



The Advocate

November 2024

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"The worst thing that can happen in a democracy – as well as in an individual's life – is to become cynical about the future and lose hope: that is the end, and we cannot let that happen."

Hillary Clinton, Former U.S. Secretary of State

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**



Jessica Coulson

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 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](#)



Praveena Chinthluri

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 Chinthluri 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.

Third Thursday Member Meeting – December

Holiday Social

**Thursday, December 19, 2024, 6:00 – 8:00 pm
Danville Congregational Church**

Join your fellow members and friends to celebrate the holiday season. Plans are in the works for a festive gathering and **we need volunteers to help!** If you are interested, please contact Deborah Wechsler at deborah.wechsler@gmail.com



Save the date!

President's Message

By Deborah Wechsler, President

We are almost there – election day! Many of us have already sent in our ballots. I trust everyone who is a member of AAUW is engaged in our elections, making informed choices and using the information from forums and reliable media sources to vote with our heads and hearts. While I was traveling in the Owens Valley last month, we visited Manzanar, one of the Japanese internment camps used during WWII, to our country's shame. At the museum (which I highly recommend visiting) I encountered this quote from Charles Evans Hughes, who was Chief Justice of the US Supreme Court from 1930-1941. This statement is as valid today, perhaps even more so, than it was when Chief Justice Hughes expressed it:



“You may think that the Constitution is your security – it is nothing but a piece of paper... it is nothing at all, unless you have sound and uncorrupted public opinion.”

This speaks directly to our mission and values as members of AAUW – to identify, publicize and offer education opportunities for ourselves and for all in our communities, so as to ensure sound and informed opinions and actions.

November Checklist

- **November 5, 8:00 pm – Polls close – Be sure to vote!**
- **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
- **December 10, 5:30 pm – San Ramon Unified School District Meeting**
[Click here](#) for more information
- **December 19, 6:00 pm – Third Thursday Member Meeting – Holiday Social**
Save the date!
- [Donate here](#) to support DAW branch programs



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.

Other sources of voting information -

Contra Costa County – Key dates, list of candidates and measures, regional early voting sites, official ballot drop box locations, and polling places. [Click here.](#)

CalMatters 2024 Voter Guide: Propositions – Background on CA ballot propositions, including what the ballot measure would do, why it's on the ballot, those for and against the measure, funders, a 1-minute video summary, and related news. [Click here.](#)

League of Women Voters (LWV) of California, Ballot Recommendations – For CA ballot propositions, a brief description, the League's recommendation and supporting rationale. [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!

DAW Branch's October 2024 School Board Candidate Forums

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). The sessions were held in October and were moderated by the League of Women Voters. They were a great opportunity to meet the candidates and hear directly from them about their positions on critical issues facing the school districts.

You can now see videos of all three sessions on YouTube. Use the following links –

San Ramon Valley Unified School District School Board Forum held Oct 1 is at –
https://youtu.be/Hjs-Gdy-Yy0?si=zzREg-XFlr_0skOm

San Ramon Valley Unified School District School Board Forum held Oct 16 is at –
<https://www.youtube.com/live/5FqkPreZygo?si=LLjWXWtQhFDrzspC>

Acalanes Union High School District School Board Forum held Oct 17 is at -
<https://www.youtube.com/live/5FqkPreZygo?si=KuHv0FJNKaKTRDpZ>



Candidate Forum on Oct 17, 2024

Donations for AAUW – Please Give!

For AAUW Danville-Alamo-Walnut Creek Branch Mission Programs

By Joanne Quijano, Advocate Editor

We certainly have many different worthy groups appealing for our money - why give to DAW?

As an AAUW member, we know you support our organization's mission of advancing equity for women and girls. And you are probably aware of our branch's signature programs that deliver on this mission; these programs rely completely on funds from donations and fundraising. One of the primary branch programs is to offer **Local Scholarships** to women in our area to advance their college education. We were able to award 10 scholarships of \$2,000 each in June, 2024. The second key branch program is to fund middle-school girls' participation in **Tech Trek**, a week-long STEM focused summer camp. With generous donations and fundraising, we sent 13 girls to in-person and virtual camps in 2024. In addition, DAW holds **meetings about topics related to our mission** to help inform members and the public. We've held eight interesting and topical meetings since the beginning of this year. Finally, DAW supports branch projects advancing equity for all.

Your member dues mostly go to help AAUW National, which has built a respected, visible national and international presence to further work for women's equity. The small portion of dues allotted to DAW enables us to keep in operation; just barely so.

Any amount that you are able to donate to DAW will go directly and entirely to our programs; it won't be used for day-to-day operations, and there's no administrative overhead since the branch is a totally

volunteer organization. You can be sure that contributions will be used solely for the desired program if you direct us accordingly. However, we suggest that DAW donations be made to our “Community Mission Projects” so they can be used for the area with the most need, which varies since fundraising can be unpredictable.

