



# The Advocate

## June 2025

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*"There is always light.  
If we're only brave enough to see it.  
If we're only brave enough to be it."*

Amanda Gordon, first National Youth Poet Laureate

## Installation and Member Appreciation



**Thursday, June 5, 2025, 6:00 – 8:00 pm**  
**Danville Congregational Church**

Join us at our annual event to spotlight all that we do with AAUW and celebrate the past year's accomplishments! We'll also welcome our new branch officers for the 2025-26 fiscal year and honor some very deserving, special branch members. ***All current and prospective members are welcome and encouraged to attend.***

We'll have social time to start, along with an opportunity to provide input to plans for branch activities in 2025-26. **We'll enjoy a complimentary Mexican-themed buffet dinner** while we share ideas. This will be a great time to touch bases with old and new AAUW friends before our summer break in branch activities.

The formal program for the evening will include:

- A call for final votes for our branch board
- Celebrating our members who reached their 50-year membership milestone this year
- Recognizing for some members who have provided outstanding service and support of our branch
- Learning about our 2025 Local Scholarship awardees and having a chance to hear from some of them
- Recognizing and thanking our 2024-25 outgoing board members
- Introducing and formally installing our incoming 2025-26 board members
- Learning about branch committees and volunteer opportunities

**You won't want to miss this fun and informative event!**  
**Don't delay - plan to attend, and RSVP now!**

[Click here to RSVP](#)

## President's Message

*By Deborah Wechsler, President*

Your DAW-AAUW board election ballot was emailed to all members on May 21. Our 2025-26 board has some new folks and some repeats, and I am grateful to all who are stepping forward into leadership positions this year. Please take a look and be sure to vote by June 4. We will finalize the vote at our Membership Appreciation and Installation meeting on June 5.

You may have noticed we did not schedule a formal program in May. We thought we could all use a break after our very successful Garden Tour Fundraiser (details later in this issue). So many volunteers from our branch made this happen. Thanks go to Anne Struthers for chairing this year!

In July your elected and appointed board members will meet to discuss our plans for next year. If you have any ideas or suggestions, please let us know!

Mid-June through early July is typically a hiatus on DAW activities, a chance for many of us to travel, tend our gardens, catch up on hobbies, and renew ourselves. So please do that!



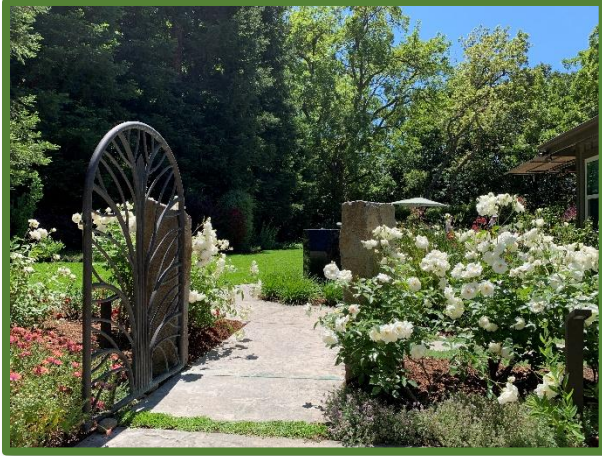
## June Checklist

- **June 5 - Installation and Member Appreciation**  
[Click here](#) for info and to RSVP
- **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
- **July 29, 5:30 pm – San Ramon Valley Unified School District Meeting**  
[Click here](#) for more information
- **August 19, 5:30 pm – San Ramon Valley Unified School District Meeting**  
[Click here](#) for more information
- [Donate here](#) to support DAW branch programs



## Garden Tour 2025 – It's a Success!

The **2025 AAUW Danville-Alamo-Walnut Creek Garden Tour** was a rousing success! Held over the Friday and Saturday before Mothers' Day, well over 500 tour attendees enjoyed visiting the six beautiful and diverse gardens. In addition to experiencing the outdoor settings, five appealing gift baskets were raffled off along with a beautiful holiday quilt and a flower-themed wall hanging.



We are honored to report that the ticket and raffle sales combined to bring in over \$25,000. These funds will be the primary source of funding for our branch's Local Scholarships, Tech Trek campers, and Community Projects.

