

# Branches and Twigs

AAUW Redlands Branch  
June 2025

<http://redlands-ca.aauw.net>  
Issue 11, 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



In June, a new board will be installed and planning for the 2025-2026 year will begin in earnest. As I prepare to leave the position as president of the branch, I look back in awe at all the branch has accomplished in the last two years. We have rebounded spectacularly from the lean Covid years, with more activities than ever and a branch membership that is the envy of all AAUW CA.

With only a few hiccups and a bit of tech anxiety, the board has embraced our new Microsoft tools which allow us to host online meetings, store, and share documents, and have AAUWRedlands.org email for professional communication with the outside world. Now that we have storage space, the branch has embarked on an ambitious archiving project to organize our records going forward and to identify and preserve past, important records.

*~continued on page 3*

## June Branch Meeting:

### “Art Right Under Your Nose: Collected Treasures at the Smiley Library”

will be the program topic at the Saturday morning Redlands AAUW brunch meeting on June 7. “While most people think of libraries as places of literature, many might not realize the treasure that Redlands has in Smiley Library’s collection of fine art, which was acquired over more than 130 years,” explained guest speaker Nathan Gonzales, archivist and head of Special Collections at the A.K. Smiley Public Library in Redlands.



“It’s somewhat unusual for a public library to have such an extensive collection of fine art,” Gonzales noted. “Right now in the Assembly Room we are showing art pieces depicting the library itself throughout its history,” he said. “We do change out the art displays from time to time. Of course, we’re looking forward to showcasing even more of the collection once the Museum of Redlands opens.”

Gonzales has served the City of Redlands for 25 years at the A.K. Smiley Public Library as an historian, archivist, and curator. Since 2013, he has overseen the Library’s Special Collections Division, including the Lincoln Memorial Shrine Museum and curatorial development and planning for the Museum of Redlands. He also serves as an adjunct professor in the University of Redlands History Department.

Gonzales earned a master's degree and Ph.D. in history from the University of California, Riverside. He has co-authored several books about Redlands history and long been active in the Redlands community, serving as president and on Boards of Directors for numerous local organizations.

In 2021, Gonzales was appointed, and in 2022 elected, to the San Bernardino Community College District Board of Trustees, which oversees both San Bernardino Valley College and Crafton Hills College. He is currently Chair of the SBCCD Board.

*~Diane Shimota, coordinator*

## June Branch Meeting

### When

Saturday, June 7, 2025  
Social 8:45 a.m.  
Brunch 9:30 a.m.  
Program 10:15 a.m.

### Where

University of Redlands  
CASA LOMA Room

### Menu

Scrambled Eggs, Country  
Ham, Biscuits & Gravy,  
Potatoes O'Brien, Coffee &  
Tea

### Cost

Members and guests: \$25

### Registration

Please email  
[AAUWrsvp@AAUWRedlands.org](mailto:AAUWrsvp@AAUWRedlands.org)  
or call 909-362-4955 by  
Saturday, May 24, 2025, to  
make a brunch reservation.  
After May 24th, brunch  
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 951-233-  
1287 or Patricia Stubbs 909-  
289-9183

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

## 2025 Branch Meetings

Tuesday, 9/9 5:30 pm

**Saturday, 10/4 8:15 a.m.**

### Membership Brunch

Saturday, 11/1 8:15 a.m.

Tuesday, 12/2 5:15 p.m.

