

Board to Board

A Communication from the AAUW California Board to Branch Boards

Standing together for equity



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December 2024

You may have noticed that all Board to Board emails have a link at the top that says “View in browser.” The reason for this option is that the appearance of some emails may vary depending on the device or email provider. If you have formatting issues, broken links, or oddly sized images, try clicking on the link, and you will see the entire email as it was designed to be read. Another advantage of reading the email in the browser is that you can send the browser link to someone. For example, you can send the link to your newsletter editor, asking them to include the Public Policy article in your next newsletter.

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Charmen's Chat

Charmen Goehring, President, AAUW California, statepresident@aauw-ca.org.

Many of us are still mourning an election that was very mixed in its results. In almost all states where reproductive health was on the ballot, voters decided to leave reproductive choices between women and their doctors. However, the incoming administration has been sending mixed messages on the issue. Project 2025, which is a GOP blueprint for the next few years, if enacted, has further red flags for women, such as ending no-fault divorces. This could have the effect of robbing women of the opportunity to leave a violent marriage. Some of the rhetoric being heard across the country is disturbing (“Your body, MY choice,” for example). For those of you who have been fighting for women’s equality for decades, it must be very difficult to find hope.

Luckily, we have a strong network of women in AAUW who believe that we all deserve equity and opportunities. Michelle Obama once called on us to be “bright lights” in this troubling world. So, I have been thinking about how we, as AAUW members, can be bright lights in our communities at this particular time. Many people are scared and anxious about what the future holds. I have friends in the LGBTQ+ community who are renewing passports and making plans to leave if

necessary. We can continue to show up for our friends and others in our neighborhoods by reaching out, joining forces, and continuing to fight for our mission of equity for all. We have many opportunities in AAUW California to get involved, from our School Board Project work to sending girls to Tech Trek to building coalitions with other local groups with similar goals. We will be looking at our Public Policy Priorities this year and revising as needed based on feedback from our members. We are also working on ways to strengthen the confidence of our young Tech Trek girls to help them find their voices. Your branch may have special local projects where you can shine your light as well.

As we head into the upcoming holiday season, one that centers light on each of the major holidays in December (Christmas, Hanukkah, and Kwanzaa), take some time to learn a little about a celebration that is different from your own family tradition. You may research the miracle that happened at the rededication of the Temple of Jerusalem that led to celebrating the eight days of Hanukkah. Or, learn more about the seven principles of Kwanzaa. Or, even just learn about how another country marks Christmas, such as the Norwegian tradition of lighting a candle every night from Christmas Eve to New Year's Day. Whatever you do, enjoy the time of gathering with friends and family. And don't forget to shine your bright light for AAUW and our incredibly important mission of equity.

Committee News

AAUW FUND [TOP](#)

Deanna Arthur, AAUW Fund Committee chair, aauwfund@aauw-ca.org

THEY'RE COMING, THEY'RE COMING!!!!

Yes, there really are fund fellows and grant recipients (31 in California), and we are much closer to having their videos available.

Please look at the Fund page on the [website](#), and you will see the current ones listed, their schools, and their fields of study. We will meet online with the recipients during the first week of December. They will then produce their videos, and the magical communications team will make their presentations available to you. Keep checking back until you see the one you want.

Delays in the fellows' selection were outside of our control. You don't have to wait for the videos; please click [HERE](#) to submit your requests if someone looks like a good fit for your branch.

I am sure California will finish strong as the branches continue supporting this relevant project. You have until December 31st to get donations in and reach our goal of \$500,000.

Have faith, the finish line is quickly approaching and we can do it!.

B2B Bonus: Quick Tips for Things to Try

Don't forget we like your input as well. If you have a great idea for raising donations, please share.

What I need to know: California Fund recipients have been posted on our website.

What I need to do: Select your choices to speak at a meeting.

Should I include this in my branch newsletter? Yes, members would enjoy seeing where their donations go.

BRANCH DEVELOPMENT[TOP](#)

Sigrid Moranz, Director, Leadership, branch-development@aauw-ca.org

Rebecca Gomez, Director, Membership, branch-development@aauw-ca.org

BRANCH ACTIVITY OF THE YEAR (BAY) AWARD

It is that time of year! Time to tell us all about your branch's best program this past year and enter your submission to the [Branch Activity of the Year](#) contest.