Many thanks to Anne Struthers, Garden Tour Chair, and the dedicated Garden Tour Committee who identified gardens, developed publicity and tour materials, recruited docents, put together raffle baskets, planned logistics for the garden visits, tracked ticket sales, and

generally organized the event. Along with Anne, key committee members were Tena Gallagher, Sue Hamill, Susan Terzuoli, and Dianne Tinnes. Other important roles were Linda Jimerson for publicity, Marian Bliss for taking photos of the gardens for the homeowners, Chris Ritter for ticket emailing and support, Kathy Harkins for refreshments, Carmen Curtis for cookies, Carol Highton and Julie Grisham for the gift baskets, and Mary Mix for the holiday quilt. Jana Multhaup, Laurinda Ochoa, Pat Morris, Pat DeRensis, Susan Terzuoli, and Tena Gallagher were vital in serving as the intrepid head docents for the gardens.

[Click here for photos of the gardens](#)

And finally, thanks to the energetic, generous branch members who volunteered as docents. It took an extensive, dedicated team to make the tour possible. The following branch members volunteered as docents -

Deborah Barone  
Sylvia Benzler  
Nancy Bocanegra  
Jennifer Brandenburg  
Kate Brandenburg  
Dee Brook  
Denise Burian  
Beth Clark  
Fran Crisman  
Nancy Dowell  
Bette Felton

Susan Ferreira  
Ilene Ferguson  
Diane Fornasier  
Anna Freitas  
Lee Garverick  
Judy Halden  
Rita Hannum  
Sarah Harkins  
Corrienne Heinemann  
Kathie Hixon  
Linda Jimerson

Alicia Jones  
Deborah Koos  
Jennifer Linden  
JoAnne Lyons  
Gwen Messman  
Laurie Miller  
Nancy Murray  
Bev Nidick  
Terry Powell  
Joanne Quijano  
Alene Riley

Chris Ritter  
Caroline Sanchez  
Holly Sauer  
Claudia Schwarz  
Kathy Somers

LeeAnn Sosa  
Ogie Strogatz  
Cathy Taughinbaugh  
Leslie Vilhauer  
Deborah Wechsler

Barbara Welch  
Sherry Wilcoxson  
Liz Williams  
Ann Willoughby  
Chris Winter

## Announcing the 2025 DAW Scholarship Recipients

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

The Local Scholarship Committee is pleased to announce the award of \$23,000 in scholarships to 11 local college women. Each awardee will receive a scholarship of \$2,000; one awardee will also receive an additional \$1,000 for the Creative Endeavors Scholarship. The ten awardees, combined under the DAW Community Local and Renaissance Scholarships, were selected by the branch's Local Scholarship Committee. The awardee of the DAW Single-Parent Scholarship was selected by Diablo Valley College. Congratulations to the 2025 AAUW DAW scholarship recipients!

### AAUW DAW Community Local Scholarships

These scholarships are open to individuals who identify as **women**, will be at least juniors in the upcoming academic year, and have a minimum GPA of 3.0. Applicants must have attended high school in Danville, Alamo, or Walnut Creek, or currently live and/or work in these communities.

**Maria Abreu Dennis** is a transfer student from Diablo Valley College; she's still deciding which four-year college to attend given the acceptances she's received. She is majoring in Psychology and aspires to be a Marriage and Family Therapist. Maria lives and works in Walnut Creek.

**Erika Braun** is pursuing a Master's degree in Nursing at the University of San Francisco and plans to be a Registered Nurse. She has a Bachelor's in Human Developmental Sciences and General Biology from the University of California (UC) San Diego, graduating Cum Laude. Erika attended Monte Vista High School and lives in Danville.

**Katja Friess** is majoring in Food Science at California Polytechnic State University where she will be a junior next year. Katja plans to be an industrial or academic Food Scientist. Katja graduated from Las Lomas High School and resides in Walnut Creek.

**Sandra Huntley** is a Diablo Valley College transfer student and will be attending UC San Diego in the fall. She works in Walnut Creek. Sandra's major is Business Administration/Economics and she is a first-generation college student. She plans to be a business entrepreneur.

