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February 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

I don't know about each of you, but this has been a heavy few weeks for me. Being confronted with horrific videos in Minneapolis, seeing the fear in my refugee students' families, and reading about climate destruction around the globe - it is a lot. This is a really good time (being February, the month of love, and all!) to check in with those around you. Be a listening ear if they need one. Share your burdens too. We have a great need for transformative relationships right now, the type that Dr. Shawn Ginwright describes in Pivot 2 (from his book, *The Four Pivots: Reimagining Justice, Reimagining Ourselves*).

Speaking of Dr. Ginwright, a small but engaged group of members met last month to discuss Pivot 2: "From Transactional to Transformative". Our next meeting will be on March 18th at 7 pm, and we will learn more about Pivot 3: "From Problem to Possibility" and how it works in our lives and our branches. All are welcome to join us

- you did not have to attend the first two sessions. You can register [HERE](#).

Another way to lean into transformative relationships and strengthen your branch at the same time was modeled last month by AAUW Sacramento and State Public Policy Committee member, Erica Dias. I was fortunate to attend a watch party she hosted to view the documentary, *Space, Hope and Charity*, about the inspirational journey of Astrophysicist Dr. Charity Woodrum. Erica invited several non-AAUW friends to join us, provided light snacks, explained why she is a member of AAUW, and encouraged them to learn more. She even offered a 50-50 raffle, with the proceeds going to AAUW's Greatest Needs Fund! After viewing the documentary, we had a thoughtful discussion about the film, the challenges women face, and related topics. It was so nice to be in a small group of women sharing like that. We could all do something similar in our branches. Invite a small group of members (throw in a couple of non-members also!) to our homes, or to meet for coffee outside a regular AAUW branch event. Deepen those connections and see how it might transform your branch!

February is Black History Month and a wonderful time to show some love to our Black sisters and community. Search Yelp for Black-owned restaurants and businesses, visit a historically Black theater or concert venue, read a Black newspaper, or check out a Black church. You can also try this Black History Month Challenge. Step out of your comfort zone and discover wonderful new things about your local Black community!

#BECAUSEOFHEMWECAN

BHM CHALLENGE

- AFFIRM A BLACK CHILD
- DONATE TO AN HBCU OF YOUR CHOICE
- FIND A PERSON IN BLACK HISTORY THAT YOU SHARE A BIRTHDAY WITH
- SHARE A PHOTO OF AN ANCESTOR
- RESEARCH BAYARD RUSTIN
- WATCH THE "THEY'VE GOTTA HAVE US" DOCUMENTARY
- TAKE A VIRTUAL TOUR OF THE NMAAHC
- BUY & READ A BOOK BY A BLACK AUTHOR
- RESEARCH BARBARA JORDAN
- FIND AN EVERY DAY ITEM CREATED BY A BLACK INVENTOR
- INTERVIEW AN ELDER
- RECREATE AN ICONIC BLACK PHOTO
- RESEARCH FLEET WALKER
- SUPPORT A BLACK BUSINESS
- DOWNLOAD 3 BLACK-OWNED APPS
- COOK A FAMILY RECIPE
- RESEARCH ELLA BAKER
- CALL YOUR STATE REPRESENTATIVE & TELL THEM TO AUTHORIZE THE VOTING RIGHTS ACT
- HELP SOMEONE REGISTER TO VOTE
- RESEARCH BROCK PETERS
- LEARN ABOUT HISTORIC BLACK LANDMARKS IN YOUR CITY
- DONATE TO A BLACK CHARITY/FOOD BANK
- RESEARCH PEG LEG BATES RESORT
- LEARN THE FULL VERSION OF LIFT EV'RY VOICE AND SING
- DONATE SUPPLIES TO A BLACK TEACHER
- OPEN UP AN ACCOUNT WITH A BLACK OWNED BANK
- RESEARCH IDA B. WELLS
- PLAN A VIRTUAL CELEBRATION WITH YOUR FAMILY ON THE 28TH

BECAUSE OF THEM WE CAN

28 DAYS, 28 WAYS TO CELEBRATE



National Needle: News from AAUW National

1. Join members from across the nation for the next *All-Member Gathering* on Wednesday, February 18th at 4:30 pm EST/1:30 pm PST. You can register [HERE](#).
2. Our Legal Advocacy Fund took on three cases in the past year: Janus Title IX Complaint against Georgetown University, Kohli v. Medical University of South Carolina et al., and Madison Roger v. California State University Board of Trustees et al. (Cal Poly). In the past, plaintiffs have expressed gratitude to AAUW and our members for financial and emotional support during their cases. You can read more about these current cases [HERE](#).



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 \$\$ and time from members.