## 2026 Branch Meetings

1/6, 2/7, 3/7, 4/7, 5/5, 6/6

BRUNCH RESERVATION for June 7 meeting: After May 24, reservations are made on a space-available basis by calling 909-362-4955 or emailing <a href="mailto:AAUWrsvp@AAUWRedlands.org">AAUWrsvp@AAUWRedlands.org</a>					AAUW Redlands June 2025	
Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 6pm California Cuisine 1	2	3 8:45am Fundraising	4 1pm Bridge	5	6	7 8:45am Branch Mtg.
8	9 *1pm Sew <u>What!</u> **5:30pm Board Mtg	10	11 6pm CHAT	12	13	14
15 5:30pm California Cuisine 2	16	17 8:45am Fundraising	18 11:45am I Am, Therefore I Think	19 10am Bridge	20 Redlands Bowl Ushering	21
22	23 *1pm Bridge **1pm Sew What!	24 *6pm DEI/ Racial <u>Justice</u> **7pm Public Policy	25 1pm Bunco 6:30pm Program mtg	26 1pm & 7pm Book Club	27	28 8:30am Hiking
29	30			Save the Date      Fall Bridge Scramble    October 22		
<b>AAUW Redlands Joint Board Meeting for 2024-2025 and 2025-2026 board</b> 6/9 Potluck 5:30pm. Meeting 6:30pm    Redlands United Church of Christ, 168 Bellevue Ave, Redlands. ~Heather Abushana				<b>Diversity, Equity &amp; Inclusion / Racial Justice</b> 6/19 6pm DEI/Racial Justice    Location will be sent by email ~Ellen Gruenbaum ~Erica Wilson ~Donita Remington		
<b>Bridge Groups</b> 4th Monday @ 1pm, 1st Wednesday @ 1pm ~Contact Susan Satzger  3rd Thursday @ 10 am Beginners ~Contact Tricia Stubbs				<b>Fundraising Committee</b> 6/3, 6/17 (every other Tuesday) 8:45am on Teams ~Heather Abushana		
<b>Book Club</b> 6/26 <i>Heaven and Earth Grocery Store</i> by James McBride No RSVP required. Information on the facilitator and co-host will be emailed. ~Valarie Boone ~Marianne Baldwin				<b>Hiking Our Hills &amp; Mountains</b> 6/28 8:30am Contact Donita to be added to email list ~Donita Remington		
<b>Bunco</b>  6/25 1pm    ~Patty Ahearn ~Lori Powell				<b>I Am, Therefore I Think</b> 6/18 11:45am "I Am..." is having their luncheon planning meeting at 11:45. Please RSVP to Margee or Barbara by 6/11. ~Barbara Simmon ~Margee Fuller		
<b>California Cuisine and Conversation 1</b> 6/1 6pm ~Kathy Toister				<b>Program Committee Meeting</b> 6/25 6:30 @ Eileen Sanborn's home ~Ellen Gruenbaum		
<b>California Cuisine and Conversation 2</b> 6/15 5:30pm ~Patty Ahearn				<b>Public Policy</b> 6/24 7pm ~Cassie MacDuff		
<b>CHAT meeting</b> 6/11 6pm <i>Contemporary Club</i> AK Smiley PL ~Katherine Gifford 909-798-7565, ext 4138 <a href="mailto:literacy@akspl.org">literacy@akspl.org</a>				<b>Redlands Bowl Ushering (see page 4)</b> 6/20 7pm. Meet on Eureka Street in front of Mission Gables for instruction and photo. ~Barbara Simmon		
				<b>AAUW Redlands STEM Initiatives</b> <b>Tech Trek</b> ~Donita Remington		
				<b>Sew What!</b> 6/9 & 6/23 1pm ~Lisa McCarty		

We managed to update our strategic plan for the first time since Covid, and we have begun to implement the goals established in that plan.

STEM Initiatives continue to be a shining example of the big things we can accomplish together. Our two STEM conferences and Tech Trek each faced some significant hurdles this year due to school scheduling conflicts, the illness of a key Tech Trek leader, and the search for a new keynote speaker for our conferences. These and other challenges were met with confidence, resilience, and success.

Our College and University Partnership team has begun to expand their reach while continuing to strengthen the relationships we have already established. As this program gets bigger, it brings new opportunities and new challenges to the branch. This year, we participated in the MLK peace walk at the University of Redlands and collaborated with them on University Women's night at the theater department's presentation of Bull in a China Shop. We are actively recruiting for a CSUSB student intern to work with FilmFest. We are sending two students to the newly independent NCCWSL conference and hope we can expand this to several more students next year when the new program is better established.

This year was the first time we sponsored members of AAUW to participate in Leadership Redlands. We hope to sponsor an additional member in 2026, and we are actively looking for new ways to provide educational and leadership opportunities for women in our branch. There are many branch programs, committees and smaller tasks that will benefit from additional workers and leaders. As I transition from president to nominating committee chair, I want to find ways for you to contribute to the branch that are empowering and energizing. If you have not found your AAUW niche yet, I would love to talk to you about how you can benefit from AAUW and how AAUW can benefit from your skills!

It has been both a joy and an honor to serve as president over the last two years. I could not have done it without the strong support of the amazing women who served on the board with me, and especially last year's co-president, Marilyn Shankar, and this year's co-presidents elect, Amy Bisek and Kathryn Brown. These three women are so accomplished and truly dedicated to the mission of AAUW. I loved working with them and will miss our nearly daily interactions! Next year's board is equally strong due to the diligent work of the nominating committee under Marilyn's leadership. The future of our branch is certain to be bright.