**Olivia Radding** attends Loyola Marymount University and has a double major in Dance and Marketing. She will be a senior in the fall. Olivia plans to be a professional dancer. In addition to the Community Local Scholarship, Olivia has been awarded a \$1,000 Creative Endeavors scholarship. She attended Monte Vista High School and resides in Danville.

**Babora Soltys**, a Walnut Creek resident, is a licensed and working Vocational Nurse. She is now pursuing a Bachelor's in Nursing at Gurnick Academy of Medical Arts to become a Registered Nurse.



**Anata Tran**, a Danville resident, will be attending UC Law San Francisco as a new graduate student in the fall studying International Policy. She is working towards her Juris Doctor and plans to become a lawyer. She recently graduated from UC Berkeley with a Bachelor's in Political Science and a minor in Human Rights.

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### AAUW DAW Renaissance Scholarships

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These scholarships are open to individuals who identify as women, attend California State University East Bay (CSUEB), and participate in the CSUEB Renaissance Scholars Program for former foster youth or are Renaissance Scholars students graduating from CSUEB and entering graduate school at CSUEB or another accredited college/university in the fall of 2025. Students must be at least sophomores in the coming academic year and have a minimum GPA of 2.5.

**Justine Overmyer**, a CSUEB senior this coming fall, is majoring in Psychology. She attended Los Medanos College where she obtained an Associate for Transfer in Criminal Justice and Psychology. Justine plans to pursue a Master's in Psychology and become a School Counselor or Social Worker. She is a first-generation college student.



Ogie Strogatz, Macey Vasquez, and Ann Willoughby  
at the 2025 CSUEB Renaissance celebration

**Johnnia Tanner** will be a senior at CSUEB this coming fall where she is majoring in Criminal Justice. She attended Skyline College and received an AA in Psychology. Johnnia wants to become a lawyer specializing in family law or police brutality. She is a first-generation college student.

**Macey Vasquez** will be a senior at CSUEB majoring in Human Development with a concentration in Women Studies. She is a first-generation college student. Macey attended Woodland Community College and received an AA in Child and Adolescent Development. Her goal is to work for a non-profit organization that

provides social service resources to low-income families.

### Catching Up with Past Renaissance Awardees

Two of the DAW Renaissance Scholarship awardees from last year, 2024, just graduated from CSUEB with their graduate degrees – Camisha Nettles received a Master's in Public Administration and Nicole Silliman received a Master's in Social Work. Our very first Renaissance Scholarship awardee from 2023, Ruth Clay, is currently pursuing her Master's at CSUEB.

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## AAUW DAW Single Parent Scholarship

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This scholarship is open to any student who is a single parent enrolled at Diablo Valley College (DVC), has completed at least 12 units, and has a minimum GPA of 3.0. The application process and award selection are administered by the DVC Scholarship Program with funds provided by DAW.

**Blanca Flores** will be a sophomore at DVC this coming fall with plans to transfer to a four-year institution next year. She is majoring in Early Childhood Education and wants to be a certified elementary school teacher. Blanca already has an AA in Criminal Justice from Carrington College.



Ann Willoughby, Blanca Flores, and Monika Witte at the DVC scholarship awards ceremony on May 9

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## Please Support DAW's Scholarship Programs

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AAUW DAW scholarships help to change lives and are so appreciated by our scholarship recipients. 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 \(CA\)](#). Donations of any amount are greatly appreciated.

## CSUEB Renaissance Scholars Reach for the Sky!

*By Ann Willoughby and Ogie Strogatz*

Now awarded for its third year, the DAW Renaissance Scholarship supports female students at California State University East Bay (CSUEB) participating in the Renaissance Scholars Program for former foster youth. Three CSUEB Renaissance Scholars received DAW scholarships this year as mentioned in the previous article.

Ann Willoughby and Ogie Strogatz, Local Scholarship Committee members, had the privilege of attending the Renaissance Scholars Program annual luncheon on May 2 to honor the current graduating class of Renaissance Scholars, scholarship recipients, and donors – like AAUW. Both DAW and San Ramon branches, each of which has a Renaissance scholarship, were in attendance. The theme of this year's event was "Reach for the Sky!"

