



The Advocate

November 2025

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*“We are ready. We will meet this moment in history. Because we have each other.
And that is everything.”*

- Valarie Kaur, activist, filmmaker, and educator



**The Reality of Reproductive Rights and Services
in Contra Costa County**

Thursday, November 20, 2025, 6:00 pm
Danville Congregational Church
989 San Ramon Valley Blvd, Danville

- What decisions and opportunities confront women to enhance healthy childbearing and parenting?
- How are all Contra Costa women supported to be healthy throughout their lifespans?

With guests from Contra Costa Regional Medical Center and Planned Parenthood Northern California, learn how health education has changed and how new opportunities and challenges are met in Contra Costa County.

Come to this month's Community Program to learn about the state of women's health care and health education in our county. The speakers will address the above questions as well as others you may pose such as: Do women still need pap smears? How many babies are born via artificial insemination? Where can all women be welcomed for care?

This important and engaging session will be moderated by DAW's Program Chair Bette Felton

**Click here for more info and
to RSVP**

The meeting is open to all.
It is free to AAUW and Danville CC members; non-members are \$10.

To review a suggested reference from Planned Parenthood as background for the program - [click here.](#)

DAW Branch Fundraising

AAUW DAW Branch Fundraiser *Dine for a Cause*

Wednesday, November 12, 5 to 8 pm
at Virtue + Vice Restaurant
267 Hartz Ave, Danville

Support the DAW branch while enjoying gourmet comfort food with a global influence at Virtue + Vice Restaurant! When you dine with us on our special evening, 10% of all sales and 100% of tips will go to our branch to support Tech Trek, our scholarships for college women, and our branch programs.

Come hungry, leave inspired, and help us support women! You can dine in or take out; we get credit for both.



Make your dinner reservation for Nov 12 now!
Visit <https://www.virtueandvicedanville.com>, and be sure to indicate you're with the AAUW DAW fundraiser.

For more about Virtue + Vice and to make your dinner reservation for November 12

[Click here](#)

Third Thursday – Holiday Gathering



President's Message

By Deborah Wechsler, President

We stood up and were counted as some of our DAW members joined with some San Ramon branch members to support our democracy in the energetic No Kings rally in Walnut Creek on Oct 18. It was an emotional boost to be together with so many like-minded people, focused on aligned goals to support our basic civil rights and a just society. There will be other opportunities, and I hope you can join us.

Our October Community Program on the 16th was two days prior to the rallies that were held across our country. It was a perfect lead-in, with Bette Felton and Ogie Strogatz offering insights and learnings about civic engagement. Read more in the recap article later in this issue. We are looking forward to our next Third Thursday Community Program on November 20.

Stay well,
Deborah



November Checklist



November To Do's

- **November 4 – Vote in California's Special Election about Proposition 50**
- **November 11, 9:00 am – Quest Science Center at Danville Veterans' Center**
See page 6 – volunteers needed!
- **November 12, 5:00 pm – DAW Branch Fundraiser – *Dine for a Cause at Virtue + Vice***
[Click here](#) for dinner reservations; see article in this newsletter for more information
- **November 18, 5:30 pm – San Ramon Valley Unified School District Meeting**
[Click here](#) for more information
- **November 20, 6:00 pm – Third Thursday Community Program – Reproductive Rights and Services in Contra Costa**
[Click here](#) for more information and to RSVP
- **December 9, 5:30 pm – San Ramon Valley Unified School District Meeting**
[Click here](#) for more information
- **December 18, 6:00 pm – Holiday Gathering**
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

Public Policy and Advocacy

Stand up for Democracy on October 18 – DAW Members Were There!



Danville-Alamo-Walnut Creek branch members teamed up with San Ramon branch members and with friends to represent our AAUW values and commitment to democracy at the historic No Kings rally. The event held in Walnut Creek on October 18 was inspiring to all!

[Click here to see photos from the event.](#)

California Special Election – November 4

Be sure to cast your ballot in the California Special Election by November 4!

For background about the initiative, a very informative article about Proposition 50 and an analysis of its impact related to AAUW's mission was in the October Advocate. [Click here](#) to access the October edition and look for the article on page 7.

Local Scholarships – Applications Open

By Ann Willoughby and Debbie Koos, Local Scholarship Co-Chairs

Announcing DAW 2025-2026 Local Scholarships for College/University Women

The Local Scholarship Committee is pleased to announce that applications for the DAW scholarships for the 2025-2026 academic year are now being accepted. Committee members include Ann Willoughby (Co-Chair), Debbie Koos (Co-Chair), Dot Healy, Judy Lauper, Rhiannon Shires, Ogie Strogatz, Kate Waters, and Monika Witte.