~Heather Abushanab, President, AAUW Redlands



## How Do You Want to Help!

We have a large branch with many mission projects, leadership opportunities and support roles that need to be filled. I challenge every member to find one way to serve in the branch this coming year. The summer is a perfect time to learn your new role and plan for the fall. Here are a few things we need for the coming year.

- NYM Scholarship Chair (or Shadow)
- STEM Leadership – multiple roles are available
- C/U Partner Co-Chair
- Holiday Boutique Chair
- FilmFest/Fundraising Members
- Ride Share Coordinator
- Photography Team Members
- Teams Support Help
- Table Decor for Branch Meetings
- California Cuisine #3 Coordinator

Contact Heather Abushanab by June 15<sup>th</sup> to discuss volunteer options for next year!



## Memories of Marie....



**Condolences** to the family and friends of **Marie Mitchell**, please accept our condolences on your loss.



### Marie Mitchell

Marie Mitchell joined the Redlands Branch of AAUW in December 2007. One member refers to her as our “sparkle woman” and she certainly did sparkle! Marie always had a smile and a friendly word for each of us. She loved jewelry, often wore lots of it, and had a fashion sense to be envied. However, Marie was more than her jewelry and fashion; she was dedicated to AAUW and donated her time generously to the branch.

During 2008-2010, Marie served as membership assistant to her dear friend, Dorothy Richardson, who was membership vp. Marie served on the board as Secretary, the recording officer of the branch from 2009-2011. In 2013 Marie was an AAUW Redlands Branch Named Gift Honoree. This award recognizes outstanding service to the branch and to the community.

Marie accepted the position of president elect for 2018-2019, learning the leadership role from then President Toni Momberger and stepped into the president position for 2019-2020. At the January 2020 branch meeting, Marie encouraged our members to wear all white, harkening back to the suffragists, to celebrate the centennial of women’s suffrage. She helped Dorothy Richardson lead the International Affairs luncheon group. Following her year as president, she served in the post-president roles of parliamentarian, nominating committee chair, and strategic plan chair.

Marie was a strong, capable woman who was never afraid to voice her opinion and had a strong sense of the branch’s mission and goals. She gave freely of her time and talents and the branch appreciated everything she did. Marie was also a valued member of the Assistance League where she also applied tremendous energy to their activities in service to the Redlands community. Marie will be very much missed by AAUW Redlands Branch and by the Assistance League.



Dear Members,

Robert Mitchell has confirmed that the family will be hosting a Celebration of Life in memory of his wife, Marie, at their home Saturday, May 31, 2025 between noon and 5pm (see branch yearbook for address).

He has invited members of the Assistance League of Redlands and AAUW to attend and share in this remembrance.



President Marie Mitchell  
2019-2020

# 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 will 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](mailto: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 Dobberty 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 Dobberty.

Please update any changes/corrections to your contact information for the 2025-2026 yearbook by emailing corrected information to [membership@aauwredlands.org](mailto:membership@aauwredlands.org) by August 6. **2024-25 yearbook updates are attached.**

## AAUW Community Engagement

### Redlands Bowl Ushering June 20



Once again AAUW will be ushering one evening at The Redlands Bowl. This year it will be at the first event of the season on Friday, June 20th, celebrating the Legacy of Whitney Houston and other women singers, featuring Nicole Henry.

We will be meeting in front of the Mission Gable Bowl House at 168 Eureka Street at 7:00 p.m. for a group picture and ushering instructions. ***Please wear your AAUW Redlands name badge and blue shirt.*** We will be ushering at the Intermission. Please feel free to bring your spouse, partner, or child over the age of 12 to help you collect the freewill offering. I am looking forward to this event. I am so pleased that The Redlands Bowl has chosen to honor women vocalists as their first concert of the season. If you have any questions, please telephone or email me.

~Barbara Simmons

## Hospitality Birthday Club

### Happy Birthday to All!

This month we will celebrate not only our **June** birthdays but also those in **July**. We celebrate both June and July this month because we do not meet in July, and we don't want to leave anyone out.