The Renaissance Scholars Program Coordinator Roshawn Campbell is a strong partner with DAW. She noted "I am grateful for RSP's partnership with AAUW DAW and look forward to continuing to inspire dreams and change lives together!"

The love and admiration students feel towards Roshawn was expressed over and over when students spoke about their college journey. She and her staff have had a tremendous positive impact on the lives of these young people, all of whom have experienced a difficult childhood and have faced ongoing challenges as young adults. Many in the audience were close to tears hearing some of the stories students shared. The students' success in persevering and graduating from college has been strongly aided by the comprehensive support services and dedicated personnel of the Renaissance Scholars Program. Some of the themes that ran through the students' speeches included "Renaissance is the true definition of family. There is value in community. You are not alone. You have a community of people who understand your story." All of the students were proud of their college journey and to be graduating from college, a dream many did not think possible.



Roshawn Campbell, Renaissance Scholars Program Coordinator extraordinaire

The Renaissance Scholars Program at CSUEB, and similar programs at all 23 CSU campuses, is a testament to CSU's commitment to the success of underrepresented, disadvantaged students. Bravo Cal State and bravo to the CSUEB Renaissance Scholars Program and Roshawn Campbell! DAW is privileged to be a partner supporting this exceptional program.

Among the students speaking at the 2025 CSUEB Renaissance Scholars Program ceremony was Sophia Garcia, a junior majoring in Ethnic Studies Bachelor of Arts with a concentration in Comparative Ethnic Studies. Sophia, whose stage name is Linei Millian, delivered an exceptionally powerful and moving poem that she wrote. She received thunderous applause from the audience. With her permission, Ann and Ogie are pleased to share her poem with you.

### Is it worth it?

*By Linei Millian*

So let me ask you, is it worth it?  
I mean, to live a life where it's hard to  
survive, so we start to commit crimes  
because our pockets is hurtin?  
Is it, because we live in the ghettos, girls  
match a purse an stiletto's, and guys think  
it's alright to carry weapons that's metal?  
No  
We got kids out here running these streets,  
ditchin and dodging bullets and the police  
Drug dealing and carrying heat with dreams  
to make it big with just one beat

But they can barely even read, let alone  
count 1-2-3  
I mean is it? Is it worth it?  
They getting younger by day and growing  
older by nightfall  
Streets adopted a new statistic, but who's  
at fault?  
Is it theirs? Is it ours? Mine or yours?  
Did they look forward to the future, but  
open the wrong door?  
I'm asking, was it worth that much?  
We got all this Black on Black crime, Brown  
looking to kill they own kind, over colors



and street signs that was here before they  
time  
So let me ask you again, is it really worth it?

Is it worth losing a loved one over  
something as small as stepping on  
somebody's new shoes?  
I hear you all saying no, but it's all over the  
news  
Reds and blues, bloods and crips  
And don't forget to stack yo chips  
Get them so high that they hating, but then  
you gotta die, so they could make it  
That ain't cool, but it's true, but uh, is it  
worth it?

Race riots and straight violence is how the  
government wants us to be  
That way our communities won't succeed  
and we'll be stuck living in these lower class  
societies

In spite of these, we got the industry to fall  
back on, but what we thinking is right, is  
morally wrong, and leading us all to believe  
violence is the only right way  
Negative influences on the youth because  
of what the songs say  
They tell us to go stupid and play with AK's  
all day

Giving off 16 shots  
Smoke weed and get paid all day  
It's funny ain't it? But is it worth it?

Are we just blind in our situation?  
Do we want these frustrations?  
Why we still sitting, we ain't working to  
make changes.  
We just hooting and hollering and barely  
got tolerance for what's going on around us  
But we laid back on hush  
Is that why? Is it worth it?

And who's to say who the next will be  
Could be your sister, your brother, you,  
your mama, or me  
And who's to say?  
Not I, or even He for that much  
Change starts in you all, in each one of us  
Now that right there is worth it

And remember it takes more energy to hate  
than to wear a smile on your face  
So break way to say Grace and take fate  
into another day  
It's worthy of so much more  
And ain't that worth it?

