



The Advocate

May 2025

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“There is always a large horizon.... There is much to be done. It is up to you to contribute some small part to a program of human betterment for all time.”

- Frances Perkins, former US Secretary of Labor and social reformer

23rd Annual Garden Tour

Friday, May 9, and Saturday, May 10, 2025
10:00am to 4:00pm

“Escape to Serenity”



The **2025 AAUW Danville-Alamo-Walnut Creek Garden Tour** is almost here! It’s not too late to get your tickets for our annual event to benefit the branch’s programs. This year, the tour features six diverse, private gardens in Danville, Alamo and Diablo that will “take you away” – immersing your senses and restoring your spirit!

All the gardens are new for the DAW tour and have an esthetic range from a stylish desert theme to a classic wooded estate. Along with gorgeous plantings, there are plenty of examples of beautiful hardscape elements with pools, patios, and other delightful features for you to enjoy.

At one of the gardens that has a gracious patio inviting you to linger a bit, we’ll provide light snacks and the opportunity to purchase tasty toffee candy. A selection of wonderful gift baskets will be on view there; you can purchase raffle tickets for your chance to win one. This garden will also have two quilts to be raffled – one created by Mary Mix with a holiday theme, the other a wall hanging donated to DAW. All winning raffle tickets will be selected at the end of the tour.

The tour will be a lovely opportunity to share the advent of spring with your mother, daughter, family, friends, and fellow garden enthusiasts – all are welcome. ***Please join us!***

[Click here for info and to purchase tickets](#)

Note that children must be 12 or older to visit the gardens, and pets are not allowed.

It’s not too late to volunteer!

Many of you have already volunteered to help with the Garden Tour; the branch is very thankful for your commitment to help with this important fundraising event. However, we still need a few more docents to ensure that all the shifts in all six gardens are adequately covered.

If you would like to be a docent at one of the beautiful gardens, please contact Susan Terzuoli at (925) 588-5693. *Thank you!*



President's Message

By Deborah Wechsler, President

What happened to our spring weather? I think it is winter again. At least the cool wet weather should be good for nourishing gardens for the upcoming Garden Tour fundraiser. Hopefully the tour weekend will be sunny and pleasant!

For our Third Thursday program April 17, co-hosted by the Livermore-Dublin and San Ramon branches, we were treated to an exceptional presentation by an impassioned recipient one of the AAUW fellowship grants, Adamaka Ajaelo. Read more and be inspired later in this issue.

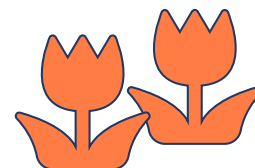
Thanks to the efforts of Holly Sauer and the Nominating Committee, we have our slate of candidates for our 2025-26 Board. The sitting board will vote on the slate at our May meeting. Please watch for your DAW member ballot in your email in May, and be sure to vote. Then save the date for our Installation and Membership Appreciation June 5.

Like the spring rains nourish both our "domesticated" and wild plants, we should all take some time to nourish ourselves during this busy time of year. The Garden Tour will be a great opportunity to do that. Don't miss it!



May Checklist

- **May 7, 7:00 pm – DEI Session – Exploring Controversy: CA Ethnic Studies Mandate in High Schools**
[Click here](#) for more information and to RSVP
- **May 9 and May 10, 10:00 am to 4:00 pm – 23rd Annual Garden Tour**
[Click here](#) for more info and to purchase tickets
- **May 13, 4:00 pm – AAUW National Strategic Plan Launch Event**
[Click here](#) to register
- **May 13, 5:30 pm – San Ramon Valley Unified School District Meeting**
[Click here](#) for more information
- **June 5 - Installation and Member Appreciation**
Save the date!
- **June 10, 5:30 pm – San Ramon Valley Unified School District Meeting**
[Click here](#) for more information
- **June 17, 5:30 pm – San Ramon Valley Unified School District Meeting**
[Click here](#) for more information
- [Click here](#) to buy your tickets for the quilt raffle to support the **Creative Endeavors Scholarship** fund; the winning ticket will be drawn at the close of the Garden Tour
- [Donate here](#) to support DAW branch programs



2024-25 Local Scholarships - \$21,000 Awarded!