Check out the volunteer roles in the Tech Trek Program [HERE](#). There are roles for alums, branch members, and others to help on behalf of Tech Trek, either at camps or locally with alums.

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

Public Policy

Take Action! Standing in Solidarity with Minnesota: AAUW California Public Policy has created petition language regarding ICE activities in Minnesota and throughout the country. You can send this statement to your Senators via Resistbot by clicking [HERE](#).

City Council Action & Monitoring Project (CCAMP) - New Special Project is Launching!: CCAMP is a special project being launched by AAUW California Public Policy to provide action-based resources that support local advocacy and relationship-building with city councils and county boards of supervisors. Please see this [overview document](#) for additional information and join us on Friday, February 27th, at 1:30 pm PT for our launch webinar, where we will answer all of your questions and provide you with a toolkit filled with resources. In the interim, you can also email us your questions at publicpolicy@aauw-ca.org. Register for the launch webinar [HERE](#).

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

Nominations are due by March 14th for six positions on the state board. Details can be found [HERE](#).

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

Strategic Planning

Both AAUW National (AAUW) and AAUW California (AAUW-CA) offer free webinars and videos. Through AAUW, some things you can access include a [salary negotiation class](#) or an exploration of key topics via [Explore the Issues](#).

For AAUW California, visit aauw-ca.org and choose what interests you — several recent webinars are featured on the homepage. To go deeper, use the links at the top of the page (AAUW California Business, Branch Tools, AAUW Fund, Projects/Programs, Calendar). These contain internal resources. The links below focus primarily on an external non-member audience.

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

Branch Development

Join the fun! Be a part of AAUW-CA Branch Development Action and Activity! There is a place for everyone.

Have you thought about joining an AAUW California Committee? The Branch

Development Committee needs members to join our team. Our portfolio of programs includes: Membership; Leadership Development; Leader-on-Loan; Branch Activity of the Year (BAY); College/University Partnerships; and Branch Support. For Committee descriptions and job requirements, click [HERE](#). The 2026 - 2027 application forms will be out in April. Watch for the announcement. **Sigrid Moranz and Rebecca Gomez**, Directors, Branch Development Co-chairs, branch-development@aauw-ca.org

Communications

Email scams targeting AAUW members have been making the rounds, typically involving the purchase of gift cards. Truly, the likelihood of an unexpected email request to purchase a bunch of gift cards being legitimate is effectively none. Look closely at the actual email address (not just the name) to see if it is the sender's real email address. Sadly, it is very easy to "impersonate" someone by changing the name on an email address. It may be helpful to review the email I sent in November ([HERE](#)) with guidelines for spotting scam emails.

Michelle Baer, Director, Communications Chair, communications@aauw-ca.org



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

***The Warmth of Other Suns: The Epic Story of America's Great Migration* by Isabel Wilkerson (2010).**

Recommended by Donna Holmes, AAUW California Director & Strategic Planning Consultant

- Donna recommends this book because, "In this beautifully written masterwork, Pulitzer Prize-winning author Isabel Wilkerson presents a definitive and dramatic account of one of the great untold stories of American history: the Great Migration of six million Black citizens who fled the South for the North and West in search of a better life, from World War I to 1970. She relates oral histories she collected. It is riveting and should be part of the history curriculum."

Legacy: A Black Physician Reckons with Racism in Medicine by Uche' Blackstock, MD (2024).

Recommended by Charmen Goehring, AAUW California President.

- Charmen explains this is “The story of a Black physician, her career in medicine and the deep inequities that still exist in our healthcare system. My book group is reading this book and it is a sad yet interesting commentary on some of our esteemed medical institutions and also a call to advocate for yourself within the system.”



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

The Board to Board (B2B) is a monthly e-newsletter from the state board to branch boards and leaders, packed with timely updates to keep branches informed. Anyone is welcome to check it out. There are two easy ways to access it:

1. [Visit our website](#) — the most current B2B is posted on the front page within a couple of days of its distribution. (Older ones can be found on the Communications page [HERE](#).)
2. Subscribe by email — Anyone may receive the B2B directly by emailing webteam@aauw-ca.org and requesting to be added as a *B2B Subscriber (Non-Branch Officer)*.



Monthly Trivia Question:

What year was the Legal Advocacy Fund created to support plaintiffs in lawsuits related to sex discrimination in higher education and the workplace?

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

Answer to last month's question ('AAUW members have supported the legalization of abortion and the ERA since what year?'): 1971. Congratulations to the contest winner: Diane Balin.

Questions or Comments?

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

California Compass production acknowledgments:

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Editing Team: Claudia Chandler, Shelly Johnson, Danica Ward

Communications Chair: Michelle Baer



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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