## DAW Branch Election

Branch election ballots were emailed to all branch members in May; please be sure to 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 slate of candidates is:

Board Position	Candidate(s)
President	Deborah Wechsler
President Elect	Open
Programs VP	Bette Felton

Membership Co-VPs	Judy Lauper Monika Witte
Funds VP	Jana Multhaup
Secretary	Kate Waters
Treasurer	Chris Ritter

## DEI Update

*By Ogie Strogatz, DEI Coordinator*

Our session on May 7 was a deep dive into 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 had been discussed at the SRVUSD Board meeting on April 22, with the Board requesting more information and deciding to revisit the topic at its May 13 meeting. The discussion on May 13 was intense, with over 50 public comments, pro and con, from both students and community members. The Board voted 4-1 to in favor of the course, asking district staff to return this summer to report on modifications to respond to commenters' concerns, also asking staff to return with evaluative feedback on the course, potentially after the fall semester and definitely at the end of the 2025-2026 school year. Heartfelt thanks to all of our members who have been able to participate in our local school board meetings!

Coming up: an opportunity to take action regarding a topic on which we reflected earlier this year. Our observance of Black History Month included a discussion about [Restrictions Apply](#), a 2021 documentary that explores the issues of racist covenants, conditions, and restrictions in California home title deeds.

The Contra Costa County Clerk-Recorder's office recently announced the launch of *Mapping Prejudice* in Contra Costa County, a community-driven initiative to identify and map racially restrictive covenants and clauses that were inserted into local property records to keep people who were not white from owning or occupying property.



The county is doing this work in partnership with the Mapping Prejudice Project, a research team based in the University of Minnesota Libraries. This group has been working with communities across the country to map racial covenants since 2016. Contra Costa's new initiative will engage residents of the county to identify and transcribe the information necessary to put these now-illegal restrictions on a modern map.

Volunteers from all over the County are invited to take part in this important work. Training and access to a digital portal to examine historical property records that have been flagged by the research team at the University of Minnesota for review will be provided. These documents offer a powerful hands-on learning experience and create an opportunity for community dialogue about our history and the legacy of housing discrimination.

To learn more about the project and the team, or to sign up to volunteer, please visit [Contra Costa Mapping Prejudice](#).

## Quest Science Center Collaboration

*By Ann Willoughby, Quest Advisory Board member*

### DAW Enriches its STEM Portfolio by Collaborating with Quest Science Center

At its May meeting, the DAW Board approved a collaboration with the Quest Science Center to help bring fun, free, family-friendly, hands-on STEM programs to our local community by encouraging volunteerism of DAW members and Tech Trek alumni at the local Quest events and promoting event attendance. This collaboration enriches our STEM portfolio and enhances our engagement and visibility in the communities that we serve.



Quest, a local non-profit located founded in 2017 and headquartered in Livermore, has a mission to inspire and nurture every day and lifelong STEM engagement by individuals of all ages. It is a leader in informal science experiences and outreach, forging strong partnerships and significant community engagement in our region. Quest is committed to fostering inclusion and creating a welcoming experience, so people of all backgrounds feel a sense of belonging and excitement in the exploration of science and technology.

Quest's largest, signature event is the annual, one-day Tri-Valley Innovation Fair held each April at the Alameda County Fairgrounds in Pleasanton. The Fair attracts some 60+ local technology innovators and educators who provide interactive STEM exhibits highlighting innovation in our region. Some 3,000 people annually, from families with small children to seniors.



Quest also hosts Science @ Stockmen's Park, a Saturday summer series of STEM events. More locally, Quest debuted at the annual San Ramon Valley Art & Wind Festival in May, and participates in the Danville Veterans Pop-Up Museum held annually over the Veterans Day weekend. Quest STEM education and outreach programs serve communities from Tracy to Danville to Castro Valley. More than 20,000 people attend Quest community events annually.

DAW will circulate information about volunteer opportunities for upcoming Quest events to branch members and Tech Trek alumni as they become available. It's simple to do, and it's fun to

enjoy the experience and volunteer with family and friends.

If you have any questions about Quest, feel free to contact DAW member Ann Willoughby at [akwilloughby@att.net](mailto:akwilloughby@att.net). She is a member of the Quest Advisory Board and is glad to talk with you.

For more information about Quest, to sign up for its mailing list, and to find its links on social media, visit the Quest website.