Each DAW Branch member received our annual letter in the past few weeks requesting donations to branch initiatives and the AAUW National Fund. It has directions for donating either online or by check.

Please consider a donation to DAW – we rely on your help to keep our programs strong!

[Click Here](#)

For information about making donations to AAUW DAW and AAUW Fund.

For AAUW National Fund

By Roseann Krane, Fund Vice President

AAUW is investing in women. For more than 130 years, AAUW National has funded the educations of countless women so they could follow their dreams. From astronauts to zoologists, the recipients of AAUW’s fellowships, grants, and awards represent nearly every imaginable field of endeavor.

You are a big part of “Investing in Women” when you donate to AAUW Fund and specify “4130 American fellows fund.” Or if you prefer, AAUW National suggests that you donate to “9110 Greatest Needs Fund.” This allows for supporting rapid response to critical issues affecting women as they emerge and helps fuel research and advocate work. It also may go toward maintaining a functioning national office.

We thank all of you and appreciate any donation whether it is \$10, \$100, or more!

[Click Here](#)

For information about making donations to AAUW DAW and AAUW Fund.

Note that online Fund donations can only be directed to the Greatest Needs Fund. Other Fund donations may be made by check and sent to the DAW P.O. Box.

Announcing the 2024-2025 Local Scholarships

By Ann Willoughby, Local Scholarship Co-Chair

The scholarship application forms have been updated, the latest instructions have been posted, and all three categories of scholarships are now open and accepting applications. The Local Scholarship Committee is off and running. Committee members include Ann Willoughby (Co-Chair), Holly Sauer (Co-Chair), Dot Healy, Judy Lauper, Ogie Strogatz, Kate Waters, and Monika Witte. If you are interested in joining the team, contact Ann or Holly.

DAW’s scholarship program for 2024-2025 includes the same three categories from last year:

Community Local Scholarships – Awarded at a minimum of \$2,000 each, these scholarships are offered to individuals who identify as women and who currently live or work in Danville, Alamo, or Walnut Creek or who attended high school in one of these locations. Applicants must be juniors, seniors, or graduate students at an accredited college or university in the fall of 2025.

Renaissance Scholarships – Awarded at a minimum of \$2,000 each, these scholarships are offered to individuals who identify as women attending California State University East Bay (CSUEB) and who participate in the CSUEB Renaissance Scholars Program for former foster youth. Applicants must be sophomores or higher or graduate students in the fall of 2025.



Alexa Chamorro, Single -Parent Scholarship awardee, and Ogie Strogatz - May 10, 2024

Single-Parent Scholarship – DAW funds one scholarship of \$2,000 that is offered to any student at Diablo Valley College (DVC) who is a single parent and has completed a minimum of 12 college units. The scholarship is administered by DVC, and the college selects the awardee based on criteria established by DAW.

There are a couple of important changes to our scholarship program this year that were approved by the DAW Board. Consistent with AAUW’s mission of equity for all and our branch’s commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion, Community Local Scholarships and Renaissance Scholarships will now be open to individuals who identify as women, not just

women. We have also expanded Community Local Scholarships to include individuals who work in Danville, Alamo, or Walnut Creek since these individuals are valuable, contributing members of our communities.

For more information regarding the scholarships, including instructions for applicants, refer to the DAW Local Scholarships webpage: <https://daw-ca.aauw.net/folocal-scholarships/>

Our ability to give scholarships depends entirely on funds raised by our branch. If you would like to make a tax-deductible donation to DAW Local Scholarships, refer to our Donate webpage: [AAUW Donate | Danville-Alamo-Walnut Creek \(CA\)](#). If you are interested in establishing an honorary scholarship in the name of a special individual, please contact us at daw.aauw@gmail.com. Donations of any amount are greatly appreciated.

AAUW California Public Policy News

Project 2025’s Potential Impact on AAUW Priorities

On October 22, the AAUW California Online Branch hosted a webinar presented by the Public Policy Committee entitled *Project 2025 and How it Would Impact AAUW Public Policy Priorities*. It was led by Amy Hom and Missy Maceyko, AAUW CA Public Policy Co-Chairs. They gave a brief overview of where *Project 2025* came from, who the Heritage Foundation is, and what the project is broadly attempting to do. Then they reviewed specific parts of the project that would impact AAUW Public Policy Priorities, such as education, Title IX, reproductive health, and gender equity, followed by a question and answer session.

Visit the AAUW CA website to view a recording of the webinar on YouTube. There’s also a copy of the presentation and the Q&A responses to read. [Click here](#) for the website.

DAW Public Policy Update

By Laurinda Ochoa, Public Policy Chair

Our branch's School Board activities have continued with our presence and designated AAUW speakers at the monthly Board meetings, and with co-hosting three School Board Candidate Forums in October. See the previous article in this newsletter for information about the forums.

