

Board to Board

A Communication from the AAUW California Board to Branch Boards

Standing together for equity



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September 2025

Branch newsletters are a valuable source of information for branches, Interbranch Councils (IBCs), and the State Leadership Team. Most branches submit their newsletter to AAUW California so they can be shared with other branches. If you would like to submit your newsletter or subscribe to receive other branch newsletters, please refer to the procedures on the website [HERE](#). You can see all the branch newsletters in the archive. You can find newsletters of neighboring branches there by either clicking on the district designation (e.g., 8-Southern) in front of the branch name or by clicking on Labels on the left side and choosing the district your branch is in.

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Peer Group Meetings

All members are welcome to attend any peer group meeting. The peer group email announcement is sent to the branch chair(s) of the relevant committee and the branch president. Example: For the Public Policy Peer Group meeting, the email announcement will be sent to all branch public policy chair(s) and branch presidents.

Charmen's Chat

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

WELCOME BACK TO ANOTHER YEAR OF ABCs: ACTIVISM, BUILDING, AND CONNECTION!

Last month, your state committee members met to begin planning ways to support our mission and our branches. I was impressed to hear about the wealth of ideas and projects, especially considering that these are all volunteer committees. From the activism inherent with our Public Policy team, including a new voter education campaign, to the building of branch leaders from our Branch Development team with *Volunteers First* and the Five-Star branch program to the connections made with our Fund recipients by our AAUW Fund committee, and so much more, we are rolling up our sleeves to provide programs, projects, and support for our branch leaders. The visioning activity conducted by the Leadership Team at our June retreat was shared with committee

members present, who then added some of their own ideas. We will work to implement as many as we can!

Connection is important, so starting this month, we have a new all-member publication called the *California Compass*. This publication builds upon the *California Connection* and introduces several new features. Please alert your branch members to be on the lookout!

Also, for all members, but especially leaders, I will be hosting a year-long book study with *The Four Pivots: Reimagining Justice, Reimagining Ourselves* by Shawn A. Ginwright. The first Pivot, "From Lens to Mirror" will be discussed on October 22nd at 7 pm. Reading the chapter ahead of time will provide you with more context, but all are welcome to participate in the discussion regardless. You can register [HERE](#).

As we head into another year of **Activism, Building, and Connection**, thank you for stepping into leadership for your branches. As always, your state team is here to support you!

Committee News

AAUW FUND [TOP](#)

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

EVERYTHING OLD IS NEW AGAIN

Another chance to start anew, to do it better than we did last year. The committee is entirely different this year. We have numerous new ideas and fresh perspectives.

We have already scheduled monthly peer group meetings. Some of our topics are already identified, but feel free to let us know what you'd like to learn about at aauwfund@aauw-ca.org. Share this information with any and all who might have an interest in learning about the AAUW Fund, what it does, its history, and so much more.

The next Fund Peer Group will be on Tuesday, September 30th, at 7 pm. Click [HERE](#) to register. The topic will be "Let's Begin."

BRANCH DEVELOPMENT

MEMBERSHIP AND LEADERSHIP [TOP](#)

Sigrid Moranz, Co-President-Elect, Leadership, branch-development@aauw-ca.org

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

Branch Development Peer Group meetings are scheduled for the second Tuesday of the month from September through May at 7 pm.

- September 9, 2025
- October 14, 2025
- November 11, 2025

- December 9, 2025
- January 13, 2026
- February 10, 2026
- March 10, 2026
- April 14, 2026
- May 12, 2026

The next Branch Development Peer Group will be on Tuesday, September 9th, at 7 pm. Click [HERE](#) to register. The topic will be Branch Resources, AAUW California Calendar, and How to roll out “Volunteers First” in your branch.

FIVE-STAR AND STRATEGIC PLAN [TOP](#)

Donna Holmes, Director, Strategic Plan Consultant, strategic-planning@aauw-ca.org

STAR AWARDS HAVE ARRIVED!

On August 28th, National sent out the September issue of *Membership Matters | 2025 Strategic Plan* from AAUW National (used to be from Katrina Sun Breeze), and it contains important news for ALL members:

- updates to the Strategic Plan,
- current rules for the 2025-2026 Five-Star program, and
- which branches achieved Five-Stars for the 2024-25 program year.

Additionally, under each star category, all branches that achieve that star are listed. So, if you are a Five-Star branch, you are on all five lists, but if not, you can see which stars you achieved, allowing you to plan accordingly this year.

An all-member webinar, titled *Fall Member Gathering*, will be held on Thursday, September 18th, from 2 to 3 pm PDT, celebrating outstanding branch work nationwide. Click [HERE](#) to register.

California branches have done amazing things this past year!

NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS [TOP](#)

Gail Swain, Nominations and Election chair, nominating@aauw-ca.org

WHAT'S YOUR PLAN?

In 2026, we will be electing six new directors to our state board - one board secretary, one one-year director, and four two-year directors. It is not too early to plan if you will nominate yourself or if you will encourage someone else to run for one of the positions. We are seeking diverse, qualified, talented, experienced, and reliable members to join the board of directors in 2026.

PUBLIC POLICY [TOP](#)

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

THE FIGHT FOR PUBLIC EDUCATION IS THE FIGHT FOR DEMOCRACY

The Public Policy Team is looking forward to another year of working with you to [advocate for gender equity and social justice](#). As we kick off the new year, we are faced with many new challenges. Although this may feel daunting, we are using this moment to find new ways to work together impactfully. Our commitment to preserving democracy is unwavering, and we are grateful to have you as a partner in this fight.

