schools and for Us**
[Click here](#) for more information and to RSVP
- [Donate here](#) to support DAW branch programs



AAUW National – It’s My Vote

By Gloria L. Blackwell, Chief Executive Officer, AAUW Action Fund

Women’s voices have the power to shape the future.

Our votes can steer political discourse toward issues that impact our economic opportunity, education, careers — and our futures. From advocating for gender equity and reproductive rights to championing equal pay and access to education, women have the power to influence the direction of our nation.

The choices we make at the ballot box can open doors for generations of women to come. As informed voters, we must support candidates who prioritize equitable access to education, promote opportunities for all women to achieve economic security, and support policies that dismantle barriers to a diverse and inclusive society.

Let’s harness our collective power and drive meaningful change. Between now and Election Day, encourage conversation around the issues that affect our families and communities. Ask the tough questions: Where do our candidates stand on issues that matter to women?

When women vote, we change the conversation.

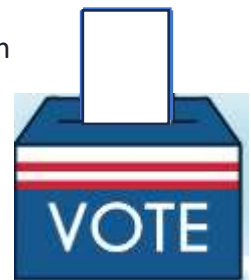
Make your voice heard! Together, we can pave the way for a more just and equitable future for all.



AAUW National’s website has resources to help you get informed and get involved with the coming election. To visit the site – [click here](#).

California Voting Information

Your vote is important! Unsure how to register to vote or how to cast your vote in California? Want more information about how our US elections work and what positions we vote for as our representatives nationally and in California? Would you like to learn more about the ballot initiatives in California? It’s all there in the comprehensive, non-partisan, Easy Voter Guide created by the **League of Women Voters’ of California**. Take a look at the guide and share it with your friends; be informed and be sure to vote.



[Click here](#) to access the informative Easy Voter Guide.



To learn about the League of Women Voters Diablo Valley – [click here](#)

To learn about the League of Women Voters West Contra Costa – [click here](#)

DAW Endorses Measure Q – Funds for SRVUSD

The AAUW DAW board has voted to add the branch to the list of organizations in favor of Measure Q. This endorsement is in line with our public policy goal of advocating for equal access to quality public education for all students.

The passage of Measure Q would renew for nine more years the expiring \$144 parcel tax that currently provides funds for San Ramon Valley Unified School District. Since it renews a current tax, it is NOT a new tax, and senior property owners can file for an exemption. As with the expiring parcel tax, the funds would be overseen by an independent citizens' oversight committee, be required to have formal annual audits, and will have public disclosure of all spending.

Measure Q funds would serve to retain teachers, and protect STEM and reading arts programs. None of the money would go to administrator salaries or benefits, and the measure does not have the built-in inflation increases that were in Measure D that failed to pass earlier this year.

AAUW DAW encourages everyone to vote “yes” on Measure Q to ensure continued funding for SRVUSD!

Shred Fest for OML’s Tech Trek

Clean out your old paper work while you help support our neighboring branch! The AAUW Orinda-Moraga-Lafayette (OML) Branch is having a **“Shred Day”** to raise funds for their Tech Trek scholarships. It’s a drive up event to provide secure pulverized shredding for papers for just \$12 per banker’s file box. It’s happening on -

**Saturday, October 12, from 9:00 am to noon
At the 5A Rent a Space, 455 Moraga Road, Moraga**

For more information, [click here](#) to visit the OML website.

DAW Brunch 2024 Recap

We had a lovely warm day for the annual brunch at a new venue, the Greenery in Walnut Creek. There were almost 60 attendees, including Tech Trek campers and their parents. After enjoying a hearty and tasty breakfast buffet, the students each said a bit about their experience at camp; they impressed all with their thoughtful comments.

The keynote speaker, Dr. Kendra Carr, followed with an engaging talk focused on raising our awareness of factors that affect people to have more or less power in our society. In her role as co-director of Contra Costa County's newly created Office of Racial Equity and Social Justice (ORESJ), she oversees their work to nurture the social ecosystem and promote collective wellness in the county. They are beginning an action plan to address the root causes of inequities.