By Ann Willoughby and Holly Sauer, Local Scholarship Co-Chairs

The Local Scholarship Committee is pleased to announce the awarding of \$21,000 in scholarships to 10 local college women. Seven of the awards are Community Local Scholarships given to women who attended high school in Danville, Alamo or Walnut Creek, or currently reside and/or work in these communities. The other three scholarships are going to women at California State University East Bay (CSUEB) who participate in CSUEB's Renaissance Scholars Program for former foster youth.

Each awardee will receive a scholarship of \$2,000. One of the Community Local Scholarship awardees will also receive an additional \$1,000 for a Creative Endeavors Scholarship, for a total award of \$3,000. In addition, DAW will pay for a one-year AAUW membership for each awardee. The DAW Board approved the scholarship awards at its April 9th meeting.

DAW also funds a Single Parent Scholarship at Diablo Valley College (DVC). DVC administers the scholarship and selects the candidate based on criteria provided by DAW. DVC will announce the student who will be awarded the DAW Single Parent Scholarship on May 9.

At present, the Local Scholarship Committee is waiting on information from each of the awardees to verify their academic status. Checks for the awardees will be mailed by the end of June. The names of and a brief background on each awardee will be shared in the June Advocate. Videos from the awardees talking about their educational journey and thanking DAW will be posted to the DAW website in June.

In the words of one of the CSUEB Renaissance scholarship recipients upon learning of her award:

“I am writing to sincerely thank you for awarding me the Renaissance scholarship. I am truly honored to have been selected, and I deeply appreciate your support of my education. This scholarship and (AAUW) membership will make a significant difference in my academic journey as a single mother, helping to ease the financial burden and allowing me to focus more fully on my studies and future goals. Your generosity is both encouraging and inspiring, and I am committed to making the most of this opportunity. Thank you once again for your support and belief in my potential. I am incredibly grateful.”

A big round of applause to the Local Scholarships Committee! Committee members included Ann Willoughby (co-chair), Holly Sauer (co-chair), Dot Healy, Debbie Koos, Judy Lauper, Ogie Strogatz, Kate Waters, and Monika Witte. Thanks also to Joanne Quijano, Linda Jimerson, Deborah Wechsler, Chris Ritter, and Isabel Lau for their critical support of the scholarship process.

Tech Trek Summer of 2025 - All Systems Go!

By Kate Waters and Lee Garverick, Tech Trek Co-Chairs

With great excitement we announce the 2025 class of fourteen Tech Trek campers. Selected girls and families have been notified, and they are filling in registration forms and packing their bags! Campers will attend Tech Trek in one of the following locations and times - Sonoma the week of June 22, Santa Clara the week of July 6, Santa Cruz the week of July 13, or virtual camp the week of July 20.

Special thanks to AAUW Interviewers who met and selected campers - Jana Multhaup, Asha Bajaj, Diane Fornasier, Debbie Koos, Deborah Wechsler, Bev Nidick, Bette Felton, Alene Riley, Lee Garverick, and Judy Lauper!



Our campers are (*drum roll*):

Charlotte Wood Middle School: Hailey Bai, Sasha Liubarska, Kiana Soltani

Diablo Vista Middle School: Adjoa Asubonteng, Avery Johanson, Arabelle Moen

Foothill Middle School: Sonia Avagyan, Chloe Carey

Stone Valley Middle School: Brielle Kuchta, Dalia Pollack, Rylie Young

Walnut Creek Intermediate: Summer Hutchins, Ella Robb, Kalina Singer

Tech Trek activities are wrapping up this year, and so begins the cycle for sponsoring campers in 2026. Would you like to get involved? Email either Lee or Kate at leegarverick@gmail.com or kwaters6@gmail.com.

