



The Advocate

July/August 2025

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“I haven’t been everywhere, but it’s on my list.”
- Susan Sontag, author and critic

Membership Brunch



Martha Slavin, DAW member and noted artist, will be the keynote speaker at this fun and festive event. As an antidote to the many weighty issues in the world today, she will inspire us with ideas about how to unleash creativity in our lives.

[Save the date!](#)

DAW Branch Fundraising

By Pat Morris, Fundraising Chair

We have scheduled a fundraiser with **Virtue + Vice restaurant** in Danville on **Wednesday evening, November 12**. Enjoy dinner out on the town while supporting the branch! DAW members will be your servers; tips and a share of the proceeds will go to branch projects. More details to come in September's Advocate.



[Save the date!](#)

President's Message

By Deborah Wechsler, President

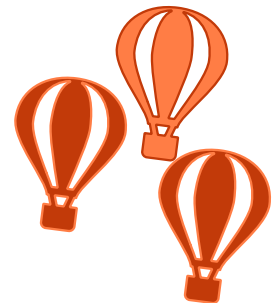
Summer is passing quickly. I hope everyone is enjoying the cooler weather! Thanks everyone who attended the Membership Appreciation and Installation event in June. Please read the article later in this issue, and I think you will be as impressed as I am with all of the impactful activities with which our branch members are engaged. Attendees were also treated to presentations from several of our Local Scholarship awardees. This and Tech Trek are two key projects where DAW AAUW is making a difference in our local communities.



Within the next couple of weeks, we will be finalizing the DAW budget for the coming 2025-26 year. Please watch your email for an opportunity to view and vote on the budget. The final membership approval will be at our general membership meeting and Brunch on September 20. Looking forward to seeing many of you in person then.

July/August Checklist

- **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
- **September 20, 10:00 am – Membership Brunch**
Save the date!
- **Volunteer!** We have open positions for FY 25-26 on our branch board and committees.
[Click here](#) to learn more
- [Donate here](#) to support DAW branch programs



Member Recognition and Installation

The annual DAW Branch Installation and Member Appreciation event was held on June 5. About 40 members and guests enjoyed a tasty Mexican dinner while celebrating the branch's achievements in 2024-25 and the outstanding members who made it all possible. Several of this year's Local Scholarship recipients were on hand to speak about their plans and how our scholarships will help them. There were many "thank yous" to the outgoing board and branch committee members before the new board members were officially installed.

Everyone at the installation was happy to celebrate a successful year for the branch in line with our theme of "standing together for equity". We anticipate many more accomplishments in the new 2025-26 year with able direction from the incoming board and all the many active, engaged DAW branch members.

Here's an overview of the evening's presentations.

Meeting Local Scholarship Awardees

Several of the 2025 DAW Local Scholarship recipients were at the event, giving attendees a chance to meet them in person. Look for the Local Scholarship article later in this Advocate edition for details about the awardees' talks.

Highlights of the Past Year

Programs – We held informational programs over a wide range of topics related to AAUW's mission of promoting equity and supporting quality education in our area. Besides arranging events on our own, we partnered with AAUW branches from San Ramon, Orinda-Moraga-Lafayette, and Livermore-Pleasanton-Dublin, and local PTA councils on several of the programs. *Thanks to Program Co-VPs Monika Witte and Ogie Strogatz!*

Local Scholarships – We awarded 11 scholarships of \$2,000 each to local women; seven were Community Scholarships, three were CSU East Bay Renaissance Scholarships, and one was a Diablo Valley College Single Parent Scholarship. In addition, one awardee received an additional \$1,000 for the Creative Endeavors Scholarship. *Thanks to Local Scholarship Co-Chairs Ann Willoughby and Holly Sauer!*

Tech Trek – We sponsored 14 7th grade girls to attend Tech Trek, the AAUW STEM summer camp. *Thanks to Tech Trek Co-Chairs Lee Garverick and Kate Waters!*

Public Policy/Advocacy – We represented AAUW's values at all the San Ramon Valley School Board meetings over the past year. There were five to 15 DAW members at each meeting and one of them spoke for the branch at most meetings. Because of this on-going advocacy related to the California School Board Project, we received a 2nd place award for Branch Activity of the Year (shared with the OML branch) from AAUW California. *Thanks to Public Policy Chair Laurinda Ochoa and DEI Officer Ogie Strogatz!*