### June Birthdays

Hoda Abdalla  
Patty Ahearn  
Elaine Brubacher  
Carol Buchanan  
Julie Byers  
Patricia Estrada  
Paula Ferri-Milligan  
Mary Lou Guerrero  
Susan Hall  
Megan Jewett  
Susan Kean  
Trisha Keeling  
Betsy Laudati  
Mae McLauren  
Meridyth McLauren  
Bonnie Piller  
Maria Rossi  
Sally Trost  
Darlene Tybur  
Keita Wangari  
Elaine Weller  
Aleta West  
Roux Whitmore  
Margaret Wilcox

### July Birthdays

Judy Adams  
Linda Adams  
Debbie Brown  
Rachel Bubbs  
Sue Ferguson  
Yvette Guidry  
Heidi Hutchinson  
Dolly Israelitt  
Ann Leonard  
Krista Moreno  
Thelma Muro  
Viktoria Norberg  
Pam Ong  
Cathy Schilling  
Barbara Simmons  
Ellen Timothy  
Sam Vasquez  
Karen Wardell  
Annie Warren  
Julie Wilson  
Tracy Wise  
Susan Wong

*Welcome New member*

**Cara Chavez** *San Diego State University, BA, MA*  
Cara taught high school Spanish and English Language Learning for 17 years and then became a counselor and guidance coordinator for the next 17 years.

She loves travel and languages and is currently enjoying a French group at the Redlands senior center.

Cara is interested in AAUW to participate in interest events and important causes.

## Membership Matters

Many of us have a June renewal date for our membership. You should have received an email from National reminding you to renew before June 30<sup>th</sup>. It is quite easy to renew online. You can check your renewal date in our yearbook.

I would like to thank Kay Dobbartin, Marion Golson, Heather Abushanab, Carol Kennedy, Amy Bisek, Joyce Katkov and Sue Ferguson for all the extra help and support they have given me during my first year as Membership VP. I am profoundly grateful! I want to encourage all members to take on a position on the board. You will have so much support and guidance to help you be successful in whatever position you might be interested in pursuing.

*~Jan Negron, Membership VP*

## 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

### Career & Internship Fair at CSUSB

Sunny Hyon is both a member of our branch and the coordinator of the Center for Professional & Career Readiness for students in the College of Arts & Letters at CSUSB. She organized the second Annual CSUSB Arts & Humanities Career Fair held on campus April 21.







## Participate in Outreach!

We will have a booth at the 8<sup>th</sup> Annual Redlands Juneteenth Celebration. Mark your calendar for Saturday, June 21<sup>st</sup> in Sylvan Park. The Juneteenth Event is presented by the City of Redlands with Unity in the Community, Redlands Police Department, and The Village Second Baptist Church and will be held from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. This will be our fourth year participating in this event. Our participation in Juneteenth allows us to increase awareness of AAUW, support our community, address diversity goals, and perform outreach. Last year we had more than twenty members participate in planning, organizing and staffing the event. AAUW members were able to circulate at the event, see the other booths, hand out fans and information cards, and connect with each other and with the community. Come join us!

Please contact Donita Remington, Diversity Committee.

## Program Committee Invitation



What sort of programs would you like to hear at our Branch meetings in the coming year? Would you like to be on the committee to choose and host the speakers and events? Ellen Gruenbaum (incoming Program VP) and Eileen Sanbourne (current Program VP) invite you to share your ideas with us either by email ([egruebaum@icloud.com](mailto:egruebaum@icloud.com)), phone, or attending one of our upcoming meetings. The first meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, May 28<sup>th</sup>, at 6:30, at Ellen Gruenbaum's house. The second meeting will be Wednesday, June 25<sup>th</sup>, 6:30, at Eileen's house.

Call Ellen, 765-586-8993, if you have questions.

## Meet Up with AAUW at Viva La Boba!

Please join us for our next Meet Up at Viva La Boba on Orange Street in Redlands, Saturday June 21<sup>st</sup> 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!



## Holiday Boutique FALL 2025-2026

The Holiday Boutique raises money every year for the Nancy Yowell Memorial Scholarship, AAUW Redlands branch. It provides financial assistance to women who are returning to college to complete their degrees, including graduate programs. (Visit [bigfuture.collegeboard.org](http://bigfuture.collegeboard.org))

Many branch members are busy creating art and crafts for the show. We plan to sell home décor items, decorative Thanksgiving and Christmas seasonal items, plants, baked goods, wine and cheese baskets, beautiful things made by our Sew What! quilting group, and much more.

We welcome costume jewelry donations for the ever-popular jewelry table where there will be something for everyone. Collections can be passed to Tricia Stubbs any time between now and this fall.

The Boutique is the perfect place to pick up a few gifts for your special people. The sale is conveniently scheduled around the holidays at the November AAUW meeting. There will be a table at the October annual membership meeting for members to volunteer to help with the event. We welcome all to join us in raising money for this wonderful cause.