Because it may feel like you need to fight on all fronts, which can be overwhelming, each month we provide a list of targeted action items focused on a topic area that we care about. This month our action items, and the articles in *Public Policy News*, are dedicated to the fight for public education as central in the fight to preserve our pluralistic democracy. Read more about action items, the history of public education in U.S. democracy, the importance of the School Board Project in the ongoing fight to preserve democracy, and the recent legal wins and losses that will impact equity and access in public education—all in the September 2025 issue of [Public Policy News](#).

And if you're looking for MORE action, **check out our Action Alerts via our [Resistbot](#) and [BlueSky](#) accounts**. The 2025 legislative session is closing in California, so we will be posting opportunities for you to reach out to the Governor's office in support of our 2025 legislative agenda in early-to-mid September. Many of our bills, including our top three bills AB 1098, SB 771 and SB 418, are expected to reach the Governor's desk around September 10, 2025. In early-to-mid September, we will also be sending out content around getting out the vote (GOTV) in this year's special election in California, including providing information about Proposition 50—so stay tuned.

September is also filled with online events held via Zoom, including Saint Mary's College of California New Education for Women's Leadership Institute one-day conference "[Women's Leadership in the Current Political Moment](#)" on **Sept 4th, 9:50 am-5:30 pm**; AAUW LACIC's [September program](#) on Generative AI and its impact on education, health and mental health on **Sept 14th at 2-4 pm**; AAUW Washington Online Branch's [Program on Title IX](#) on **Sept 17th, 5:30-7 pm**; the League of Women Voters' program entitled, "[The Challenges to Voting Rights Then and Now](#)" on **Sept 18th, 1-2:30 pm**; and the Public School Defenders Hub Monitors & Observers Training on "[The Brown Act](#)" on **Sept 25th, 6:30-8:30 pm**.

And because we need it, we wanted to end this dispatch with a solid win for preserving pluralistic democracy. On August 14th, [a federal judge delivered a major legal victory for public education and civil rights](#). In *American Federation of Teachers et al. v. U.S. Department of Education et al.*, the court struck down the Trump–Vance administration's attempt to force schools nationwide to censor lessons, eliminate diversity and inclusion programs, and sign unlawful compliance certifications under threat of losing federal funding and facing criminal penalties.

The next Public Policy Peer Group will be on Friday, October 10th at 1:30 pm. The topic will be Public Policy & our 2025 Projects. The Zoom link has or will be provided to the committee members, send an email to publicpolicy@aauw-ca.org if you would like to attend but are not a member of the Public Policy Group.

Program News

TECH TREK [TOP](#)

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

TECH TREK IS NOT A 'ONE AND DONE' PROGRAM - DON'T LET YOUR INVESTMENT FADE AWAY!

Over 450 volunteers lifted 752 girls at nine camps in 2025, adding to more than 16,000 alums in the past 27 years. And every summer, sponsors like you make it possible for them to be immersed in STEM for a week—sparking confidence, curiosity, and career dreams.

But here's the hard truth: if no one stays in touch once camp ends, much of that spark risks burning out. The return on your investment isn't in one magical week—it's in the long-term growth of these young women.

Besides being a five-year commitment that your branch makes annually when you complete a Tech Trek branch memorandum of understanding (MOU), staying connected with alums provides them, and you, with opportunities for continued encouragement and access to role models. Without it, the talent pipeline you helped build may dry up before it flows into college labs, tech companies, or research centers.

This is where you, as a sponsor, can make all the difference. By staying connected with alums, you're not just supporting their future—you're continuing the conversation that began at camp. Your continued involvement can inspire them long after camp ends, guiding them as they explore new opportunities and persist through challenges.

To help you protect that investment, AAUW California Tech Trek is proud to introduce the Tech Trek Alum Program (TTAP) Microfunding initiative! It offers branches and alum groups up to \$500 in seed funding to launch or expand projects that keep Tech Trek alums connected and engaged. It ensures Tech Trek's impact and investment doesn't end at camp by empowering alum futures as they continue to stay involved, inspired, and supported.

To learn more about the TTAP Microfunding initiative, check out the [Microfunding Guide](#). The application link is within the document. Please read BEFORE applying!

Additionally, AAUW National is offering Community Action Grants up to \$10,000 to branches and state organizations that are designing or implementing hands-on STEM programming specifically for girls in grades K–12 focused on at least one of the following core areas:

- Skill-building in science, technology, engineering, or math
- Confidence-building and STEM identity development
- College and career preparation with a STEM focus
- Connecting girls with women mentors and role models in STEM fields

They are especially interested in collaborations with community organizations at the local or state level, such as schools or others with the same mission of lifting girls and women. Intra-branch and state Tech Trek activities are likely opportunities that we will be discussing further at the Tech Trek committee level. More information is available [HERE](#), and the application can be found [HERE](#).

Protect your investment: keep the conversation alive with the girls you've already lifted!

Remember, your commitment doesn't just help fund the Tech Trek program—it helps shape the futures of young women. Stay in touch with your alums. Support a girl. Empower a generation.

The Tech Trek Peer Group will be on the 3rd Thursday each month (9/18, 10/16, 11/13, 12/18, 1/15, 2/19, 3/19, 4/16, 5/14, 6/18), at 6:30 pm. The topic will be Tech Trek activities relevant to branch coordinators. The Zoom link has or will be provided to the committee members, send an email to techtrek@aauw-ca.org if you would like to attend but are not a member of the Tech Trek Group.

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AAUW California

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