For the San Ramon Valley Unified School District (SRVUSD) Board meetings, in September, Deborah Wechsler, our branch President, introduced our branch and AAUW priorities to the new SRVUSD Superintendent CJ Cammack. In October, two new branch members, Dr. Rhiannon Shires and Rian Dindzans, raised the bar for all community speakers with their inspiring comments to the board.

DAW is representing our support for honest and inclusive public education! To read the statements from the October SRVUSD meeting and to learn more about attending school board meetings, [click here](#).

Membership Corner

AAUW Art & Garden Interest Group – November Field Trip

By Tena Gallagher, Art & Garden Interest Group Lead

Let's go to the Legion of Honor to see the Mary Cassatt exhibit Tuesday, November 19!! We will meet at the far end of the **Sycamore Park and Ride at 9:30 am**. We will carpool and will need volunteers to drive; let me know if you can drive. I do suggest that you attend the Lafayette Library presentation on November 13 at 2 pm in preparation - see info below for this event.

Mary Cassatt (1844–1926) was among the leading figures of the French Impressionist movement and the most celebrated woman artist of her era. Too often dismissed as a sentimental painter of mothers and children, Cassatt was in fact a bold modernist pioneer and an aesthetically radical painter, pastelist, and printmaker. [Mary Cassatt at Work](#) is the first North American retrospective of Cassatt's work in 25 years and includes works from the National Gallery of Art, the Philadelphia Museum of Art, the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, as well as the Fine Arts Museums of SF.

Cost: Members of the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco are free and can bring a guest at no additional charge. If you are a member, please include your membership number in your email to me! Adults: \$35 Seniors (65+): \$32. If we have 10 or more, adults would be \$28 and seniors would be \$25. Audio players to the exhibit are an additional \$6. The suggest contribution for carpoolers to their driver is \$9.

To RSVP for the field trip, ask any questions, or volunteer to drive, please contact Tena Gallagher at mstena@gmail.com.

The Lafayette Library's talk, **WOW: Mary Cassatt at the Legion of Honor Museum**, is on Wednesday, November 13, 2024, at 2:00 pm. For more information about the event and to make a reservation, [click here](#).

Interest Group – Morning Literature

By Sue Woodworth-Bennett

Looking for a new book club? The Morning Literature Group welcomes new members! We meet on the 4th Thursday of the month starting at 9:30am via Zoom or in member's homes. The members suggest and vote on our books annually. We love great literature and enjoy in-depth discussions of our books.

For more information, please contact Sue Woodworth Bennett at (925) 548-0679 or email at woodworthbennett@gmail.com

Calling All Prospective Members!

By Monika Witte, Membership Co-Vice-President

Do you know of someone who might want to join DAW? Please share the word that we are having an informative social gathering for prospective AAUW DAW members on Tuesday, Nov 12, at 6:30 pm. The event will be hosted at a home in Danville.

For more information about the gathering and to refer potential members, contact me, Monika Witte, at aauwmonikawitte@gmail.com. Thanks!

Membership Directory 2024-2025

By Joanne Quijano, Database and Directory Manager

The new DAW Membership Directory for 2024-2025 is in the works and will be mailed to all branch members in November. While you will receive the much-used, traditional printed directory soon, we will also be working on an electronic version that will be easy to access and kept up-to-date as current members change their contact information and new members join. This eDirectory will be available on our website as part of a new branch “member hub” page that will pull together useful reference information from various parts of the website. Much of the information will open for all to access, but the member listings will still require a password for viewing this more sensitive information.

We'll share more about the new eDirectory and branch Member Hub page as they are developed.

Volunteer with Quest at the Danville Pop-Up Museum

A Veteran's Day Pop-Up Museum related to space, robotics, science, and the military will be held on Saturday, Sunday, and Monday, November 9-11, at the Veteran's Memorial Building in downtown Danville. This is a free, family-friendly event that draws hundreds of attendees each day that's hosted by the Veteran's Memorial Building of the San Ramon Valley and the Town of Danville.

The Quest Science Center will have an interactive, hands-on exhibit at the event that features a simple-to-operate wind voyager tunnel. Visitors of all ages will have fun making and testing parachutes in the wind tunnel.

Quest needs volunteers aged 18 and up to help staff its exhibit for the Pop-Up Museum all three days from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm. Shift times are flexible and can be two to three hours; you can volunteer by yourself or with a partner. Note that you will be standing for most of the shift. Simple instructions will be provided - no STEM-experience necessary.

Volunteering with Quest is great fun for friends and couples, and enables Quest to bring free hands-on science to our local community. If you are interested, please contact Dan Golub, Quest education director, at dgolub@quest-science.org.



The wind voyager tunnel



The Quest Science Center is a non-profit organization that aims to inspire and nurture everyday exploration for lifelong engagement with science and technology. It's located in Livermore, CA, and serves the entire Tri-Valley area.

To learn more about the Quest Science Center, [click here](#).

“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 Branch Sponsors

We are proud to acknowledge our loyal 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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* 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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