To learn more about the Tech Trek program [click here](#).

We seek your help in enlisting donations from local businesses to raise the remaining funds needed to pay for the students' camps. Or are you interested in donating directly to our Tech Trek program? Please [click here](#) for more information.

DAW Branch Election – Coming in May

By Holly Sauer, Nominating Committee Chair

Branch election ballots will be emailed to all branch members no later than May 21, 2025; please vote no later than Wednesday, June 4. Even though the positions aren't contested, your vote is important to complete the election! Results will be finalized at our Member Recognition and Board Installation event on Thursday, June 5.

The proposed slate of candidates is:

Board Position	Candidate(s)
President	Deborah Wechsler
President Elect	Open
Programs Co-VPs	Bette Felton Anabel Kassembe
Membership Co-VPs	Judy Lauper Monika Witte
Funds VP	Jana Multhaup
Secretary	Kate Waters
Treasurer	Chris Ritter

Bring your leadership skills and great ideas to our board! We still have many appointed positions that



need to be filled. If any of the appointed or elected positions interest you this year or in the future, please let us know. All candidates have filled these positions and others on the board this year and in the past. They welcome your support in their roles and would love to mentor you. I can provide you with more information about the responsibilities and current board members

will be happy to talk with you. Branch board positions are listed in the front section of your directory and great information about all of our projects is on our website - [click here](#). Please contact me at holly.gr8f8@gmail.com.

DEI Update

By Ogie Strogatz, DEI Coordinator

Disability Rights in Public Education - April Session Update

Our April online session was led by DAW member Rian Dindzans and Juliet Barraza, Senior Education Advocate with the [Disability Rights Education and Defense Fund](#). Rian and Juliet gave an excellent presentation that included the history of disability rights and public education, fundamental disability rights legislation, current challenges to disability rights, and calls to action. [Click here](#) to access their slide presentation.

May DEI Session -May 7, 7:00 pm – Exploring the Controversy: CA Mandate for Ethnic Studies in High Schools

Our May session will focus on a topic under consideration by many school districts throughout California, including San Ramon Valley Unified School District (SRVUSD): the state-mandated addition of one semester of Ethnic Studies as a required course for graduation from all California public high schools beginning in the 2025-2026 school year. The Ethnic Studies requirement was discussed most recently at the SRVUSD April 22 Board meeting and is likely to be revisited at the Board’s May meeting.

Please Zoom with us on Wednesday, May 7, from 7:00-8:00 pm to review background and next steps, as we prepare for our branch’s participation in the SRVUSD Board meeting on May 13. RSVP for the Zoom session to Ogie Strogatz at ogstrogatz@gmail.com.

Public Policy Update

DAW Recognized for AAUW California Activity of the Year

By Laurinda Ochoa, Public Policy Chair

On Saturday, April 26, AAUW California announced that our DAW branch, together with the Orinda-Moraga-Lafayette branch, had won second place in the annual Branch Activity of the Year Awards (BAY). This state award program provides branches an opportunity “to showcase and share an activity that is novel, inspirational, reproducible, promotes AAUW’s mission and image, and incorporates elements of diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI)”.

Both branches won the award for our participation in the CA School Board Project (SBP). Activities included in achieving the award were: attending and speaking up for public education at monthly school board of education (BOE) meetings; hosting educational membership meetings examining school board issues: co-hosting three local BOE candidate forums with PTA, League of Women Voters, and San Ramon AAUW; and working in coalition with other non-partisan civic and educational organizations (in Lift Up Public Schools). DAW and OML are providing an exciting example of what local AAUW branches can do to further AAUW’s mission of promoting, enhancing, and ensuring equal access to quality public education for all students.



