

Branches and Twigs

AAUW Redlands Branch
May 2025

www.AAUWRedlands.org
Issue 10, 11 Issues Annually



The Redlands Branch of AAUW is dedicated to advancing equity for women and girls through education, empowerment, and advocacy.

President's Corner: Heather Abushanab



One of the benefits of being on the branch board, and even more so as the branch president, is getting a very "big picture" view of the branch. I've seen how our membership has rebounded after Covid and now has exploded well beyond any numbers we have had in the past. I've gotten to hear ideas about various directions for our branch from thoughtful board and branch members. I get reports from committees and interest groups even when I can't attend,

and I have learned a lot about how things operate in our branch.

Our membership is now the largest it has ever been. Some of that growth came from sad circumstances with the closing of the Hemet branch and the slow decline of the Riverside branch. Some of it has come from an unexpected source: our FilmFest. Over the last two years, many women who had never heard of AAUW before were invited to FilmFest by friends or even stumbled upon it while looking for an evening activity. There they enjoyed a welcomed night out but were also introduced to the mission of AAUW and made aware of the amazing branch we have here in Redlands.

Many of the women we have gained through this avenue are younger than our traditional, recently retired, new member demographic. These younger women have
~continued on page 3

May Branch Meeting:

"Serving Immigrants and Refugees in our Midst" Anne Thorward, President of Newcomers Access Center (NAC)



Anne grew up in Los Angeles. Her first career was teaching elementary school in LA and for two years in Europe. Upon returning to the US, she worked in real estate management followed by a long career as a financial advisor. Then a serendipitous encounter changed the course of her life.

When a neighbor mentioned that a ninth-grade Syrian refugee student needed tutoring, Thorward answered the call. Through this connection, she met the student's family, other refugees, volunteers, neighbors, faith groups, politicians and more.

Having done social justice work all her life, in 2017, a friend suggested that she start an ACCESS organization, thus Newcomers Access Center was born. NAC serves immigrant and refugee families throughout Southern California.

In addition to sharing stories of clients served by Newcomers Access Center, Thorward will provide insights about NAC and offer ways to support our vulnerable neighbors. For more information about NAC, a local nonprofit, visit newcomersaccesscenter.org

~Margaret Wilcox, coordinator

May Branch Meeting

When

Tuesday, May 6, 2025
Social 5:15 p.m.
Dinner 6:00 p.m.
Program 6:45 p.m.

Where

University of Redlands
CASA LOMA Room

Menu Romaine Lettuce
Salad**, Avocado Ranch
Dressing*, Cilantro Lime
Brown Rice**, Charo Beans**,
Braised Chicken, Braised
Beef, Roasted Portobello
Mushrooms**, Guacamole**,
Salsa Verde**, Pico De
Gallo**, Delce De Leche
Brownies*
(*Vegetarian, **Vegan)
Beverages.

** Please advise if you are a
vegetarian and are requesting
the *Roasted Portobello
Mushrooms* option

Cost

Members and guests: \$35

Registration

Please email
AAUWrsvp@AAUWRedlands.org
or call 909-362-4955 by
Monday, April 21, 2025, to
make a dinner reservation.
After April 21st, dinner
reservations will be made on a
space-available basis.

**After registering, you will
receive a confirmation via
email.**

Reminder

A reservation made is a
reservation paid.

Transportation

Call Susan Miller or Patricia
Stubbs

**Members and guests are
invited to attend the speaker
portion of the meeting free
of charge. Chairs will be
available.**