[Click here for the Quest website](#)

For more information about the DAW branch's collaboration with Quest, visit our website.

[Click here for the DAW website](#)

## Membership Corner

*By Monika Witte, Membership Co-VP*

### Renew Your Membership Before July 1 and Save!

In this chaotic world one thing is certain – costs continue to go up! Our dues support three parts of the organization: AAUW National, AAUW California, and the AAUW DAW Branch.

Members of AAUW California voted to increase the state portion of the dues effective **July 1**. The state dues have not increased for more than 10 years since they went from \$16 to \$20. The increase on July 1, 2025, will be from \$20 to \$30. In addition to the needed increase, AAUW CA has worked to keep costs down by making the following changes.

- Closed Sacramento office and moved office manager to home office
- Consolidated equipment and supplies to close storage unit
- Moved almost all leadership team meetings, Convention and Committee Day to Zoom

To recap your total dues payments -

	Before July 1, 2025	After July 1, 2025
AAUW National	\$74	\$74
AAUW California	\$20	\$30
AAUW DAW	\$28	\$28
Total	\$122	<b>\$132</b>

Thank you for being a member of AAUW, and for supporting our mission, which is more important than ever!

## AAUW California

### California's Virtual Branch

*By Charmen Goehring, President, AAUW California*

What and why is an online branch? Everyone is familiar with branches that you can attend in person. The beauty of an online environment is the absence of geographical barriers in defining membership. The California Online Branch was established in 2001 as an experiment in creating a “virtual” community. The branch currently has members residing in eight states, comprising 32 primary members and 73 dual members. There are quarterly program meetings, a monthly newsletter, several interest groups, a board of directors, and a monthly no-agenda gathering. Why do people join? There are probably as many reasons as the 105 members. Some reasons include no nearby in-person branch, the virtual environment works well, the various offerings are interesting, it is only an additional \$15 per year to become a dual member and meet new like-minded people, people move away from their primary branch, they don’t want to drop their membership, but they want to remain active in AAUW and many more reasons. If you or someone you know fit these or other reasons, please consider checking out the California Online Branch. [Click here](#) to view the Online Branch’s website.

## Congratulations to Our State Named Gift Honoree!

*By Deanna Arthur, AAUW California Fund Committee chair*

Kathleen Doty, of the Alhambra-San Gabriel Branch, was revealed as the State Named Gift Honoree during the Virtual Annual Event. Since joining her branch in 1985, Kathleen has served in most branch leadership positions, including president three times. She has also served on AAUW California committees and the state board as Secretary and Parliamentarian and, from 2014-2016, as president. Kathleen and her late husband, Jim, started the Colorful Stories program to give diverse books to local schools. She hosted with her husband, and now her sister, “Dining with the Dotys”/”Dinner with Kathleen and her Sister,” where raffle tickets are sold, and the winner is treated to a gourmet meal for six. Proceeds go to the AAUW Fund. Kathleen has also long been active in her local community- serving on the PTA board of Ramona School in Alhambra, as a Girl Scout leader and lifelong Scout, as a board member for the local American Youth Soccer Organization, and on the board, including as president, of the California Association for Medical Laboratory Management. *Thank you, Kathleen, for all that you give AAUW and your community!*

## AAUW California Public Policy News

*By Amy Hom and Melissa Maceyko , Public Policy Co-chairs*

### AAUW California Mobilizes to Advance Priority Legislation

AAUW California advocates came out in full strength on April 8th and 9th to participate in Lobby Days 2025. A total of 197 people representing 66 branches, including our Public Policy Interns and other college students, turned out to advance our priority legislation. 84 people came to Sacramento on April 8th to meet in-person with legislative offices; 104 people held virtual meetings via Zoom on April 9th; and 9 people met with district offices. Because many offices prefer to keep their calendars open until the



last minute, our committee worked furiously right up until the day of the event to schedule meetings. Meetings were requested with all 120 legislative offices, and 94 meetings were secured. In other words, we met with 78% of all legislative offices - a record for AAUW California!