Our branch is honored to have the support and participation of many of our branch members as both designated speakers and audience members at our local SRVUSD BOE meetings. A big thank you to all members who have attended the meetings. And a special acknowledgement to those members who have taken the extra step to showcase the excellence of our members by making public comments as AAUW DAW members, including: Deborah Wechsler, Monika Witte, Ogie Strogatz, Teresa Cheung, Barbara Blalock, Rian Dindzans, Dr. Rhiannon Shires, Chris Ritter, Susan Hildreth, Diane Fornasier, Linda Jimerson, Teresa Roeder, and Anabel Kassembe.

In addition to our stellar speakers, our loyal and invaluable SBP members attending meetings and those supporting our project and speakers in person and in spirit include: Brodie Hilp, Joanne Quijano, Roseann Krane, Tena Gallagher, Judy Lauper, Pat Morris, Kathleen Hixon, Lee Garverick, Nancy Dowell, Holly Sauer, Rebecca Radulovich, Robin Keefe, Robin Halloran, Martha Slavin, Lisa Gross, Laurie Miller, Bette Felton, Bev Nidick, and Chris and Patricia Kenber.

Please congratulate our branch members who participated in the SBP. AAUW California has expressed their gratitude for the work of our members in supporting the advocacy and education mission of AAUW. And join us all at the next SRVUSD BOE meeting on Tuesday, May 13, 6:00pm at the district offices at 699 Old Orchard Dr. in Danville.

Notes from AAUW California's Lobby Days

By Laurinda Ochoa, Public Policy Chair

AAUW CA's Annual Lobby Days event was held on April 8 and 9. Participating DAW branch members met virtually with staff for local State Senator Tim Grayson and for State Assembly Member Anamarie Ávila Farías. Branch members Monika Witte, Rian Dindzans, dual-member Denise Burian, and I discussed AAUW CA's top three priority bills: SB 418, SB 771, and AB 579. These three bills were chosen as our top priority bills during a marathon weekend analyzing over 60 bills presently being considered in our state legislature for the 2025 legislative year.

SB 418, Ensure Equal Access to Care for All, prohibits health plans or health insurance providers from denying coverage or benefits to anyone based on their race, color, national origin, age, disability or sex, including sex characteristics, pregnancy, and gender identity. AAUW strongly supports SB 418.

SB 771, Social Media Platforms Endangering Californians, is a bill co-sponsored by AAUW. It clarifies that a social media platform may be liable for civil penalty when its algorithms or AI aid or abet individual users who are engaging in **already unlawful** intimidation of others in online spaces.

AB 579, an anti-trans bill, was strongly opposed by AAUW. AB 579 quickly died in committee shortly after AAUW Lobby Days. This bill would have changed several existing CA codes to **prevent a court or governmental agency from considering evidence of parental decisions** regarding their child's gender identity in civil and criminal cases of child abuse, neglect, or child endangerment.

CA Lobby Days is an exciting opportunity for AAUW members to participate in the legislative process by learning about pending legislation, meeting with local representatives and their staff, and participating in advocating for AAUW values.

We strongly encourage all members to learn about Lobby Days and to join with our branch, and all other CA branches, in advocating for (or against) bills that directly impact our community and helping to further our mission of advancing equity for all women and girls.

A Personal Take on Lobby Days

By Monika Witte, Programs Co-Chair

For the past two years I've participated in AAUW CA's Lobby Days, and I've been inspired both times. What a great way to experience and learn about the lobbying process in the California legislature, plus understand better the work that AAUW California's Public Policy team does for all of us. It's at the core of why we exist!

As a participant, this is an easy lift. The statewide team works hard to select bills, then members participate in small teams to inform legislators about AAUW and advocate for their support of AAUW California’s priority bills. We received summaries of the bills in advance, plus talking points to explain why they were important for AAUW and for the people of California. AAUW CA has hired a part-time lobbyist, who works on our behalf year-round. We met her (virtually, in a zoom session) a day or two prior to Lobby Days, and heard her plus our statewide PP chairs explain AAUW’s positions.

I found the entire process to be informative, interesting, and uplifting. And easy! Here’s a picture of our team. Clockwise from upper left they are – DAW members Denise Burian, Monika Witte, Laurinda Ochoa (team leader), and Rian Dindzans, plus Audrey Detmer, staff member for Senator Tim Grayson. Please join me next year!