Branch Meetings 2024-2025

Saturday, June 7
*RSVP deadline 5/24/2025

DINNER RESERVATION for MAY 6 meeting: After April 21, reservations are made on a space-available basis by calling 909-362-4955 or emailing AAUWrsvp@AAUWRedlands.org					AAUW Redlands May 2025	
Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3
4 6pm California Cuisine 1	5	6 8:45am Fundraising <div> 5:15pm Branch Mtg. </div>	7 <u>*1pm Bridge</u> **5-7pm Shop Suey fundraiser	8	9	10
11	12 <u>*1pm Sew What!</u> **6:30pm Board Mtg	13	14 *9am CHAT	15 <u>*10am Bridge</u> **7pm DEI/ Racial Justice	16	17
18 5:30pm California Cuisine 2	19	20 8:45am Fundraising	21 12pm I Am, Therefore I Think	22 6pm Book Club	23	24 8:30am Hiking <div> 5/24 Reservation Deadline for June 7 branch mtg. </div>
25	26 <u>*1pm Bridge</u> **1pm Sew What!	27 7pm Public Policy	28 1pm Bunco	29	30	
~Heather Abushanab AAUW Redlands Board Meeting 5/12:6:30 pm Redlands United Church of Christ, 168 Bellevue Ave, Redlands and remotely on teams. ~Heather Abushanab Bridge Groups 4th Monday @ 1pm, 1st Wednesday @ 1pm ~Contact Susan Satzger 3rd Thursday @ 10 am Beginners ~Contact Tricia Stubbs Book Club (page 4) 5/22 6pm Annual Book Club Selection meeting ~Valarie Boone ~Marianne Baldwin Bunco 5/28 1pm ~Patty Ahearn ~Lori Powell California Cuisine and Conversation I 5/4 6pm ~Kathy Toister California Cuisine and Conversation 2 5/18 5:30pm ~Patty Ahearn CHAT meeting 5/14 9am Contemporary Club AK Smiley PL ~Katherine Gifford 909-798-7565, ext 4138 literacy@akspl.org Diversity, Equity & Inclusion / Racial Justice 5/15 6pm DEI/Racial Justice Location will be sent by email ~Ellen Gruenbaum ~Erica Wilson ~Donita Remington			<div> Save the Dates June Branch Meeting Saturday June 7, 2025 Reservation deadline Saturday May 24 Redlands Bowl Ushering Friday June 20 </div> Fundraising Committee 5/6, 5/20 (every other Tuesday) 8:30am on Teams ~Heather Abushanab Hiking Our Hills & Mountains 5/24 8:30am Contact Donita to be added to email list ~Donita Remington I Am, Therefore I Think 5/21 "The Incredible Impact of Shopping Local" facilitator: Toni Momberger. Meets 12 pm at Trinity Episcopal Church Lounge (Rooms 6-8) 419 South 4th Street, Redlands ~Barbara Simmons ~Margee Fuller Public Policy 5/27 7pm ~Cassie MacDuff AAUW Redlands STEM Initiatives Tech Trek ~Donita Remington Sew What! 5/12 & 5/26 1pm ~Lisa McCarty Shop Suey Boutique fundraiser (page 9) 5/7 5-7pm 120 Orange St, Redlands ~Amy Bisek ~Kathryn Brown			

President's Corner, Heather Abushanab ~continued from page 1

less time available to them because they are still juggling work, family, and other responsibilities. They join AAUW for the same reasons we all joined: (1) the mission of advancing equity for women and girls through education, empowerment and advocacy, and (2) the fellowship of a diverse group of women who are committed to the mission. Their schedules make it difficult for them to participate in many of our interest groups. They attend branch meetings when they can and mingle with other members, but such a large event makes getting to know people challenging.

This month, we held our first informal Meet-Up event targeted at this younger group of women. Tansu Philip, the owner of Viva La Boba on Orange Street, agreed to open her shop an hour early on a Saturday so that we could have a place to gather informally and chat with each other. Roughly a dozen women dropped in to try out Tansu's Boba (or coffee for some!) and enjoyed an hour of conversation and fellowship. Many people who could not attend expressed hope that there will be more of these scheduled in the future. Amy, Kathryn, and I will be looking for opportunities over the next few months to schedule a few more and exploring with those interested how we might form a new interest group to meet the needs of this younger demographic. It is never our intention to exclude anyone from these events, so if you are feeling younger on the day of one of these events, please come and Meet Up! As plans develop, more information will be provided in upcoming newsletters.