Unsurprisingly there were a few hiccups, but a vast majority of the meetings went off smoothly. While most meetings were with staff, ten of the meetings were with legislators. Reports from the teams indicate that all of the meetings were courteous and cordial, including those with offices who did not agree with some of our positions. Many teams were received with enthusiasm and gratitude for

AAUW’s scholarships, activities, and programs such as Tech Trek. Some staffers expressed interest in joining AAUW, and one staffer generously shared information with our Public Policy Interns about a Fellowship program she participated in which ultimately led to her current job. Overall we successfully met with 94 offices to advance our key legislation and increase awareness about AAUW and all the things we do to advance gender equity.

We asked the legislative offices to support SB 771 and SB 418, and oppose AB 579. **SB 771 (Stern) “Social Media Platforms Endangering Californians”**, sponsored by AAUW California, would hold social media platforms liable if their algorithms or AI aid or abet users to intimidate and threaten marginalized groups. **SB 418 (Menjivar) “Ensure Equal Access to Care for All”** 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. **AB 579 (Castillo) “Yaeli’s Law”**, which we opposed, would prohibit parental denial of support for youth self-identity from being considered as child abuse and the basis for custody or removal decisions.

Our positions on SB 418 and AB 579 are protective of the rights of transgender people, meeting the challenges of the current moment. A number of the offices expressed support for our positions with empathy and personal stories about legislators’ family members who are transgender.

Shortly after our Lobby Days event, we learned that AB 579 is dead. The bill was held in the Assembly Rules Committee and was not referred to a policy committee, effectively killing the bill. We quickly replaced AB 579 with AB 1098 (Fong) “Title IX and the California Sex Equity in Education Act” as our third “A” priority bill. AB 1098 would expand protections for pregnant graduate students and institute protections for pregnant undergraduate students, prohibiting postsecondary educational institutions from discriminating against a student based on their current, potential, or past pregnancy or pregnancy-related conditions.

We invite you to track the progress of our top 3 bills, and all of the bills on our Legislative Agenda, by viewing the [2025 Bill Tracking Report](#). The report will continue to be updated as the bills move through the legislative process, so you can always check back to see the latest status.

### **Be A Trans Ally - Trans Allyship Guide**

The AAUW California Public Policy Trans Allyship guide has finally launched! Learn how to have conversations and be an ally. Check it out – [click here](#).

This guide is for anyone who wants to continue to ally with transgender and nonbinary people. It is meant to be a complement to existing guides, such as those produced by well-known gender equity and transgender and nonbinary support organizations like The Trevor Project, PFLAG, GLAAD, HRC, and Amnesty International. While some of the existing guides already contain important information about inclusive language and terminology, our guide is unique in that it specifically focuses on how to have everyday conversations about transgender and nonbinary social and policy issues, offering sample responses to common questions that YOU, our members have encountered while engaging in allyship and advocacy work. Please keep those questions coming, as this is a living document! We will update content regularly.



### **Take Action Spreadsheet**

In April, AAUW California launched the Take Action spreadsheet to offer a list of resources for resistance to the implementation of Project 2025, which runs counter to our values and Public Policy Priorities.

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: Be A Trans Ally**

Self-Focused: Education

- learn how to be a trans ally, [click here](#) for the AAUW of California Public Policy Trans Allyship guide

- read “Priority Legislation 2025: Why AAUW Will Be Standing Up for the Transgender Community” in the [April 2025 issue of Public Policy News](#)
- watch John Oliver in this informative episode about Trans Athletes – [click here](#)

#### Other-Focused: Education & Connection

- tell a few people (2-10) why the infringement on trans rights is inseparable from broader attempts to restrict women
- tell a few people (2-10) to check out the John Oliver episode about Trans Athletes by copying and sharing this link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fISS1tjoxf0>

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

- text SIGN PGNDGE to 50409 to contact legislators, urging them to oppose CA AB 600 which would allow parents or guardians to opt their child out from accessing information about transgender concepts in schools.

#### School Board Project Monitors & Observers Training

If you missed the April 24th training on how to be an effective school board monitor and observer, co-sponsored by AAUW California School Board Project and the Public School Defenders Hub, you can watch the recording - [click here](#).

