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March 2026

Welcome to the *California Compass*, the monthly roadmap sent to every member from your state AAUW organization!



Charmen's Compass Callouts: A message from Charmen Goehring, AAUW California President

Now that the 2026 Winter Olympics are over, it seems appropriate to boast a bit about the amazing women on Team USA. They earned six gold medals, two more than the men, and 17 medals total to the men's 12. Our women have outmedaled the men at the last three consecutive Winter Olympics and at the last four consecutive Summer Olympics. Last summer, the women earned a whopping 26 gold medals, twice as many as the men! Christine Brennan, of USA Today, attributes this to Title IX and the opportunities for women in sports that were brought forth as a result of the legislation in 1972. AAUW can be proud to be a long time supporter of Title IX, and the resulting success of women in the sporting arenas. And, I don't know about you, but I could not help but feel proud when watching the pure skill and joy of figure skater Alysa Liu!

Our third session of our statewide book study with *The Four Pivots: Reimagining Justice, Reimagining Ourselves* by Dr. Shawn Ginwright will be held on Zoom on

Wednesday, March 18th, at 7 pm. Although helpful, you do not have to have read the book. We will be talking about *Pivot 3: From Problem to Possibility*. You can sign up [HERE](#) and join our conversation.

Please consider running to serve on our State Leadership Team! We still need a candidate for a Secretary (a two-year term). This is a wonderful way to help guide our branches and provide meaningful resources for all. Most meetings are via Zoom and travel expenses are covered for the in-person retreat in June. I have never regretted serving on a state board and have met some of my closest AAUW friends that way! More information and the application can be found [HERE](#). The deadline to apply is March 14th.

Lastly, please mark Saturday, April 18th on your calendars for our 7th Virtual Annual Event! With the theme, *A Sustainable Future*, we will focus on highlighting successful ways for branches to continue growing into the future as well as, celebrating the many achievements we saw this past year. We will host a panel discussion between AAUW's Katrina Sun Breese, Senior Director of Institutional Advancement, and four branches from around the nation who have seen remarkable growth and retention over the past few years. We will also hear from our Branch Activity of the Year (BAY) winners, meet our State Named Gift Awardee, and much more! And at the end, if you would like more information about the topics presented during the event, there will be break out rooms you can join! We are encouraging watch parties! Host a few members in your home to watch the event, snap a picture of yourselves, and send it in. We will highlight your photo during the event! We look forward to seeing many of you on **April 18th!**



National Need: News from AAUW National

1. AAUW is an official supporter of the nationwide **No Kings Day** events. Gather your friends and fellow members for the upcoming event in your community on Saturday, March 28th. You can find a toolkit with messaging and planning tools [HERE](#) to help you plan a successful showing. Feel free to share this information with friends and family.
 2. AAUW announced its schedule of virtual Economic Empowerment webinars for 2026. Find one [HERE](#) and help empower your economic future!
 3. Our CEO, Gloria Blackwell, and AAUW were featured in an interesting article about women in higher education in a recent *New Republic* article. Read it [HERE](#).
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On the Horizon: Highlights from the State Committees

Tech Trek

Tech Trek California is a 100% volunteer-operated, branch-sponsored program of AAUW California, which means we can't do it without the help of \$\$ or time from our members.

Camps are happy to schedule visitors so they can get as excited about Tech Trek as we are! Check out the camp schedule [HERE](#) and click a camp name to learn more.

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

Public Policy

The City Council Action and Monitoring Project, known as [CCAMP](#), is a special project recently launched by AAUW California Public Policy. It provides action-based resources to support local advocacy and relationship-building with city councils and boards of supervisors. Through CCAMP, we want to encourage sustained collaboration between AAUW members/branches and local governments on issues that help us advance our public policy priorities locally, in ways that are accessible, [empowering, and more immediate](#). This year, we are focusing on anti-discrimination.

Join in on this project now! Start by learning more about the project (watch the [launch webinar recording](#) and read through [the toolkit](#)), then build a local team. Email us at publicpolicy@aauw-ca.org with “CCAMP” in the subject line if you have any questions. We’re happy to help you get started!

Please share the latest issue of [Public Policy News](#) with your branches, your friends and your network.

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

Nominations and Elections

The deadline for submitting an application for any State Board position is March 14th. Any additional candidates are welcome. At this time the only position with no candidates is the Board Secretary (a two-year position). Get all the details [HERE](#). The AAUW California voting period will begin on April 18, 2026 and will close on May 08, 2026.