Measure T - Endorsement

DAW Board Supports Measure T

Don't forget to vote! The DAW Branch is one of many local organizations endorsing this vital measure that’s on the May 6 ballot to be mailed to residents in the Acalanes Union High School District (AUHSD). The measure would enhance locally controlled funding to continue attracting and retaining great teachers, keeping class sizes manageable and providing a wide range of challenging and enriching course offerings for students in the district. Please [click here](#) to learn more about Measure T and how you can help encourage support for passing this important legislation.



April Member Meeting – Recap

Investing in Innovators – Self-eSTEM

Over 40 attendees were welcomed at the meeting that DAW hosted jointly with the San Ramon and Livermore-Dublin-Pleasanton neighboring branches on April 17. It was great to see AAUW members from the other branches along with SR co-presidents Cindy Alpert and Judy Bracken, and LDP president Anita Massey.

Ogie Strogatz, DAW Program Co-Chair, opened with an overview of the extensive AAUW National Fund program that supports several types of grants, fellowships, and other action areas. She noted that 96% of the Fund assets are donor-restricted for programs like fellowships and grants, while 4% that’s in

unrestricted assets are essential to support AAUW’s advocacy, public policy, communications, and select operations.



Ogie Strogatz speaking to attendees

The evening’s speaker, Adamaka Ajaelo, is one of the first recipients of an AAUW Community Action grant which has helped her start and develop the Self-eSTEM organization. Her grant enabled her to build an early STEM immersion program for girls. We were happy to be able to engage her as our speaker through AAUW’s Fund speaker process.

Adamaka spoke enthusiastically about Self-eSTEM which serves to ignite pride, purpose, and possibility in underrepresented women. It’s designed to help guide and sustain women in

the “pipeline” for STEM education resulting in careers

in STEM fields. It starts with early training and skill development for girls from ages 7 to 17 and continues with professional and leadership training for those who are 18 to 25. All the organization’s programs and services are provided free of cost to the participants.

A distinguishing feature of the Self-eSTEM program is that it is centered on the person involved and aims to take them through a continuum of early education into career and professional development. And it’s designed to be culturally appropriate for the students so they can connect and thrive with the process and in STEM fields. To illustrate how well the approach is working, Adamaka inspired us with the stories of three successful students.



From left – Deborah Weschler, Adamaka Ajaelo, Anita Massey, Cindy Alpert, Judy Bracken

An innovator showcase fundraising event for Self-eSTEM will be held on Oct 4 in Oakland hoping to help raise a target of \$250,000 in 2025. Adamaka encouraged us to help fund the program by sharing information about their work and their need for monetary contributions and sponsors.

To see Adamaka Ajaelo’s slide presentation - [click here](#)

To see Ogie’s slides about the AAUW Fund – [click here](#)

To learn more about the speaker, visit our webpage – [click here](#).

To learn more about Self-eSTEM – [click here](#).



Membership Corner

By Monika Witte and Judy Lauper, Membership Co-Chairs

Renewing Your AAUW DAW Membership - We're Streamlining our Process



This is a special message from DAW Membership Co-chairs, Judy Lauper and Monika Witte, and DAW Treasurer, Chris Ritter.

When you renew your AAUW membership this year, please do so online at the AAUW National Community Hub rather than sending a check. This saves us work, and it saves you the cost of the stamp. In addition, we've eliminated the option for using PayPal for renewal.

Here's what to do to renew online with the AAUW Community Hub:

1. You'll need an account in the AAUW Community Hub, if you don't already have one you must create one.
2. Go to the AAUW National website - AAUW.org
 - a. In the upper right corner of the screen, click "Log In"
 - b. If you don't have an account, scroll down to just below the blue "Log In" bar, click "Don't have an account"; follow the directions to create an account.
 - c. You'll be able to edit your record, pick a branch, or branches (if you are a member of more than one) and pay dues. Note that our branch id is **CA0154-Danville-Alamo-Walnut Creek**.
3. Questions? Please contact Monika at aauwmonikawitte@gmail.com

Thank you for helping us improve this vital branch process!