~Heather Abushanab, President, AAUW Redlands

YOUR MEMBERSHIP MATTERS



If you joined AAUW prior to March 2022, Please Renew by June 30!

If you joined AAUW prior to March 2022, your annual membership renewal dues are due by June 30, 2025. Members who joined March 2022 or later will have a renewal deadline 12 months from when they joined. Your renewal deadline is listed by your name in this year's little purple membership yearbook, as well as in our Redlands branch online directory.

Attached to the email in which you received this newsletter, you'll find detailed membership renewal instructions. Here is a summary of renewal options:

Renew online on the [AAUW National website](#) with a credit card (no fee).

Renew online on our [Redlands branch website](#) under the Payment tab via Square using a credit card (\$4 processing fee).

Renew in your bank app via Zelle (no fee). Open your bank app. Go to Zelle.

Recipient for payment to AAUW Redlands is treasurer@aauwredlands.org.

Please note what the payment is for in the message line within Zelle.

Renew at an upcoming branch meeting with cash, check, Zelle (no fee), or credit card (\$4 processing fee).

Renew by check sent to AAUW Redlands branch, P. O. Box 7678, Redlands, CA 92375-0678

- This year, our membership dues are \$125 (\$74 National, \$20 California, \$31 Redlands Branch).
- You will receive a renewal reminder email from AAUW National. This is NOT spam. Feel free to follow the instructions in that email or follow the instructions in the attachment to this newsletter email.
- If you are a student, please contact Marion Golson or Kay Dobbartin to assist you with renewing your discounted membership.
- If you are a Paid Lifetime Member or would like to purchase Paid Lifetime Membership, please contact Marion or Kay to assist you with renewing your California and Redlands branch dues.
- \$105 of your 2025/26 membership dues are tax deductible.

If you have questions, please direct them to: Marion Golson or Kay Dobbartin

Please update any changes/corrections to your contact information for the 2025-2026 yearbook by emailing corrected information to membership@aauwredlands.org. 2024-25 yearbook updates are attached.

From the Hospitality Committee

Congratulations to the following members who will receive certificates at the May branch meeting for years of continuous membership in AAUW.



We have added two "years of membership" pins in order to celebrate 45 and 35 years of membership.

Two of our members joined more than 45 years ago and four of our members joined more than 35 years ago.

Receiving 45 year pins:

Betty Romano 48 years~joined 1977-78
Louise Schuman 48 years~joined 1977-78

Receiving 35 year pins:

Carol Buchanan 39 years~joined 1986-87
Evelyn O'Prey 39 years~joined 1986-87
Susan Kean 38 years~joined 1987-88
Amber Costa 37 years~joined 1988-89



35 years~joined 1990-91

Pam Ong

30 years~joined 1995-96

Susan Bentley
Kimberly Cousins
Cathy Curtis Odegaard
Susan Satzer
Erica Wilson

20 years~joined 2005-06

Del Barrett
Jane Henry
Linda Rowland

15 years~joined 2010-11

Gloria Harrison
Ann Leonard
Toni Momberger

10 years~joined 2015-16

Susan Bangasser
Mary Lou Guerrero
Joyce Heitmeier
Martha Lehman
Charlotte Lucey
Linda Richards
Diane Shimota
Barbara Simmons
Pat Zappia

Hospitality Birthday Club

Our best wishes this month to:

Carol Ahuja	Theresa Lantz
Susan Bangasser	Alice Mozley
Antoinette Brenion	Carolann O'Donnell
Kathryn Brown	Evelyn O'Prey
Josie Burns	Joan Roberts
Maria Carrillo Colato	Dawn Romo
Stephanie Centeno	Jeanne Shevlin
Judy Dods	Samantha Trad
Gabrielle Duff	Hester Turpin
Margee Fuller	Jane Weldon
Kelsey Gormley	Mara Winick
Thelma Korpman	Pat Zappia



Book Club Yearly Book Selection Meeting

Our Book Club will host the annual Book Selection meeting on Thursday, May 22nd at 6:00 p.m. This replaces the regular book club discussion sessions in May. The purpose of this meeting is for members to give a brief overview of books they recommend for book club next year. Members can nominate up to two books that they have read previously to ensure books have content that lends to a group discussion. A list of all recommendations will be sent out for voting in June. The final 2025-26 book



selections will be announced shortly after. If you are unable to attend this meeting, please provide your book recommendation and a brief write up of why you are recommending this book to valarieboone@aauwredlands.org prior to the May 22nd meeting.