Each year, the Branch Activity of the Year Award recognizes signature branch activities that have been presented during the period of one year, ending on March 15, 2025.

The BAY 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). The activity may be a one-off program or event or a sustained recurring project for which the branch is known.

Last year we had over 25 submissions of interesting and meaningful programs. We hope to have even more branches participate this year. You can see examples of last year's submissions and winners on our website. Click [HERE](#) to see last year's winners.

The application will go live next month—on January 2, 2025. It will be posted on the AAUW California website under Branch Tools. The deadline for submitting your branch's nomination is March 15, 2025.

Mark your calendars and join us on April 26, 2025, at the AAUW California Annual Meeting to celebrate the winners of our Branch Activity of the Year contest.

If you have any questions, please contact Patricia Souza at souzapellow@gmail.com

Patricia Souza
AAUW California Branch Activity of the Year Chair

BRANCH DEVELOPMENT PEER GROUP MEETINGS

Mark your calendars for 2025. The next two Branch Development Peer Group meetings will be a two-part series entitled *Volunteers First: Cutting Edge Program for Leaders of Volunteers*. Part one is on Tuesday, January 28, 2025, at 7 pm. Click [HERE](#) to register for the meeting.

Part two will be on Tuesday, February 25, 2025, at 7 pm. Click [HERE](#) to register for the meeting.

More information will be sent to peer group members in a December email.

B2B Bonus: Quick Tips for Things to Try

We love what you do in your branches! Share it with everyone. Submit your program for Branch Activity of the Year.

What I need to know: Does my branch have a program or programs to submit?

What I need to do: Check for the link to submit your application on or after January 2, 2025.

Should I include this in my branch newsletter? No, this is for branch officers only.

COMMUNICATIONS [TOP](#)

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

HOW CAN WE COMMUNICATE IF YOU HAVE UNSUBSCRIBED?

After a contentious election year, many of us have experienced email burnout. Or maybe the sales ads for the holiday shopping season are driving you over the edge. My home branch is quite large and uses Mailchimp to send e-blasts and newsletters. AAUW California also uses the Mailchimp platform. When you choose to unsubscribe from one of our messages, you are prevented from getting any messages, including the *California Connection*! To re-subscribe, you need to send an email to webteam@aauw-ca.org to request to be re-subscribed.

AAUW National has the same issue and asks you to ensure you stay connected with them by re-subscribing to AAUW National emails. Simply use this link, aauw.us/emailoptions, to re-subscribe and guarantee that you receive all the latest news, webinars, and opportunities from AAUW National.

What I need to know: Unsubscribed folks can re-subscribe.

What I need to do: Let your branch members know, post in newsletters, or announce at meetings.

Should I include this in my branch newsletter? Yes, since that is the only way unsubscribed members will know how to re-subscribe.

DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION [TOP](#)

Lata Murti, Director, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, diversity@aauw-ca.org

SURVEY SAYS!

The results of our Fall 2024 AAUW CA Branch DEI Survey are in! Please come to our December DEI Peer Group Meeting to see the results and discuss how to move forward based on the responses.

In the meantime, look for an AAUW CA Communication summarizing the important information Morgan Hill Branch member Kat Napoli shared during the November DEI Peer Group Meeting about Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women (MMIW) and Red Dress Day. (Unfortunately, this meeting was not recorded due to technical difficulties.)

Please join us for our next DEI Peer Group Meeting on Wednesday, December 18th, at 7 pm. Click [HERE](#) to register.

B2B Bonus: Quick Tips for Things to Try

AAUW National is collecting information on members' ethnicity. Log in to the Community Hub and check your membership profile information (under "My Profile") to make sure it lists your ethnicity under "Additional Information." You may select more than one ethnicity.

What I need to know: The DEI Survey has been completed.

What I need to do: Attend the DEI Peer Group meeting to know the results.

Should I include this in my branch newsletter? No, not until the results are ready for publishing.

FINANCE [TOP](#)

Kathy Ford, Chief Financial Officer, Finance Committee chair, cfo@aauw-ca.org.