AAUW California

Voting Is More Than a Right, It Is a Privilege!

By Michelle Baer and Donna Holmes, Directors, Communication Committee Co-chairs,
communications@aauw-ca.org

April is the month AAUW National (April 14th – May 13th) and AAUW California (April 26th- May 16th) kicked off voting on various issues, bylaws, and board positions. Public Policy, Governance, and the nominating chair have been sending information since January and asking for input and candidates.

Now comes the time for members to make their voices heard when accepting, rejecting, or selecting ballot initiatives and candidates. We have a contested election for AAUW California Director positions, whereby you may select two choices from four candidates (read the candidate bios [HERE](#)), a [dues increase measure](#), and proposed [Public Policy Priorities](#), making your vote even more important.

All members with email addresses should have received their ballots electronically, and those without will receive their ballots in the US Mail to be returned by the closing dates.

Why bring this up? While a repairman was working near us, we were discussing an election result we were not happy about and the repairman said: "You are so lucky here, there will be another election at a scheduled time, and you may work for a better outcome; in Moscow nothing has changed in 25 years with no end in sight!"

Strong Candidates Are Ready to Lead AAUW California

By Elaine Johnson, Nominations and Election chair, nominating@aauw-ca.org

This is to clarify that we have eleven board members. Six are continuing for the second year of their terms. That leaves five board positions to be filled. Co-presidents are allowed per our policies but co-directors are not allowed.

Since we can only add five board members and one is reserved for CFO, that leaves four slots to be filled. Two will now be taken by the co-presidents-elect, who are running unopposed, and two will come from the four candidates running for director.

For President-Elect: three-year term 2025-2028 (one year as President-Elect and two years as President), we have two candidates, Sigrid Moranz and Sharyn Siebert, who are sharing this position. Each person will have one vote on the board.

For Chief Financial Officer (CFO): two-year term 2025-2027, we still need someone to step forward for this position. The CFO has one vote.

For Directors: two-year term 2025-2027, we have Gail Swain, Bev Van Citters, Melissa Maceyko, and Amy Hom. We can vote for two. Each has one vote.

All the candidates are experienced AAUW leaders and represent geographical regions across California. Click [HERE](#) to view the 2025 Candidates' statements.

Please be sure to vote in the AAUW California election by May 16!

AAUW California Public Policy News

By Amy Hom and Melissa Maceyko, Directors, Public Policy Committee Co-chairs,
publicpolicy@aauw-ca.org

Public Policy Committee Sets AAUW California Legislative Agenda

The Public Policy Committee met over a weekend in mid-March for our most important meeting of the year, to set the Legislative Agenda for 2025. Prior to the meeting, our committee collectively evaluated over 60 bills related to AAUW's mission and Public Policy Priorities. During our two-day marathon session, we carefully considered each bill. We then voted to select and prioritize the top 25 bills, leaving room to add a few more bills that we know will be coming to us in the next few weeks.

Our three "A" priority bills are SB 771 "Social Media Platforms Endangering Californians", AB 579 "Yaeli's Law", and SB 418 "Ensure Equal Access to Care for All". All three of the "A" priority bills this year fall under the Social Justice pillar of our Public Policy Priorities.

The first "A" bill, SB 771 "Social Media Platforms Endangering Californians", is authored by Senator Henry Stern and is sponsored by AAUW California. SB 771 clarifies that a social media platform may be liable for civil penalty under existing law if and when its algorithms or AI aid or abet individual users who are engaging in already unlawful intimidation of others in online spaces. While hateful speech is problematic, it is not illegal. However, it can cross the line into illegal action. When hate speech is "brought to the doorstep" of marginalized communities, for example, if someone maliciously posts anti-immigrant messages on the virtual Facebook wall of an immigrant family, they are engaging in unlawful intimidation, terrorism, and threats. While social media platforms are not responsible for the speech of individual users, aspects of their platform, such as algorithms or AI, can be complicit in the

targeting of marginalized groups, which is unlawful. Social media companies have recently intentionally turned away from providing safeguards that they previously provided for targeted vulnerable communities. They should be held accountable for that decision, in light of the real-world impacts of the proliferation of online hate and their complicity in unlawful intimidation.