To see her "slide show" from the talk, visit our website - [click here](#).



Dr. Kendra Carr



Lee Garverick, Tech Trek students, Deborah Wechsler



Brunch 2024 attendees

AAUW California Public Policy News

2024 Ballot Propositions - Support AAUW California Public Policy Priorities

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

This November, California voters will decide the fate of 10 statewide ballot propositions. While we encourage members to support additional propositions that may capture the spirit of AAUW California's Public Policy Priorities (PPPs), we suggest that four of the propositions on the ballot in 2024 deserve a YES vote from our members for their explicit alignment with AAUW California's PPPs.

Proposition 2, Public Education Facilities Bond Measure (2024), proposes issuing \$10 billion in bonds to fund construction and modernization of California's public education facilities. \$8.5 billion would be allocated to K-12 schools and \$1.5 billion would support improvements at community colleges. Many school facilities are over 50 years old and require significant upgrades to meet current technological and education needs. Research shows that modernized school facilities correlate with better test scores, higher attendance, and improved teacher retention rates. The last time districts received state funding for infrastructure improvements was in 2016, when Prop 51 authorized \$9 billion in bonds. That money has now run out, and Prop 2 would help fund school projects totaling \$3.5 billion that have already been approved and are awaiting funding.

AAUW California supports "Adequate and equitable funding at all educational levels, including pre-school and post-secondary", and we support a YES vote on Proposition 2.

Proposition 3, Constitutional Right to Marriage, would amend the California Constitution to recognize the fundamental right to marry, and would remove the language banning same-sex marriage, passed by voters in 2008, from the state constitution. In practice, the ban has been nullified since a Supreme Court ruling in 2013 which allowed same-sex marriages to resume in California. Proposition 3 will enshrine the fundamental right to marry and protect against any potential future changes to federal marriage protections.

AAUW California supports "Guarantee of civil and constitutional rights for all, including all forms of gender identity and expression, and all family structures", and we support a YES vote on Proposition 3.

Proposition 4, Parks, Environment, Energy, and Water Bond Measure, would allocate the state to issue \$10 billion in bonds to fund various environmental, energy, and water projects. While there are a range of projects that ballot measure would fund that would benefit all Californians who are confronted with the impacts of sea-level rise, extreme heat, wildfire dangers, and air/water pollution, Proposition 4 would also require that 40% of the bond revenue be used to fund activities that benefit communities with lower incomes or that are affected by environmental changes or disasters. Also, as AAUW California's Public Policy Committee has pointed out in the past, addressing climate issues and advancing gender equity is directly related to environmental sustainability, and vice versa.

AAUW California supports "Social and racial justice for all members of society, including equal access to quality affordable healthcare, housing and a healthy environment," and we support a YES vote on Proposition 4.

Proposition 32, Raises Minimum Wage, would raise California's current minimum wage of \$16 per hour. Employers with 26 or more employees would pay \$18 per hour beginning in 2025. Employers

with 25 or fewer employees would pay \$17 per hour in 2025 and \$18 per hour in 2026. California has a high cost of living and our current \$16 minimum wage is well below the estimated living wage needed to support a household's basic needs. Women and communities of color bear the burden of low-wage jobs. The California Civil Rights Department (CRD) released data showing that in 2021, roughly half of all Latino, Black, and Native American workers earned \$32,329 or less - \$10,000 less than the state's per capita income. 54 percent of all workers in California earning \$32,239 or less were women.

A minimum wage of \$18 will reduce income inequality and improve the standard of living for millions of California workers, especially women and people of color.

AAUW California supports “Economic Security for All Women”, and we support a YES vote on Proposition 32.

For guidance on additional ballot measures that are adjacent to, but not directly within, the scope of AAUW California's PPPs, please see this excellent guide provided by [the League of Women Voters of California](#).

“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 branch sponsors. 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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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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