Members will be asked to RSVP as we will have pizza, salad and dessert for a \$15 contribution. The address will be included with the book club email announcement.

~Marianne Baldwin and Valarie Boone

Welcome New Member

Ann Kawell

Western Illinois, BA
Azusa Pacific, MA

Ann grew up in Burlington, Iowa, and moved to California after college graduation. She taught school for five years in San Bernardino before marrying and moving to Crestline. After 25 years as a 2nd grade teacher in Crestline, Ann moved to Yucaipa six years ago.

AAUW Community Engagement



Back-to-School Project

It's that time of year again to remind you that we will once again be collecting donations at our June branch meeting for our Back-to-School project that provides backpacks and school supplies for children in need in the RUSD. This has been a very successful project over the past decade thanks to the generosity of our members and I hope you will open your wallets once more. We accept cash, check, credit card and Zelle. Thank you for your past support and consideration of this project again this year.

~Dawn Romo, Project Chair

AAUW Community Engagement



Redlands Bowl Ushering on June 20th

As in the past, our AAUW members, significant others, and children over the age of 12 are invited to come help and usher at the Redlands Bowl Performance on Friday, June 20th. The evening's performance will be *Celebrating the Legacy of Whitney Houston and other Great Pop Divas* featuring Nicole Henry.

We will first meet at 7:00 at the Bowl Heritage House on Eureka next to the Bowl to receive our instructions. We will collect the free-will offerings at intermission.

I am very excited about this particular evening that is celebrating outstanding women artists.

Please contact me if you have any questions or email me if wish to be added to our list of volunteers.

~Barbara Simmons

Meet Up with AAUW at Viva La Boba!



We held our first informal Meet Up event on Saturday, April 5th at Viva La Boba on Orange Street in Redlands. We got lots of feedback that regular opportunities to gather are of interest to many of our working members who cannot attend most of our other interest groups. Please mark your calendars to Meet Up at Viva La Boba Saturday, May 17th, and Saturday, June 21st at 10 a.m.! These events are open to all AAUW members, though we are especially targeting our under-retirement age members. If you wander into Viva La Boba on another occasion, be sure to thank the owner, Tansu Philip, for opening her shop early for us!



AAUW National election:

April 14 to May 13

Members will receive emails from

vote@simplyvoting.com with their unique Elector ID and Password to vote*. **AAUW members are asked to vote on amendments to the Public Policy Priorities and national bylaws, in addition to electing members to the AAUW Board of Directors.**

AAUW California election: April 26 to May 16

Members will receive an email message containing a personal invitation to vote*. There will be a link to click that will take them to their ballot. No password or code needs to be entered. **AAUW CA members are asked to vote on AAUW California dues increase and the proposed 2025-2027 Public Policy Priorities, in addition to electing members to the AAUW California Board of Directors.**

*Members who do not have an email address on file will receive information and a ballot via postal mail.

National Membership Dues Update

The AAUW National Board approved a modest dues adjustment — \$2 per year over the next two years.

Starting April 1, 2025, individual National member dues will be \$74, AAUW CA dues \$20, AAUW Redlands branch \$31.

On April 1, 2026, National dues will change to \$76.

You are Invited to the AAUW California 2025 Annual Event: April 26th



- Saturday, April 26th
- Zoom, 9 am - 2:30 pm
- Envision how we can pivot to sustain AAUW

For more information
click [HERE](#)

To register now, click [HERE](#).

The AAUW organization is comprised of three distinct but closely aligned powerhouses: AAUW National, AAUW CA (California) and over 600 local AAUW branches across the nation, over 100 of which are here in California. Our Redlands branch receives a great deal of support from both AAUW National and AAUW CA.