The second “A” bill, to which we are taking an opposition position, is AB 579 “Yaeli’s Law” authored by Assemblymember Leticia Castillo. This bill rests on the premise that denial of support for youth self-identity, including refusal to use a child’s name and pronouns, or refusal to provide or allow their gender-affirming care, is not harmful and therefore should not be considered child abuse under the law, and, accordingly, not be allowed as a basis for custody or removal decisions. This is problematic. Research shows that transgender children are more likely to experience anxiety and depression and are at greater risk of substance abuse and homelessness when they live in households that do not accept their gender identity. We oppose this bill because every child deserves to be protected from emotional and physical abuse, including the right to be removed from a harmful household to a more healthy environment.

The third “A” bill is SB 418 “Ensure Equal Access to Care for All” authored by Senator Caroline Menjivar. This bill would prohibit a health plan or a health insurance provider from denying coverage or denying benefits to a person based upon their race, color, national origin, age, disability, or sex - including sex characteristics such as intersex traits, pregnancy, and gender identity. Access to gender-affirming care is a fundamental aspect of health equity and human rights. SB 418 will protect against discrimination on the basis of sex, while also sending a powerful message of support to the LGBTQ+ community, affirming that their needs matter. Creating an environment where all individuals can express their identities without fear is foundational to a strong democracy.

To see the full 2025 Legislative Agenda, please go to the [Bill Tracking Report](#). This report is a living document that will be updated as the bills move through the legislative process, so you will always be able to see the latest status.

New Resource for Taking Action!

As we outlined in a [webinar](#) in October 2024, the objectives of Project 2025 directly counter the Public Policy Priorities of AAUW California. With federal policy pronouncements and changes continuing to take place at a head-spinning pace, it is clear that changes are underway to make Project 2025 become reality (track implementation [HERE](#)).

To respond to the attack on the people and issues we care about, and to fulfill the mission of our organization, “to advance equity for women and girls through advocacy, education, and research,” we have continued to compile resources to help you take action to fight back. And, with the help of our amazing Public Policy Interns, we are finally able to launch an interactive [Take Action spreadsheet](#) that will provide you with action options.

This spreadsheet attempts to create a clearinghouse for ongoing resistance activity, so that you can follow and join-in based on your passions and preferences. We also highlight successful political and legal actions, to give us both hope and a blueprint for moving forward. Click on **QUICK ACTIONABLE ITEMS** if you are looking for general action resources, **LITIGATION & LEGISLATION TRACKERS** if you want to keep track of advancing legislation and/or legal challenges, and **PODCASTS** if you want to learn more and/or encounter even more “good trouble.” Click on **ISSUE AREAS** if you are looking for information and resources in a specific issue area. Please share this resource with anyone who you think will find it useful - inside or outside of AAUW California.

We will continue to ask you to take action by choosing one self-focused, one other-focused, and one political-focused item from the list below. This month the topic area is..