The branch offers three categories of scholarships, described below. Scholarship awards will be a minimum of \$2,000 each, with additional awards available for Community Local Scholarship recipients as noted. ***Please spread the word to all who might be potential candidates!***

Community Local Scholarships – These scholarships are open to students who identify as women and will be juniors, seniors, or graduate students at an accredited college, university or technical school in

the fall of 2026. Applicants must have attended high school in Danville, Alamo or Walnut Creek or currently live or work in these locations. The minimum required cumulative GPA is 3.0.

Awardees selected for Community Local Scholarships majoring in STEM (science, technology, engineering and/or math) or the arts will be eligible for additional monetary awards, subject to the availability of funds and number and qualifications of awardees.

STEM Scholarship— Scholarship recipients are selected from Community Local Scholarship awardees majoring in STEM who intend to pursue a STEM career. This scholarship is new this year and reflects AAUW DAW's commitment to deepening the pipeline of women in STEM professions, an area where women have been and continue to be underrepresented. Improving the pipeline of women in STEM a top priority for [AAUW National](#).

Creative Endeavors Scholarship – Scholarship recipients are selected from Community Local Scholarship awardees majoring in the visual arts, applied arts, and performing arts. This longstanding scholarship is made possible by the raffle of a beautiful quilt crafted annually by DAW member Mary Mix and donations.

Renaissance Scholarships – These scholarships are offered to individuals who identify as women attending California State University East Bay (CSUEB) and participating in the CSUEB Renaissance Scholars Program for former foster youth. Applicants must be juniors, seniors, or graduate students in the fall of 2026. The minimum required cumulative GPA is 2.5.

Single Parent Scholarships – DAW funds a scholarship at Diablo Valley College (DVC) and one at Los Medanos College (LMC) that is offered to a student at each college who is a single parent and resides or works in Contra Costa County. The LMC scholarship is new this year and reflects DAW's commitment to serving diverse communities. Students must have completed a minimum of 12 units and be enrolled as a continuing student at the colleges or be transferring to an accredited four-year college/university in the fall of 2026. The minimum cumulative GPA is 3.0. The scholarship is administered by each college with funds provided by DAW, and the college selects the awardee based on the criteria established by DAW.

Applications for Community Local and Renaissance Scholarships opened October 31, 2025, and are due to DAW by March 1, 2026. Awardees for these two types of scholarships are selected by the Local Scholarships Committee in March/April 2026 and are subject to Board approval. Awardees are announced in June 2026. Single Parent Scholarship applications are also open and are due to the colleges in mid-February with awardees selected and announced by DVC and LMC in early May 2026.

For more information about DAW scholarships and how to apply, go to <https://daw-ca.aauw.net/local-scholarships/>, or

[Click here for scholarship and application information.](#)

The AAUW DAW Branch is proud to have awarded local college/university women \$179,000 in scholarships since 2011. Our ability to give scholarships depends entirely on funds raised by our branch, every donation matters! Any amount is greatly appreciated and donations are fully tax deductible. If you would like to donate to DAW Local Scholarships, go to <https://daw-ca.aauw.net/donate/> or

[Click here to donate to AAUW DAW scholarships.](#)

October 16 Community Program - Recap

By Isabel Lau, Social Media Manager

A Powerful Night of Connection, Purpose, and Momentum

October's Community Program brought together a room full of passionate individuals united by a shared commitment to justice and progress. It was a powerful, productive, and uplifting evening.

Bette Felton, DAW Program Chair, guided us through an insightful conversation unpacking key concepts essential to our work: **solidarity, advocacy versus lobbying, and manageable activism.**



Bette Felton and Ogie Strogatz

Ogie Strogatz, DAW DEI Officer, shared impactful resources from AAUW, including AAUW CA's [Public Policy Priorities](#), the [School Board Project](#), and the [CA Proposition 50 Guide](#), and [AAUW National's partnership on the 10/18 No Kings events](#).

Attendees engaged with community partners who are making a difference every day - representing [Indivisible Tri-Valley](#), [League of Women Voters Diablo Valley](#), and the [Multi-Faith Action Coalition](#)

- who were present with materials and open conversations about their work.

After reflecting together on our collective efforts toward a more just and equitable society, Ogie closed the evening with a moving excerpt from activist and thought leader **Valarie Kaur**.

"Is this the darkness of the tomb or the darkness of the womb?...

You are the community leaders... the midwives in this time of great transition, tasked with birthing a new future for all of us."

Thank you to everyone who showed up. The work continues, and so do we - stronger, together.

[Click here to see photos from the meeting.](#)

Quest Science Center News

By Ann Willoughby, Quest Advisory Board member

Danville Veterans Day Pop-Up Museum, November 11 – DAW Volunteers Needed!