Fundraising – We held our 23rd Garden Tour over the Friday and Saturday before Mother's Day featuring six beautiful, varied gardens. The tour netted roughly \$24,000 that will go toward branch projects in 2025-26. *Thanks to Garden Tour Chair Anne Struthers!*

Honoring DAW Members

We are proud that three of our branch members have been with AAUW for 50 years and are now recognized as **Honorary Life Members**. They are:

- Jan Geahry
- Millie Lindsay
- Therese O'Meara

As part of the AAUW Fund program, four branch members were recognized as **AAUW Fund Honorees** for their outstanding work on behalf of our branch and in support of the AAUW mission. With their enthusiasm and energy,



From left – Therese O'Meara, Millie Lindsay, Jan Geahry

they've worked well beyond their basic role descriptions to help the branch over the past year. They are:

- Laurinda Ochoa
- Ogie Strogatz
- Ann Willoughby
- Monika Witte

Members who made **donations to the AAUW Fund** over the past year were also recognized for their invaluable help in supporting AAUW's programs. They are:

Director's Circle

- Asha Bajaj

Equity Circle

- MaryAnn Hruska
- Carol Kennedy
- Roseann Krane

Sustaining Circle

- Tena Gallagher
- Ann Willoughby
- Monika Witte

Century Club Circle

- Susanne Burrill
- Marilyn Lawver
- Chris Winter

Friends Circle

- Carmen Curtis
- Rebecca Calzia-Bhatt
- Angela Domer
- Debbie Koos
- Noelle Schoelkopf

DAW Board Transitions for 2025-26

The outgoing board and branch committee members who were all instrumental in making the past year's activities successful were recognized for their service. In particular, we thanked people who are transitioning off the board – Roseann Krane who was Fund VP, Holly Sauer who was Nominating Committee Chair and Local Scholarship Co-Chair, and Lee Garverick who was Tech Trek Co-Chair.



From left – Monika Witte, Chris Ritter, Bette Felton,
Judy Lauper, Deborah Wechsler

Many board members will continue with their roles in the coming year and the full incoming board was recognized as they pledged their support to the branch. In addition to those continuing, several new board members were welcomed – Bette Felton as Program VP, Jana Multhaup as Fund VP, and Debbie Koos as Local Scholarship Co-Chair.

The DAW board members for 2025-26 are:

President	Deborah Wechsler
Programs VP	Bette Felton
Membership Co-VPs	Judy Lauper, Monika Witte
Funds VP	Jana Multhaup

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

2025 DAW Scholarship Recipients

Scholars' Information on DAW Website

Many of the 2025 Local Scholarship recipients have shared brief videos with us that express their plans for the future and their appreciation of their DAW scholarship. The videos are available through our branch website along with details about each student and her school and major for the coming year.

[Click here to visit the DAW website for more info about the recipients](#)

Scholarship Awardees Recognized at the DAW Installation

By Ann Willoughby, Local Scholarship Co-Chair

Five of our eleven DAW Local Scholarship awardees for 2025 were able to attend the Installation on June 5 along with Roshawn Campbell, the Cal State University East Bay (CSUEB) Renaissance Program Coordinator and our partner for the Renaissance Scholarships. Awardees in attendance were Maria Abreu Dennis, Sandra Huntley, Justine Overmyer, Anata Tran, and Macey Vasquez.

Each of the awardees introduced themselves, spoke of their college journey and graciously thanked DAW for their scholarship award. Macey Vasquez, one of the CSUEB Renaissance Scholars, gave her permission to share her speech. Her words demonstrate the exceptional impact the Renaissance program has on its students, all former foster youth, and her heartfelt gratitude for her DAW scholarship.

"My name is Macey Vasquez, I am a rising senior at Cal State University, East Bay. My major is Human Development with a double concentration in Women's Studies and Childhood Development. It is truly an honor to stand before you today as a recipient of the AAUW scholarship. I want to express gratitude to the AAUW for believing in me, investing in my future and for uplifting women like me.