TAKE ACTION: PROTECT VOTING RIGHTS

Self-Focused: Education

- learn more about [the SAVE Act](#) that is moving through Congress
- learn more about [California Assembly Bill \(AB\) 25](#)
- learn more about how voting rights challenges that target small or non-existent populations and issues, like SAVE and AB 25, [serve to disenfranchise many others in the process](#)

Other-Focused: Education & Connection

- tell a few people (2-10) something about the [potential impacts](#) of passage of the SAVE Act and/or AB 25
- tell a few people (2-10) something that **THEY** can do to oppose the SAVE Act, CA AB 25, and/or voting rights challenges more broadly

Politically-Focused: Outreach to Legislators (State/Federal)

- use AAUW National's 2-minute activities platform to [voice your opposition](#) to the SAVE Act
- watch the progress of [California's AB 25](#) and reach out to representatives in CA if/when the bill is being heard to make sure the bill is actively opposed

Take Action to Help Kids Feel Safe at School

Many of our members have expressed concerns about the potential for ICE raids in our local schools. These intrusions on school grounds are already happening in some places and are having a significant detrimental impact on these families, especially for their children. Some of the ramifications have included:

- Parents not showing up at school events, fearing agents might be there
- Students don't want to come to school, fearing their parents will be taken while they're gone
- Children not learning, consumed by fear of agents coming on campus to take them away

Here are some things you should know:

- Current law (Plyler v Doe 1982) held that all children, even undocumented, have a constitutional right to free public education
- In 2011, DHS issued the "Sensitive Locations" policy, which prohibited raids from certain places including schools
- Although the President has attempted to revoke the order, Executive Orders and Actions cannot change statutes or regulations
- There are currently four lawsuits challenging the attempted revocation; three from churches have been successful so far, one from a school in Denver has resulted in a denial of a request for a temporary injunction
- Current law also prohibits ICE entry on campuses without a warrant
- Even if they have a warrant to enter, that does not entitle them to have access to private/protected student records

Here are two things you can do:

- Urge your school boards/districts to issue a “Safe Zone” Resolution – template can be found here: [Guidance on Immigration Issues | NEA](#)
- Engage your branch members in a postcard-writing campaign to their school boards with the following message:

WE STAND WITH

- Immigrant students
- LGBTQ+ youth

AAUW California Public Policy is on Bluesky

We plan to use this account to send out state-level legislative action alerts, promote Resistbot petitions, and provide real-time updates. We encourage you to create your own account, if you have not yet done so, and follow us! You can find us by clicking this [link](#) or by following us on Bluesky.

Follow [AAUW California’s Petitions Page on Resistbot](#)

AAUW National

AAUW Action Network - Reminder

If you haven’t already, join AAUW in the fight for gender equity! Sign up to get regular alerts on how and when to engage. We provide all the tools you need to call or send messages to your members of Congress, contact your state legislators about pressing issues, and more. Now it’s more important than ever to add your voice to advocating for equity.

[Click here](#) to sign up for alerts from the AAUW Action Network.

AAUW Joins in Advocating for National Policies

AAUW’s policy work connects and rallies advocates at the local, state, national, and global levels to empower women and girls. AAUW uses lobbying and grassroots efforts to push forward policies that break through educational and economic barriers for women. Learn about how AAUW is speaking up for national policy concerns - [click here](#).

National Strategic Plan Launches

Please join us for a special AAUW Strategic Plan Launch Event on Tuesday, May 13, 2025, at 7:00 pm ET (4:00 pm in California). We’re excited to unveil our new strategic plan — highlighting the vision and priorities that will guide AAUW’s future.

During the session, you’ll:

- Get an inside look at our strategic objectives and key initiatives.
- Learn how branches, states, and members can align with and support the plan.
- Have the opportunity to ask questions and share your perspective.

Your voice matters, and your engagement will help bring this plan to life. We hope you’ll join us as we shape the future of AAUW — together.

[Click here](#) to register for the event.

Stay Connected: Re-Subscribe to AAUW Emails

Do you think you may be missing out on vital updates and important announcements from AAUW National? Don't let valuable information slip through the cracks! Ensure you stay connected with us by re-subscribing to AAUW emails. Simply [click here](#) to re-subscribe and guarantee that you'll receive all the latest news, webinars, and opportunities from AAUW National.

“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 fund 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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* AAUW DAW 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/>

Joanne Quijano, Editor
AAUW Danville-Alamo-Walnut Creek Branch
P.O. Box 996, Alamo, CA 94507