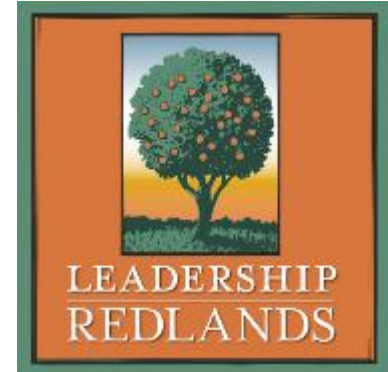
For more information contact Tricia Stubbs.

## Leadership Redlands: A Transformative Experience

Over the past two months, I've had the privilege of participating in Leadership Redlands, a program designed to cultivate leadership skills and foster a deeper understanding of our community. This journey has already been transformative, offering invaluable insights into local governance, key issues, and the community members dedicated to preserving the history and beauty of Redlands. We are already establishing connections with government officials and community stakeholders, gaining an understanding of the factors impacting our community and how the city balances its decisions with legal requirements and constituent demands.

Our first session focused on local government and key issues, providing a comprehensive overview of the inner workings of our city. We met several influential figures who play pivotal roles in shaping Redlands:

- Barbara Riordan
- Marc Shaw, Mayor Pro Tem
- Charlie Duggan, City Manager
- Danielle Garcia, Management Services Director
- Brian Desatnik, Development Services Director
- Stephen Crane, Deputy Chief
- Rich Sessler, Fire Chief
- Debi Menard, Redlands Chamber of Commerce Membership Director
- Alyssa Kyranakis, Artist, A Visionary Design



From this session, we learned how Redlands is structured government-wise, distinguishing between elected and non-elected officials, charter versus non-charter counties. Redlands is a charter county which allows us to tailor our government structure and powers to better meet local needs. It gives us greater autonomy and means we can enact laws, initiatives, referendums, and recalls, as long as they don't conflict with state laws or the constitution. We delved into the challenges the city faces, including housing, police enforcement, homelessness, real estate developments, and the fire department's role in servicing our community and neighboring areas. We also explored the key issues that constituents care about: 1. homelessness, 2. public safety, 3. preserving Redland's quality of life.

Our next session focused on economic and business development. We learned about the development of the train and Redlands' efforts to attract new businesses and people, highlighting how the city supports small business owners. The best part of this session was the opportunity to hear from a panel of small business owners in Redlands. They shared their experiences of starting a business and working with the city to open their doors.

A key element of Leadership Redlands is the service project. Our cohort is responsible for developing and executing a project that will benefit the community. To do this, we had to align a project idea and are now in the process of presenting the idea to the numerous stakeholders that will be involved in making this happen. We need approval from groups such as Leadership Redlands, the Parks and Recreation Department, and lastly the City Council. This collaborative effort is enhancing our teamwork and leadership skills, preparing us to make a tangible impact on our community. It is also teaching us the complexities of city government and the importance of remaining tenacious and patient when pursuing community projects.

My experience with Leadership Redlands has been insightful and valuable thus far. I am grateful for the opportunity to be a part of this program and appreciate AAUW's scholarship to participate!

*~Submitted by Rachel Bubb*

**AAUW Redlands wants YOU to apply for [Leadership Redlands](#)!!**

**The Branch will provide a \$500 scholarship to an AAUW Redlands branch member to participate in Leadership Redlands 2026. The awardee will be expected to update the board periodically on things they have learned and to serve on the Board during the 2026-27 or 2027-28 year.**



## STEM Initiatives Receives a Grant from the Morongo Band of Mission Indians

Pam Ford and Kay Dobbertin accepted a grant on behalf of AAUW Redlands STEM initiatives at Morongo's 4th Annual Community Outreach Awards Luncheon on May 14<sup>th</sup>



## Learn to Play Bridge



The spring course of beginner bridge classes is nearly done, and our students are ready to play over the summer! Louise Schumann taught this first group, and I have learned from Louise's tutoring how to run the course. If there is an interest, the fall series will begin the week of September 29<sup>th</sup>. It takes about 8 weekly lessons to learn the game. After the classes, it's best to play regularly for a period of time to become comfortable. There is no such thing as "mastering bridge" as there is always something new to learn and a new hand to decipher. Classes will be on Monday, Tuesday or Wednesday mornings from 10am to noon, depending on the will of the group. If you are interested in participating, please let me know which days you are available. We need a minimum of four people to run the class. I am excited to introduce a new group of players to this challenging game.

Contact Heather Abushanab to be added to the list.