YOUR BRANCH IS HAVING AN EVENT, AND ONE OF THE EVENT VENDORS WANTS A CERTIFICATE OF INSURANCE (COI). HOW DO YOU PROVIDE PROOF OF INSURANCE COVERAGE?

You can find the most current COI Request Form [HERE](#) under Branch Tools / Finance / Managing Branch Insurance / Branch Insurance / Request a Certificate of Insurance. Candace Valentino is our current contact person at FOY & Associates for obtaining the necessary Certificate of Insurance for your branch events.

Candace is also our senior insurance representative, and a new contact for COI requests will be named soon. We will update the COI request form once the new contact is identified. So, be sure to check the AAUW California website for the most current form when you need to request a Certificate of Insurance.

And, most importantly of course, Happy Holidays from the Finance Committee – we're looking forward to seeing you in the New Year at the 2025 Finance Peer Group meetings. You still have time to tell us which topics you want to cover by completing the [2024-2025 Finance Committee Survey](#) under Branch Tools / AAUW California Peer Groups / Finance.

What I need to know: There is a new form and contact for obtaining a Certificate of Insurance.

What I need to do: Make sure program and finance officers have this information.

Should I include this in my branch newsletter? No, only for specific leaders.

NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS [TOP](#)

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

CELEBRATING THE PRESENT WHILE PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

'Tis the season for celebrating. Let's celebrate the outstanding dedication of our AAUW California Board of Directors. Each board member has made major contributions, and together their impact has been impressive. Their work can be seen on the state website at aauw-ca.org. The webinar on Project 2025 is of special interest as we prepare for the coming year.

We will be electing a president-elect, chief financial officer, and three board members.

Every member will receive an email invitation to vote. Voting will begin in April. Consider applying or nominating someone for these critical positions.

We can celebrate the present and encourage members to apply for AAUW California Board positions!

B2B Bonus: Quick Tips for Things to Try

Every member can make a contribution by applying, nominating, and voting for board positions.

What I need to know: We need at least five members to run for the offices listed above.

What I need to do: Consider volunteering beyond your branch and join the state team.

Should I include this in my branch newsletter? Yes, all members are eligible to run for state office.

PUBLIC POLICY [TOP](#)

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

SELF CARE IS A POLITICAL ACT

Looking forward to the New Year

We would like to take this moment to wish you a happy holiday season and to extend our deepest gratitude for your hard work, passion, and commitment to advancing gender equity and improving the lives of women and girls.

With the looming post-election threat of an uptick in policies and enforcement actions that run counter to our core values, including the promise to advance Project 2025, many of you may be feeling a range of emotions, including exhaustion, anxiety, fear, and despair. Please take time during this holiday season to practice self-care--[as Audre Lorde teaches us, this is, indeed, a political act](#). Unplug if you have to, spend time with your loved ones, and recharge so that we can continue to work together to advance and protect the communities that we care about.

When you feel ready to take action, we are here to support you. We will have opportunities on the ground, including via Lobby Days and the School Board Project. We will have opportunities within our organization, including through solidifying and expanding our Public Policy Priorities. And we will continue to build new opportunities, including through partnering with organizations and individuals that share our priorities. We are gathering resources, projects, and outlets that will streamline our collective efforts.

With this in mind, we wish you all the best. Warm wishes for a peaceful holiday and a resolute New Year.

In Solidarity, Missy and Amy

LOBBY DAYS 2025 - SAVE THE DATE!

Get ready to advance legislation that makes a difference! This spring, the AAUW California 2025 Lobby Days event will be held over two days: an in-person meeting day at the State Capitol on Tuesday, April 8th, and a virtual meeting day over Zoom on Wednesday, April 9th. A registration form will arrive in your inbox in early January. For more details about the event, see the December issue of Public Policy News [HERE](#).

JOIN THESE UPCOMING VIRTUAL MEETINGS!

AAUW Priorities in Light of the Election Results featuring Meghan Kissell, AAUW Senior Director of Policy and Member Advocacy. The meeting is hosted by AAUW Silicon Valley and will be held on Wednesday, December 4, 2024, from 4-5 pm. You can register [HERE](#).