From left - Monika Witte, Ann Willoughby, Macey Vasquez, Roshawn Campbell, Justine Overmyer, Anaya Tran, Sandra Huntley, Maria Abreu Dennis, Debbie Koos, Judy Lauper

As a former foster youth and single mother, the path to higher education has not been an easy one. Life has presented challenges that, at times, felt unbearable. But with each obstacle, I've found resilience, and with every step forward I've carried my daughters Lily and Kiki with me - motivated by the desire to show them what strength, determination and self-worth look like.

The Renaissance Scholars Program, especially my academic counselor Roshawn, have welcomed me with open arms. Since my first day in the program, I have been invited to retreat events. I had the pleasure of traveling to LA for the Blueprint for Success conference providing networking opportunities supporting foster youth. This spring semester I had the privilege of being a part of the Student Advisory Board for Renaissance Scholars.

This scholarship is a reminder that I am not alone, that there are communities of women who care about equity, education, and empowerment. Your support lightens the burden and lights the way. To the AAUW and everyone who makes these opportunities possible: thank you for recognizing the power in stories like mine. Thank you for helping me rewrite the narrative, not as someone defined by her hardships but rising through them.

I promise to pay this forward to my children, my community, and every young woman who needs to know that her dreams are valid, and her past does not define her through working with women and youth."

With the \$23,000 in scholarships this year, DAW has now awarded \$179,000 in scholarships to local college women since 2011. In addition to our 2025 scholarship awards, DAW is providing each awardee with a free one-year membership to AAUW National, California and DAW. In the words of Anata Tran, one of our awardees and first-year grad student at University of California Law San Francisco, *"I look forward to coming to future DAW meetings and want to express my gratitude for all the amazing work that this branch is doing to support the educational journeys of young women and other underserved populations here in the Bay Area. I hope to one day serve my community half as well as all of you lovely ladies."*

Our scholarship awards are made possible through the generous donations of our members and our extraordinary, much loved, annual Garden Tour. We are deeply grateful to those of you who have contributed to our Local Scholarship Program that benefits so many deserving young women.

AAUW Fund

By Roseann Krane, past Fund VP

Thank you to all who generously donated to the AAUW Fund. This money helps provide funds for fellows for further study and to help run the organization. Sometimes there is confusion at the national association with donations and people are not credited. Those who gave will receive a tax letter from past DAW Fund VP Roseann Krane if donations were in the period of January 2025 to June 2025. If you donated and don't receive a tax letter by the end of July, please contact Roseann at rkrane@gmail.com so the issue can be rectified.

Quest Science Center at the San Ramon Art & Wind Festival

By Ann Willoughby, Quest Advisory Board member, and Joanne Quijano

STEM Fun at the San Ramon Art & Wind Festival

Along with two AAUW Livermore-Pleasanton-Dublin volunteers, we joined Quest Science Center staff and other volunteers to help with Quest's debut at the San Ramon Art & Wind Festival on May 25.

Festival organizers were thrilled with Quest's participation and provided them a large field to set up a hands-on activity with air-powered paper rockets. Assisted by enthusiastic volunteers, festival goers of all ages constructed paper rockets and tested their designs by shooting them skyward with air-powered rocket launchers. Rockets soared, many going an impressive distance, all to the cheers of rocketeers. Some flubbed and some didn't go far, so rocketeers went back to refine their designs and try again.



Festival visitors building their rockets



View from the rocket range at the Art & Wind Fest

This immersive, family-friendly activity attracted hundreds of participants throughout the day. Great fun was had by all, rocketeers and volunteers alike. With the resounding success of its Art & Wind Festival debut, Quest plans to return next year. We had a blast (no pun intended) and encourage DAW members to volunteer at future Quest events as information is shared with the branch. No STEM experience is needed to volunteer, just an interest in science and in helping people to experiment and learn.

If you have any questions about Quest, feel free to contact DAW member and Quest Advisory Board member Ann Willoughby at akwilloughby@att.net.