## Congratulations

### 2025 Nancy Yowell Memorial Scholarship Recipients

**Cynthia De los Santos - \$2,000**  
pursuing a bachelor's in aerospace engineering  
at Cal Poly Pomona



**Perla Caballero - \$2,000**  
pursuing a bachelor's in business administration  
at Cal State Chico



## FALL BRIDGE SCRAMBLE!

**Save the Date  
Wed, October 22nd.**



The AAUW Redlands Bridge Scramble will return this fall on Wednesday October 22nd. This will be another fabulous event with several rounds of bridge, a luncheon, bake sale and prizes. Registration for the event will start in early September. We are looking to add a few more people to our planning committee. If you want to play that day, you can help with set-up, clean-up, finding prizes, and logistics. If you don't play bridge, we would love your help with the luncheon. Contact Heather Abushanab to be added to our planning committee!

*~Heather Abushanab*

## Thank You for Helping Us Grow!



Thank you to all the ladies who joined AAUW Redlands from June 2024 through May 2025. The 45 ladies listed below include new members, previous members, current national members, and members who transferred their membership from another AAUW branch. During the last 12 months, we also have had four Student Associates join our branch. AAUW Redlands is very happy to have so many new and returning members. We hope you enjoyed your first year and plan to continue next year. Our June 2024 – May 2025 new members are:

*Hoda Abdalla, Shirley Ayangbah, Brandi Bailes, Julie Byers, Maria Carrillo Colato, Cara Chavez, Peggy Crabtree, Jennifer Cross, Roya Damsaz, Jennifer Escobar, Paula Ferri-Milligan, Andrea Fuqua, Kate Gattuso, Susan Hall, Stephanie Hastings, Rebecca Haynes, Emma Herzog, Sunny Hyon, Megan Jewett, Ann Kawell, Trisha Keeling, Heather King, Rachel Lee, Joanne Lessard, Jennifer Marvillas, Meridyth McLaren, Darcy McNaboe, Ruthann Mlcoch, Andrea Morics, Julie Mueller, Jennifer Nelson, Carolann O'Donnell, Bonnie Piller, Marilee Rendulich, Joan Roberts, Karen Skoog, Carol Sousa, Diana Stelle-Jones, Amanda Tromblay, Sherry Walsh, Annie Warren, Mara Winick, Tracy Wise, Jocelyn Yow, Sara Zarro*  
*Student Associates: Cynthia De Los Santos, Alison Klemm, Sierra Mason, Mae McLaren*

## 2025 Great Decisions Evening Group

We decided to enjoy each other's company and have wine and appetizers before discussing the Middle East. Every week, we had a great group of educated, enthusiastic, and thoughtful minds coming together to discuss our current geopolitical situation. Couldn't have asked for a better year to Make Great Decisions!



AAUW invites hundreds of college women from around the country for two days of leadership training, inspiration and networking at our National Conference for College Women Student Leaders.

**College/  
University  
Partnership**

**University of  
Maryland  
Hosts  
NCCWSL**

## National Conference for College Women Student Leaders 2025

By the time you read this, they may have returned from the University of Maryland so be sure you ask Alison Klemm and Sierra Mason about their experiences at NCCWSL. Sierra & Alison were able to attend the conference May 28 – May 30. They flew in early and stayed with friends after the conference so that they could explore the DC Metro area.

You will hear more formally from them in September yet you will like knowing that they are both members of AAUW Redlands, both attend Crafton Hills College, and both are in the College Honors Institute that Judy Cannon described to us at a branch meeting just a few years ago. Sierra is in student government, so she works with Ericka Paddock. Sierra is quietly influencing Alison to be a part of student government in the 2025-26 school year.

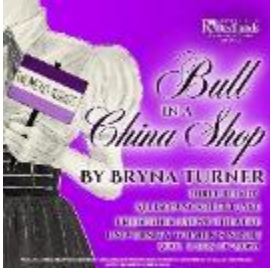
You may remember that AAUW moved the responsibility for organizing and implementing NCCWSL to NASPA, an organization of Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education. This is the first year that NASPA has carried this out and we look forward to a future full of opportunity for young women in leadership.

## AAUW Community Engagement

# University of Redlands + AAUW = A Night at the Theatre

AAUW Redlands was so fortunate to partner with the University of Redlands Department of Theatre and Dance for the April 12 performance of “Bull in a China Shop.” The play was a partly fictionalized description of the careers of Mary Woolley and her partner Jeannette Marks at Mount Holyoke College. Woolley was the president of the college from 1901-1937 and Marks was a professor. You can imagine that this was not an easy time for women in higher education administration or for same sex partnerships.