2024 Revisions to Title IX: How they Impact AAUW Values and Public Policy Priorities by Kathi Harper, member of the Public Policy Committee and chair of the School Board Project. The meeting will be held on Thursday, January 9, 2025, from 3-4 pm. Register [HERE](#).

B2B Bonus: Quick Tips for Things to Try

Some branches have reported that some local colleges are refusing to post scholarships to their portal because the scholarships are limited to individuals who identify as women. See the December issue of Public Policy News [HERE](#) for an article that explains how scholarships that seek to target protected groups to overcome historical forms of marginalization have become a target in the larger attack against DEI.

What I need to know: Take care of yourself. Save the date for Lobby Days including watching for the sign-up in January.

What I need to do: Participate in Lobby Days 2025. Consider joining the virtual meetings.

Should I include this in my branch newsletter? Yes, all members are welcome to participate in Lobby Days and attend the virtual meetings.

Program News

SPEECH TREK [TOP](#)

Cathy Foxhoven, Speech Trek Program Director, and Speech Trek Committee chair, spechtrek@aauw-ca.org

FINAL CHANCE TO PARTICIPATE IN SPEECH TREK 2024-2025

The deadline for the Speech Trek MOUs was November 18th, but if your branch still wants to participate in the competition, please fill out the MOU ASAP and send it in immediately. We want to accommodate all who wish to have a competition. To date, 15 branches have sent in their MOUs.

Don't miss out! Plan on attending the MANDATORY peer group meeting on Monday, December 16th at 7 pm. Click [HERE](#) to register. **Please bring the date of your competition so you can be eligible to receive the \$800 stipend.**

We're all looking forward to a very successful Speech Trek competition for 2024-2025!

What I need to know: This is the last chance to participate in a statewide Speech Trek competition.

What I need to do: The deadline has passed but if you submit your MOU immediately your branch can still be included.

Should I include this in my branch newsletter? No, this is only for Speech Trek chairs.

TECH TREK [TOP](#)

Mary Isaac, Tech Trek Program Director, and Tech Trek Committee chair, techtrek@aauw-ca.org

HOLIDAY GREETINGS, TECH TREK FANS!

As we think back on the prior year this December (especially the recent election results), we have a finer appreciation for the importance of keeping our Trekkers closely engaged with AAUW, STEM, and the friendships they formed at camp throughout their high school and college years and beyond.

To support this effort, a new workgroup within the state Tech Trek committee has been established known as TTAZ -- the Tech Trek Alum Zone. Our vision is that every branch that sends campers to Tech Trek continues to follow and support their Trekkers, minimally for the first five years after camp.

This year, TTAZ is focused on three action items to reconnect AAUW branches with their Tech Trek alums and to connect Tech Trek alums with each other.

1. Help branches form Tech Trek Alum Groups (TTAGs): These exclusive "clubs" will provide alums with opportunities to plan, participate in, and enjoy local and virtual STEM activities,

encouraging them to pursue futures in STEM.

2. Support the Tech Trek Alum Community (TTAC): Join forces with the TTAC Advisory Board -- a statewide committee of high school and college Tech Trek alums -- to design and deliver statewide educational, career, and social programs to ALL alums.
3. Improve alum contact information: Ensure we have accurate, up-to-date information to strengthen communication and engagement with our alums.

We welcome your ideas and feedback as we work together to rebuild and strengthen our alum network! Contact techtrek-ttac@aauw-ca.org if you have further questions about alum programs.

Your Action:

No Zoom call on the 3rd Thursday of December! But keep your eyes open for a survey from the TTAZ this month for your branch's Tech Trek Alum Advisor or other contact person to gauge your branch's interest in TTAG and TTAC programs.

B2B Bonus: Quick Tips for Things to Try

If you use Outlook and your eyes can't read the normal-size display anymore, try ctrl-scroll using your mouse.

What I need to know: A Tech Trek committee is helping branches develop alum groups for our Trekkers. There is no peer group meeting in December.

What I need to do: Look for a survey regarding your branch's interest in alum programs.

Should I include this in my branch newsletter? Yes, if your branch has a TT alum group.

AAUW California

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