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

Art and Garden Interest Group to Visit SFMOMA on Aug 19

By Tena Gallagher, Art & Garden Leader

Let's go to San Francisco Museum of Modern Art (SFMOMA) to see the Ruth Asawa exhibit on Tuesday, August 19! This first posthumous retrospective presents the full range of Ruth Asawa's work and its inspirations over six decades of her career. As an artist, Asawa forged a groundbreaking practice through her ceaseless exploration of materials and forms. As an educator, civic leader, and long-time resident, Asawa's impact on San Francisco can still be felt today. For more information about the exhibition, [click here](#).



We will take BART in together and walk about 5 minutes to SFMOMA. All interested DAW members are welcome to come with the group. Please contact Tena Gallagher at mstena@gmail.com

Thursday Morning Literature Group

By Sue Woodworth-Bennett, Thursday Morning Literature Group Leader

The Thursday Morning Literature Group welcomes new members, and we now have some meetings in person! We meet at 9:30 am on the 4th Thursday of the month either via Zoom, at Bagel Street Café in Danville, or in members' homes. The book discussion leader chooses the meeting location. Our members suggest and vote on our books annually.

For more information, please contact Sue Woodworth Bennett at woodworthbennett@gmail.com.



Member News

Renee MacArthur, from our DAW Branch, has stepped up to be the CFO for AAUW California. They are grateful for her volunteering for this mandatory and critical position that was not filled as of the recent state election. *Thank you, Renee!*

A Big Broken Promise to America's Students and Women

Congress has passed a bill that will go down in history not as a beautiful promise fulfilled - but as a **big broken promise** to America's students, working families, and especially to women.

From early learning through graduate school, this bill deals a devastating blow to educational opportunities in America. It **slashes financial aid, eliminates vital student loan programs, and channels public dollars into private voucher schemes** - all while doing nothing to ensure that participating schools uphold civil rights protections. Instead of expanding access, it erects new barriers that will shut out millions of students, especially women, low-income families, and communities of color. This bill makes drastic cuts to Medicaid, it threatens reproductive freedom and the health and economic security of the very people who rely on education as a path to a better future.

For AAUW, this is personal. We are the nation's largest non-institutional funder of women's graduate education. For more than 140 years, we've fought to open the doors of higher education to all women - not just those who can afford it. And we know the truth: **when women lose access to education, they lose access to opportunity, economic security, and equity.**

This bill:

- **Undermines educational equity** by using tax breaks to fund private school voucher programs without requiring participating schools to follow Title IX, Title VI, or disability laws - creating a loophole that permits legal discrimination against students.
- **Shuts women out of higher education** by eliminating Graduate PLUS loans and creating borrowing caps that disproportionately harm women of color, single mothers, and first-generation students.
- **Attacks reproductive health and health care access** by essentially defunding Planned Parenthood and making sweeping changes to Medicaid that will strip coverage from millions of women - leaving them without access to birth control, cancer screenings, and maternal care

This bill does not reflect the values of fairness, inclusion, or opportunity. It is a deliberate rollback of hard-won rights, passed at the expense of women's futures and our nation's progress.

AAUW calls on the administration to reckon with what this legislation truly means — and to recognize the irreversible harm it will cause to students, families, and our economy now and in years to come.

AAUW and our nationwide network of members and advocates will not stop fighting until every student - regardless of gender, race, income, or zip code - has full and equal access to education, civil rights, and opportunity.

Help AAUW fight to preserve higher education in America, now when it is dire that we do so.

[Click here](#) to donate to AAUW National Funds.

AAUW Fellowships and Grants for 2025-2026 Open August 1

In July 2025, AAUW awarded **\$5.3 million in fellowships and grants** to 228 women and community-based projects. These investments - made possible by your giving - help break down barriers and open new doors in education, STEM, public service, and beyond. Each year, the awards support women pursuing academic, research, and professional opportunities that advance equity for women and girls. From graduate education to community-based projects, our awards empower changemakers at every level.

We're excited to announce that applications are opening as of August 1 for AAUW's 2025–26 fellowships and grants! Applications close September 30, so please help spread the word now! Encourage eligible students, scholars, and community leaders to apply today.

[Click here](#) to learn more about AAUW grant and fellowship opportunities for 2025-2026.

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/>

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