AAUW National manages grants and fellowships from the AAUW Fund; operates the evolving National Conference for College Women Student Leaders program (NCCWSL – soon to be renamed); and conducts regularly scheduled Start Smart, Work Smart and Money Smart educational webinars for our members. You can find out more about these webinars and sign up to participate [HERE](#). There are seven more of these webinars scheduled from now until the end of June. If you have trouble signing up at this link, feel free to contact Amy Bisek at AmyBisek@AAUWRedlands.org and she can walk you through the process.



AAUW CA provides leadership support for Lobby Days and our Public Policy platform, myriad educational and sharing webinars that can be found [HERE](#), plus regular California Connection communications, and branch support. This graphic describes the priorities of our AAUW CA leadership team.

In support of our AAUW CA alliance, all Redlands branch members are invited to join AAUW CA leadership on Saturday, April 26th, 9 a.m. - 2:30 p.m., for the AAUW California 2025 Annual Event on Zoom, entitled *Pivoting 4 Our Future*. Building off the concepts in [The Four Pivots: Reimagining Justice, Reimagining](#)

[Ourselves](#) by Dr. Shawn Ginwright, CA leadership will explore how the pivots tie into the *Volunteers First* program that the AAUW CA Branch Development committee created.

This will be a wonderful opportunity to envision together how our broader California organization can pivot to sustain our vital organization. Hundreds of members will gather across the state to celebrate our accomplishments, honor our members and branches, and learn how we all can continue the success of AAUW California and our branches into the future.

This webinar includes two exciting speakers: AAUW Board Chair, Cherie Sorokin, with an AAUW update, and strategist, Deepa Iyer, who will speak to us about the importance of our strengths, as well as connection and collaboration for our organization's viability.

The webinar will offer four breakout rooms for attendees to choose from based on the Four Pivots: *From Lens to Mirror*, *From Transactional to Transformative*, *From Problem to Possibility*, and *From Hustle to Flow*. Lots of connections, inspiration, and joy will be found!

For more information, including the agenda, a description of the breakout rooms, and links to speaker bios, click [HERE](#). To register to participate, click [HERE](#).

It's sure to be an informative and interesting online event!

Tech Trek

This is an exciting time for Tech Trek! The Redlands Branch Tech Trek team has just finished conducting interviews with the 12 girls who submitted applications from our four assigned middle schools: Nicolet Middle School in Banning, San Geronio Middle School in Beaumont, Park View Middle School in Yucaipa and Clement Middle School in Redlands.

We also had the opportunity to present the girls who attended last summer's Tech Trek camps with their certificates. Last year 13 girls from the four schools completed Tech Trek Camp and earned a total of 20 certificates! Seven girls attended Residential Camp at San Diego and Whittier and six girls attended Virtual Tech Trek Camp. All 13 girls are now AAUW Tech Trek Alumni and Tech Trek Ambassadors!

Tech Trek is a one-week summer camp for middle school girls focusing on STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics). Campers either attend virtually online or attend in person on a university campus. They live in the dorms, eat in the cafeteria, attend labs and classes, and learn what it might be like to be a college student.

To be considered for a sponsorship to Tech Trek, students must first be nominated by their 7th grade math, science, or technology teachers.



Several girls said that their experience at camp was “*amazing*”! They had the opportunity to meet new people and were excited to be part of something that “*motivates young women to do something in areas that are male dominated*”. They were exposed to “*a lot of new interesting things and able to find something that really interests you*”. The girls were equally enthusiastic about both Residential Camp and Virtual Camp.

This year acceptance letters will be going out to congratulate four girls who were selected to attend the University of San Diego Residential Camp, four girls who were selected to attend Whittier College Residential Camp and four girls who have been selected to attend Virtual Tech Trek Camp and named as alternates for Residential camp if any of our selected girls are unable to attend. It was delightful to meet the girls, learn about their interests and hear their enthusiasm for science, technology, engineering and math. Your support of Tech Trek makes a difference. Thank you, Tech Trek Team, for your dedication, hard work, collaboration and energy! It is indeed an exciting time for Tech Trek!