## AAUW National

*By Katrina Sun Breese, Senior Director of Institutional Advancement*

### 2025 AAUW Strategic Plan

In May, we proudly announced the launch of our new 2025 Strategic Plan - our boldest vision yet for advancing equity for women and girls through education. AAUW was founded more than 140 years ago with this mission, and with the unprecedented attacks we’re seeing on higher education, we believe it is more important than ever to focus our efforts in this area.

We’ve identified three powerful priorities:

1. **Champion gender equity through education and funding.** We’re directly empowering women - especially in underrepresented communities and STEM fields - through higher education, research, and advocacy.
2. **Remove barriers to success in higher education.** We are taking action to ensure every woman can thrive in higher education without bias or barriers. From defending Title IX to expanding financial aid and campus support, your support drives real change where it’s needed most.
3. **Strengthen AAUW from the ground up.** We’re investing in local, state, and national efforts while building the financial and operational strength needed to drive long-term impact.

At a time when education - a vital pathway to opportunity and equity - faces growing threats from efforts to roll back civil rights and politicize learning, **we must act urgently.**

Our work and your commitment have never been needed more. That’s why we’ve set an ambitious goal **to raise \$250,000 by June 15 for our 2025 Annual Fund Drive.**

Click here to learn more about the strategic plan and to donate to the Fund drive

*Let's rise to the challenge — together.*

### 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.

## Advocate – Combined Summer Edition

*By Joanne Quijano, Advocate Editor*

The next Advocate will be a combined edition for July and August. It will give our hard-working DAW Board and other busy volunteers a summer break before getting into new 2025-2026 year's activities. Look for its publication in mid to late July.

*Happy summer!*



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## **“Stay Home” Policy Statement**

While we understand that people want to participate in person at our branch events, we also want to foster consideration for all members in creating a safe environment for everyone. Please consider this direction when you plan to attend a branch meeting.

**If you are feeling ill in any way, or have been in close contact with someone known to have tested positive for COVID in the last 10 days, please do not attend any meeting!**

Remember that COVID exposure remains a serious issue and that we need to be constantly vigilant. If you plan to attend a branch event, please stay home if you feel ill or if you have been exposed to COVID or any other significant communicable disease. We encourage you to be considerate of everyone attending a function, some of whom might be more susceptible than others. If you have any doubts, test, wear a mask, and err on the side of caution.

While there are inherent risks in attending an in-person event, with your help we will do our best to keep everyone safe at our meetings.

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## **From the Editor - Joanne Quijano**

**Contribute to the Advocate** - Send ideas, articles, and pictures by the 23<sup>rd</sup> of the month to appear in the next issue. Please use the [Submittal Form](#) on our website to direct your contribution to the Advocate, or other DAW social media, to our communications team.

Submissions are preferred in the following format:

- Articles in a .doc or .docx file, or in the body of an email
- Calibri font, size 12
- Pictures in .jpg format
- Permissions set to enable editing

Find contact information about people mentioned in the Advocate on our [branch website](#) and in your directory. If you do not have a directory, [click here](#) to send us a request.

**Comments about the Advocate?** – I’m always interested in making improvements to the newsletter to better meet our members’ needs. Please let me know your comments and suggestions at [jtq@sbcglobal.net](mailto:jtq@sbcglobal.net).

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## **From the Treasurer – Chris Ritter**

**Handle money matters here** - Please send expense vouchers or deposits to our AAUW mailbox at: P.O. Box 996, Alamo, CA 94507 for expedited processing. Refer to our branch website for specific forms and instructions – Click on [Members Page](#)

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## **From the Corresponding Secretary - Julie Grisham**

**Know someone who needs a note?** - Julie Grisham, our Corresponding Secretary, sends cards on behalf of our branch. If you know of an AAUW-DAW member in need of a get well, condolence or congratulations card, contact Julie via email at [juliegrisham@sbcglobal.net](mailto:juliegrisham@sbcglobal.net).

## 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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**Marsha Anderson \***

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*Estate, trust, and probate specialist serving individuals in the  
Danville area.*

**Sarah Nix, Attorney at Law \***

[snix@gagenmccoy.com](mailto:snix@gagenmccoy.com)



*Eliminating barriers and enhancing capabilities to improve the  
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**Bette Felton, CCRHF Board Chair \***

<https://www.ccrhf.org/>



*Take advantage of advanced technologies  
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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