Rebecca Davis, who is the Marketing and Box Office Coordinator for the Dept of Theatre & Dance, worked with us to provide discounted tickets. The April 12 audience was overwhelmingly AAUW members! Debbie Wilson & Pam Ford greeted theatregoers and shared info about AAUW to all who were interested.



## Interest Group Ideas!

What if AAUW had a pickleball group? A group that takes field trips? Ladies who Lunch? Do you have an idea for a new branch interest group? The summer is a great time to get the logistics in place so that a new interest group can launch in September. The [AAUW Redlands Branch Standing Rules](#) has this guidance on Interest Groups: *With the approval of the board of directors, any member may form a new interest group provided its meetings will not conflict with other scheduled branch meetings and provided that it is open to all members.*

There have been some exceptions to the “open to all members” requirement for interest groups that get very large. For example, Sew What! has limited membership so that they can fit in the available crafting space. Reading in the Rainbow and Great Decisions both have multiple meeting times to accommodate different schedules as well as keep the number of participants reasonable. Most of the bridge groups have eight core members and a list of substitutes, since you can only play with multiples of four. California Cuisine II was started after the original California Cuisine became too big to accommodate everyone in members’ homes. We now are ready to start a California Cuisine III or similar dinner group to accommodate more members.

If you would like to head up California Cuisine III, or propose a new interest group, please submit your idea in writing to the President to include on the agenda for discussion at the board June 9<sup>th</sup> meeting or the summer meeting in August. Include in your proposal who will be the head of the interest group, which day(s) and time(s) you want to meet and how you will coordinate the meeting space. Generally, interest groups do not receive money from the branch for their activities. If you want to discuss this before you put it in writing, contact Heather Abushanab who will be happy to help you figure things out!



**Branch Officers:** **President:** Heather Abushanab, **Co-Vice Presidents-Elect:** Amy Bisek & Kathryn Brown, **Communication Vice President:** Keita Wangari, **Co-Hospitality Vice Presidents:** Joyce Katkov & Keller Iuppenlatz, **Program Vice President:** Eileen Sanborn, **Membership Vice President:** Jan Negron, **Secretary:** Nan Neighbours, **Treasurer:** Sue Ferguson, **At-Large Board Members:** Twillea Evans-Carthen, Lisa McCarty, Ellen Timothy

**B&T Submission:**

The deadline for the **summer newsletter** is **July 26**. Send your articles to the editor via email to [news@AAUWRedlands.org](mailto:news@AAUWRedlands.org)



## AAUW Redlands Nonprofit of the Year Award

AAUW Redlands was recently notified that we are selected as a 2025 honoree for California State Senate District 29 Nonprofit of the Year. District 29 is currently represented by Senator Eloise Gomez Reyes. This award recognizes nonprofits from across the state for their outstanding contributions to communities such as Colton, Fontana, Highland, Rancho Cucamonga, Redlands, Rialto, San Bernardino, Upland, Grand Terrace, Loma Linda, and the unincorporated cities of Bloomington and Muscoy.



Amy Bisek and Kathryn Brown, Co-Presidents Elect, attended the award luncheon on May 9<sup>th</sup> at the InTech Center in Fontana. Here, they received our certificate of recognition and were able to mingle with other honoree organizations. Over 300 nonprofit organizations were submitted for consideration with approximately 10% designated as this year's award honorees. The 2025 Nonprofit of the Year is Community Action Partnership. Other Redlands-based nonprofit honorees include Family Services of Redlands and the Redlands Chamber of

Commerce.

Congratulations on all of the good work you do, which made this award possible for our branch. From fundraising to scholarships, Tech Trek to STEM Conferences, supportive committees to fun interest groups, we are uniquely poised to make a positive impact for women and girls in our community.



## ***Congratulations to our members who received certificates at the May branch meeting for their years of continuous membership in AAUW.***



5 years:  
**Luann Bangsund,  
Ellen Gruenbaum**



10 years:  
**Joyce Heitmeier, Mary Lou  
Guerrero, Susan Bangasser,  
Barbara Simmons, Martha Lehman**



15 years:  
**Toni Momberger,  
Ann Leonard**



20 years:  
**Del Barrett**



30 years:  
**Susan Bentley, Kim Cousins,  
Erica Wilson**



39 years: **Carol Buchanan**  
37 years: **Amber Costa**  
39 years: **Evelyn O'Prey**



*"If you can dream it, you can do it."* Walt Disney

## Congratulations and Thank You to FilmFest 2025!

Two years ago, the Luna Bars company stopped selling to organizations a curated reel of short films that were used for local fundraising. Annually used as AAUW Redlands' primary community fundraising tool, this could have been disastrous. But instead, it simply became a challenge to overcome.