~Donita Remington, Tech Trek Chair



Mother's Day

as a national holiday in the United States has roots in 19th century and the efforts of Anna Jarvis, who campaigned for a day to honor others after her own mother's death. Celebrations of motherhood can be traced back to ancient civilizations, with festivals honoring mother goddesses like Cybele and Rhea. The Christian tradition of "Mothering Sunday" also existed, a day when people returned to their mother church and honored their mothers.

In the 1870s, suffragette Julia Ward Howe wrote the "Mother's Day Proclamation," calling for mothers to unite for world peace. Another precursor was Ann Reeves Jarvis, who organized "Mother's Day Work Clubs" to improve public health and sanitation. In 1908, Anna Jarvis organized a small gathering in Grafton, West Virginia, marking the first widely recognized Mother's Day celebration. Anna Jarvis' relentless efforts eventually led to the official proclamation of Mother's Day as a national holiday in 1914 by President Woodrow Wilson.

HAPPY
Mother's Day

*to all AAUW
Redlands Women*

*Our Mother -
Daughter Members*



Rachel & Susan Bentley
Dianne Landeros & Toni Momberger
Emma Herzog & Mandy Wilcox-Herzog



Meridyth & Mae McLaren Sarah Van Tassel & Annie Warren Erin & Eileen Sanborn Heidi & Valerie Taber
*"Mother - Daughter AAUW Members" not pictured: Rosa Gomez & Raquel Gomez-Van Diest,
Kathy Presnell-Best & Sande Meith-Rask, and Jennie & Kyra Ruvalcaba*



AAUW Community Engagement 2025 Community Day of Service

On Saturday, March 15, 2025, AAUW Redlands members enjoyed participating in this year's 16th Annual Redlands Community Day of Service. This event is sponsored by the Redlands Service Club Council. A dedicated group of branch members met at Sylvan Park to participate in a variety of projects that were all located there. We registered volunteers arriving to serve, pruned and weeded the large rose garden, refurbished and restored the softball field with new sod and ground cover, painted benches in the lunch area and completely overhauled the horseshoe pits. One of the biggest projects involved moving composite rock onto all the walkways throughout the park. Oh, and over 30 new trees were planted to provide shade in the coming years as they grow. We visited with friends, met new community members, enjoyed a wonderful barbecue lunch provided by the Redlands Kiwanis Service Club as great music played in the background. Over 600 volunteers served throughout the day. It was a beautiful, sunshine-filled day to participate in this yearly event. Although it was only the second time our branch participated in this project, it won't be the last! Thank you to Marion Golson, Heidi Taber, Pam Ford, Shelli Stockton, Denise Davis, Judy Cannon, and Eileen Sanborn for your time.



~Eileen Sanborn, Community Day of Service Coordinator

AAUW Community Engagement

Social Justice Conference at the University of Redlands

Several of us were pleased to contribute to strengthening our relationship with the University of Redlands on March 21 by staffing a table for AAUW at the university's Social Justice Conference, held at the Orton Center. We were invited by student Lila Alizadeh, who especially wanted us to be there because our organization values social justice issues in education. Those of us who did shifts at the table were able to meet with students and faculty who dropped by, hear some of the presenters and attend the luncheon keynote speaker, who reported on a study of the lives of sex workers in Los Angeles who are parents, and how they manage, based on focus group discussions with the research participants. Student presentations included topics as diverse as warehouses and their impacts on health in the Inland Empire, especially in linguistically isolated neighborhoods, and another on writing narratives to educate about food and culture, based on a student's learning her South Asian heritage from her grandmother.