“Volunteering is an act of heroism on a grand scale. And it matters profoundly. It does more than help people beat the odds; it changes the odds.” – William J. Clinton

Gail Swain, Nominations and Elections Chair, nominating@aauw-ca.org

Strategic Planning

This is the time of year branches are looking for officers. Some roles are bigger than others and all are rewarding, a great way to make friends, learn a new skill or make a difference. It seems that about 15% of any given branch do all the tasks and that is fine if 100% are happy. However, more and more we hear from branches where the same people have rotated the positions for years and are burned out. Saying yes won’t kill you, honest. Are you willing to take reservations for an event, woman the welcome table at a program, write an article for a newsletter, help membership follow-up with members who have not renewed by their due date, or maybe take notes for a board meeting? Oftentimes a small group can handle producing one meeting a year, for example a book group could arrange for an author to speak. Slide into doing and you may discover you can do more than you imagined!

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

Branch Development

What can you do to ensure the sustainability of your branch? Volunteer for a task or an event. Step up to a leadership role. If we each do a little bit to ensure the future of the branch, we also ensure the future of the programs you love most like Tech Trek and scholarships. Give back to an organization you value.

Sigrid Moranz and Rebecca Gomez, Directors, Branch Development Co-chairs, branch-development@aauw-ca.org

AAUW Fund

Ladies and Gentlemen. WE DID IT! Thanks for all your hard work.

\$523,453.80 and we reached our goal to continue our support of education and equity for women and girls. The individual donations got us there. It doesn't matter if they are big or small – they accumulate to make a success. Keep them coming – one year ends and another begins.

Deanna Arthur, Director, AAUW Fund Chair, aaufund@aauw-ca.org



Book Bearings: Mission-related book recommendations from the bookshelves of the state leadership team and committee members.

***Mindfulness* by Ellen J. Langer (2014).**

Recommended by Julika Barrett, AAUW California Office Manager & Communications Committee Member

- Julika says the book points out how we tend to live and interact with others from a place of “mindlessness” —going through life on autopilot and relying on habits and assumptions we rarely question. In conversations about diversity, equity, and inclusion, we perceive others by role, background, age, or culture and then assume we know who they are or how they’ll act. We stop seeing individuals. Langer invites us to take a more open lens, where perceived group identity provides context but doesn’t define the whole person.
- Julika found that “simple shifts—like asking genuine questions, listening for what’s new, or challenging our first impressions—can help us move beyond 'us versus them' thinking toward more inclusive, human-centered interactions.”

***Daring Greatly: How the Courage to Be Vulnerable Transforms the Way We Live, Love, Parent, and Lead* by Brené Brown (2015)**

Recommended by Gail Swain, AAUW California Nominations and Elections Chair

- Gail says this is “one of my favorite books about leadership, the author does not hold back and is not afraid to say what needs to be said. The book is full of

very helpful and good ideas to help a leader help someone on their team.”

- Gail notes, “one of my favorite concepts [from the book] is 'Sitting on the same side of the table.' It is so simple and effective. She also talks about 'stretch-mark friends.' These are friends we have been with through thick and thin. ... This kind of friend helps you weather the mean and nasty people that put you down, complain, and don't like you.”



Wayfinder Links: Helpful links to the AAUW California or AAUW National websites

The National Conference for College Women Student Leaders (NCCWSL) unites college women and gender non-conforming students from across the nation for a transformative experience in leadership development, networking, and inspiration.

- **May 27-30, 2026**, at the University of Maryland College Park.
- Registration deadline is **May 18th** for those needing housing; for commuters, the registration deadline is **May 28th**.

Click [HERE](#) for more information



Monthly Trivia Question:

Which member became the first woman elected to the US House of Representatives?

Click [HERE](#) for contest rules and to enter your response.

Answer to last month's question ('What year was the Legal Advocacy Fund created to support plaintiffs in lawsuits related to sex discrimination in higher education and the workplace?'): 1981. Congratulations to the contest winner: Winifred Creamer.

Questions or Comments?

We would love to hear from you! You can reach the *California Compass* editors at cc@aauw-ca.org.

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AAUW's mission: To advance gender equity for women and girls through research, education, and advocacy.

AAUW.org

AAUW California's mission: AAUW California facilitates California branches in meeting the vision and mission of AAUW by providing programs, education and resources.

www.aauw-ca.org



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