Quest Science Center will again be participating in the Veterans Day Pop-Up Museum at the Veterans Memorial Building in downtown Danville on Tuesday, November 11 from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm. The popular Pop-up Museum is a free, family-friendly, annual event honoring veterans hosted by local veterans groups and the Town of Danville. This will be Quest's third year at the event, and their hands-on STEM exhibit is always a huge hit with children.

Lots of volunteers are needed, so this is a great chance for DAW members to get involved in a community event; no STEM experience is necessary. Quest supervisors will be on hand to guide volunteers, and



they will provide snacks and water. Encourage your partner, family, or friends to sign up with you. DAW volunteers are greatly appreciated and help Quest bring its family-friendly science exploration to our local community. Since you will be standing throughout your shift, dress comfortably and casually. Your DAW T-shirt would be perfect attire!

Three volunteer shifts are available:

- All day
- Morning - 8:30 am to 1:00 pm
- Afternoon - 1:00 to 5:30 pm

To volunteer, email Quest's Director of Education Dan Golub at: dgolub@quest-science.org. Let him know that you are from AAUW DAW. Branch volunteers are greatly appreciated and help Quest bring its family-friendly science exploration to our local community.

PS: If you go, please take pictures of the event and send to Ann Willoughby at akwilloughby@att.net for use in a future Advocate.

AAUW California – Public Policy Updates

School Boards - The Overlooked Frontline of Democracy

By Kathi Harper, Chair, Public Policy School Board Project

Last month, Seena Trigas from the Public Policy School Board Project team, submitted an excellent article reminding members of the crucial role that public education plays in our democracy. The current – and seemingly never-ending - assaults on that institution gave rise to the School Board Project, which is now entering its third year.

When we started this project, our main focus initially was to encourage members to actively participate in identifying, recruiting and supporting candidates to run for school boards whose education values were in line with ours at AAUW California. For a number of reasons, our focus shifted to an emphasis on encouraging and training members to attend school board meetings and let us know what they are seeing in their districts. We had a remarkable response, and we want to thank all our members who have answered that call.

As we enter our 3rd iteration of the project, we want to continue that momentum, but narrow the scope to watching for and speaking out against violations of California's protective laws; add a new component of learning how to make a greater impact by working in coalition with other public education supportive organizations; and swing back to where we started with re-engaging and increasing our efforts to ensure district board majorities that support **all** students and the free flow of ideas. In this last regard, we have recently discovered an organization called the School Board Integrity Project, and I can't say it better than their Executive Director, Kyrstin Schuette, as stated in an Op-Ed she wrote on September 3, 2025, in *The Courier*:

"The redistricting battle is important, and we shouldn't minimize it, but it's equally important that we pursue local pathways to power to protect our families and our neighbors from the extremism sweeping our country. The solution lies in recruiting, training, and electing school board members who will practice good governance, pursue academic freedom and excellence, and foster schools where every student belongs."

You can read Kyrstin's full article here: [Kyrstin Schuette: The Overlooked Frontline of Democracy](#), and learn more about her organization here: [School Board Integrity Project](#). Front and center on their webpage you will find their tagline:

"The future we choose for our public schools is the future we choose for our country."

Membership Corner

In Memoriam

We are deeply saddened to report that DAW branch member **Judy Slinger** passed away in early October. Born in Wisconsin, she attended college there, earning undergraduate and graduate degrees, then a PhD from the University of Denver. After marrying her husband Randy and beginning their family in Wisconsin, they moved with their children, Jen and Jon, to Boulder, Colorado, where she taught and became Director of Literacy.



Judy and Randy moved to Danville, California, in 2011. She was deeply involved in her community, serving on the Board of Directors for the Blackhawk Scholarship Fund, on the Blackhawk Women's Golf Association Board, and as an active member of San Ramon Valley United Methodist Church. Many DAW branch members met her through the bridge interest groups and at other branch meetings and activities. She was always gracious, warm, and optimistic; her kind spirit will be greatly missed by her AAUW friends.

Condolences to her husband, Randy; her daughter and son-in-law, Jen and David; her son, Jon; and all her extended family. In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to the Blackhawk Scholarship Fund.

In Sympathy

Our sincere condolences go out to Marilyn Lawver and her daughters Sandi and Devrah. Her husband **Bryan Lawver** passed away suddenly while they were traveling on a cruise last month. Bryan was generous in volunteering his time with many local organizations; he was supportive of Marilyn with AAUW events and many of her DAW friends knew him. He will be sorely missed by all.

In lieu of flowers, please consider a donation to the Museum of the San Ramon Valley.

AAUW National

Update from the Fall Member Gathering

Thank you to all who attended the virtual AAUW Fall Member Gathering last month! It was a pleasure to bring our community together to recognize outstanding supporters and branches, update you on our strategic plan priorities, and highlight our 5 Calls to Action. To view the event recording (which has been updated to exclude technical challenges experienced during the live session) [click here](#).

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 or update your contact information 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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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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