~Ellen Gruenbaum, DEI/Racial Justice Co-Chair



You're Invited: AAUW Redlands Shopping Spree! Wednesday, May 7th from 5:00 – 7:00 p.m. Eight Reasons to Shop @ Shop Suey Boutique

- 1) Spring, spring, spring into new duds!
- 2) **15% of all purchases, including gift cards, will be donated to AAUW Redlands**
- 3) Treat yourself for Mother's Day
- 4) Find a fantastic graduation gift
- 5) Great clothes, purses, shoes, jewelry and more!
- 6) Mom and daughter bonding spree
- 7) Try on the perfect summer hat
- 8) Meet up with your AAUW friends! 😊



Join us for this glorious girls' gathering on Wednesday, May 7, from 5:00 – 7:00 p.m. at Shop Suey Boutique in downtown Redlands. Fifteen percent of all purchases will be donated to AAUW Redlands branch as a fundraiser for our Mission Funds. Invite your friends and enjoy a glass of champagne while you shop together for a good cause. The more the merrier – more friends, more shopping, and more champagne! A Shop Suey Boutique gift certificate is a great gift for your favorite graduate. And Mother's Day is just around the corner. Hope to see you there! Shop Suey Boutique, 120 Orange St, Redlands, CA. Check out their Instagram and Facebook pages for a preview of their great vibe. Shop Suey promo eCard attached. ShopSueyBoutique.com

AAUW California's Lobby Days

AAUW Redlands' Public Policy Committee takes part in AAUW California's Lobby Days annually, meeting by Zoom or in person with our region's legislators and/or their staffs in the legislators' Sacramento offices or -- this year -- in their district offices.

On Friday, April 1, Public Policy Committee Chair Cassie MacDuff and member Twiliea Evans-Carthen met with Sen. Eloise Gomez Reyes' District Representative Daphne Lezo Duran in the senator's San Bernardino office. Cassie and members Ellen Gruenbaum and Susan Burnett met with Asm. Leticia Castillo's Chief of Staff Louisa Millington in the Assembly member's Corona office. Ellen and members Jane Weldon and Patty Ahearn met with Sen. Rosilicie Ochoa Bogh in the senator's district office in Redlands. And members Kathryn Brown and Erica Wilson met with Asm. Greg Wallis' District Director Nick Anziano in the Assembly member's Rancho Mirage office.



Legislative advocacy is one of the primary missions of the American Association of University Women. Your Public Policy Committee was proud to represent you by lobbying for the three bills that AAUW California's public policy team chose as the top priorities for this legislative session.

We lobbied in support of SB 418, which would protect health care patients from discrimination, and SB 771, which would hold social media platforms civilly responsible for illegal hate speech. We also lobbied in opposition to AB 579 (authored by Castillo) which would exclude gender identity as a factor in deciding whether to remove a child from an abusive home.

More information is available on the [aauw-ca.org](https://www.aauw-ca.org/category/public-policy/lobby-day/) website <https://www.aauw-ca.org/category/public-policy/lobby-day/>

~Cassie MacDuff, AAUW Redlands Public Policy chair



Bunco



Hiking



STEM
Committee

Afternoon
Great Decisions





Speaker: Dr.
Jessica Lascano



April Branch Meeting

April Birthdays:

Terrill Levinson Wickham, Ellen Weiss, Judy Cannon, Susan Burnett, Sierra Mason, Twillea Evans-Carthen, Ruthann Mlcoch, Susan Miller, Mandy Wilcox-Herzog, and Emma Herzog



2025-26 Named Gift Honorees:
Eileen Sanborn with Heather Abushanab & Mary Lou Guerro.

Barbara Simmons with
Ellen Weiss

Every year the AAUW Redlands branch honors members who have done outstanding work in supporting the programs and goals of AAUW Redlands and have been a member for at least five years.



April 1, 2025, Branch Meeting Recap: Our AAUW branch membership dinner was a great success with 101 people present, including current members, 10 guests, and our speaker, Dr. Jessica Lascano, and her guest. We also had one more person sign up as a new member. As of April 1st, 2025, our AAUW Redlands membership is 265 people. Two more Named Gift Honorees were named, Eileen Sanborn and Barbara Simmons. Patty Ahearn presented the video presentation of the branch's Speech Trek winner. Our guest speaker, Dr. Jessica Lascano, explained Neurodiversity and provided an updated understanding of this population. The membership at this meeting made two votes, and both were in favor of the slate of officers for the board and three new members of the nominating committee. For details of all of these items, please see the attached branch minutes that accompany this email.

~Nan Neighbours, Secretary



Public Policy Committee Sets AAUW California 2025 Legislative Agenda

By Missy Maceyko and Amy Hom, Co-chairs Public Policy Committee

The Public Policy Committee met over a weekend in mid-March for our most important meeting of the year, to set the Legislative Agenda for 2025. Prior to the meeting, our committee collectively evaluated over 60 bills related to AAUW's mission and Public Policy Priorities. During our two-day marathon session, we carefully considered each bill. We then voted to select and prioritize the top 25 bills, leaving room to add a few more bills that we know will be coming to us in the next few weeks.

Our three "A" priority bills are SB 771 "Social Media Platforms Endangering Californians", AB 579 "Yaeli's Law", and SB 418 "Ensure Equal Access to Care for All". All three of the "A" priority bills this year fall under the Social Justice pillar of our Public Policy Priorities.

The first "A" bill, SB 771 "Social Media Platforms Endangering Californians", is authored by Senator Henry Stern and is sponsored by AAUW California. SB 771 clarifies that a social media platform may be liable for civil penalty under existing law if and when its algorithms or AI aid or abet individual users who are engaging in already unlawful intimidation of others in online spaces. While hateful speech is problematic, it is not illegal. However, it can cross the line into illegal action. When hate speech is "brought to the doorstep" of marginalized communities, for example if someone maliciously posts anti-immigrant messages on the virtual Facebook wall of an immigrant family, they are engaging in unlawful intimidation, terrorism, and threat. While social media platforms are not responsible for the speech of individual users, aspects of their platform such as algorithms or AI can be complicit in the targeting of marginalized groups, which is unlawful. Social media companies have recently intentionally turned away from providing safeguards that they previously provided for targeted vulnerable communities. They should be held accountable for that decision, in light of the real-world impacts of proliferation of online hate and their complicity in unlawful intimidation.

The second "A" bill, to which we are taking an opposition position, is AB 579 "Yaeli's Law" authored by Assemblymember Leticia Castillo. This bill rests on the premise that denial of support for youth self-identity,

Redlands Branch, AAUW
P.O. Box 7678
Redlands, CA 92375-0678
Branches and Twigs
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Please click <https://www.aauw-ca.org/documents/2025/04/public-policy-news-april-2025.pdf/2025.pdf/> for the April issue of Public Policy News. ~Cassie MacDuff, AAUW Redlands Public Policy Chair

including refusal to use a child's name and pronouns, or refusal to provide or allow their gender-affirming care, is not harmful and therefore should not be considered child abuse under the law, and, accordingly, not be allowed as a basis for custody or removal decisions. This is problematic. Research shows that transgender children are more likely to experience anxiety and depression and are at greater risk of substance abuse and homelessness when they live in households that do not accept their gender identity. We oppose this bill because every child deserves to be protected from emotional and physical abuse, including the right to be removed from a harmful household to a more healthy environment.

The third "A" bill is SB 418 "Ensure Equal Access to Care for All" authored by Senator Caroline Menjivar. This bill would prohibit a health plan or a health insurance provider from denying coverage or denying benefits to a person based upon their race, color, national origin, age, disability, or sex - including sex characteristics such as intersex traits, pregnancy, and gender identity. Access to gender-affirming care is a fundamental aspect of health equity and human rights. SB 418 will protect against discrimination on the basis of sex, while also sending a powerful message of support to the LGBTQ+ community, affirming that their needs matter. Creating an environment where all individuals can express their identities without fear is foundational to a strong democracy.

To see the full 2025 Legislative Agenda, please go to the [Bill Tracking Report](#). This report is a living document that will be updated as the bills move through the legislative process, so you will always be able to see the latest status.