If you attended this year's sold out FilmFest event, you know how well our branch overcame and far exceeded this challenge. Attendees declared 2025 FilmFest fun, interesting, lively and thought provoking. "The food was fabulous!" "What a diverse and engaging selection of films." "Every year gets better and better!" And better yet, AAUW Redlands netted over \$18,000 for future student scholarships and outreach to local colleges and universities. Make sure you save the date for next year's FilmFest – Friday, April 24, 2026.

Thank you to all our volunteers! From sourcing and producing an exceptional reel of short films that showcased the work of women in the film industry, to managing myriad event logistics, to sourcing a wealth of sponsor donations, to creating an alluring assortment of opportunity baskets, to selling attendance and raffle tickets, the Fundraising Committee really created a triumphant event.

Planning has already begun for 2026. You can volunteer now to find interesting short films; help market the event to the community; solicit sponsors; pick the menu and many other aspects of what it takes to pull off an event such as FilmFest. Whether you have limited availability or lots of time on your hands, the FilmFest Committee can find you a role that you'll enjoy. Simply call Heather Abushanab at 909-565-0655 to volunteer. We'd love to have you involved in raising money for our Mission Fund. You will be helping women and girls in the Inland Empire dream big.





# Thank You To Our Sponsors

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## People's Choice

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Redlands Pottery Project  
Toyota of Redlands





**May Birthdays:** Theresa Lantz, Antoinette Brenion, Kathryn Brown, Stephanie Centeno, Thelma Korpman, Susan Bangasser, and Jane Weldon



**May Program:** Anne Thorward, President of Newcomers Access Center



**May 6, 2025, Branch Meeting Recap:** Although we're nearing the end of the year 2024-2025, there's still much going on. FilmFest was a great success raising money for the AAUW R Mission Fund. The two recipients of the Nancy Yowell Memorial Scholarships were announced. Speaker Anne Thorward shared the work of the Newcomers Access Center, a nonprofit that serves refugees and immigrants throughout Southern California. Jan Negron presented pins for members with continuous AAUW membership for 5, 10, 15, 20, 30, and a new designation of 35 years. Our last branch meeting for the year is Saturday, June 7<sup>th</sup>, beginning at 8:45 a.m. Please see the accompanying minutes for more details.

*~Nan Neighbours, Secretary*



Please click [HERE](#) for the complete May issue of the of Public Policy News.



MAY 2025 | ISSUE 21

## Public Policy News

A monthly dispatch from the AAUW California Public Policy Team

## AAUW California Mobilizes to Advance Priority Legislation

By Amy Hom, Co-chair, Public Policy Committee

AAUW California advocates came out in full strength on April 8th and 9th to participate in Lobby Days 2025. A total of 197 people representing 66 branches, including our Public Policy Interns and other college students, turned out to advance our priority legislation. 84 people came to Sacramento on April 8th to meet in-person with legislative offices; 104 people held virtual meetings via Zoom on April 9th; and 9 people met with district offices. Because many offices prefer to keep their calendars open until the last minute, our committee worked furiously right up until the day of the event to schedule meetings. Meetings were requested with all 120 legislative offices, and 94 meetings were secured. In other words, we met with 78% of all legislative offices - a record for AAUW California!

Unsurprisingly there were a few hiccups, but a vast majority of the meetings went off smoothly. While most meetings were with staff, ten of the meetings were with legislators. Reports from the teams indicate that all of the meetings were courteous and cordial, including those with offices who did not agree with some of our positions. Many teams were received with enthusiasm and gratitude for AAUW's scholarships, activities, and programs such as Tech Trek. Some staffers expressed interest in joining AAUW, and one staffer generously shared information with our Public Policy Interns about a Fellowship program she participated in which ultimately led to her current job. Overall we successfully met with 94 offices to advance our key legislation and increase awareness about AAUW and all the things we do to advance gender equity.

We asked the legislative offices to support SB 771 and SB 418, and oppose AB 579. SB 771 (Stern) "Social Media Platforms Endangering Californians", sponsored by AAUW California, would hold social media platforms liable if their algorithms or AI aid or abet users to intimidate and threaten marginalized groups. SB 418 (Menjivar) "Ensure Equal Access to Care for All" 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. AB 579 (Castillo) "Yaeli's Law", which we opposed, would prohibit parental denial of support for youth self-identity from being considered as child abuse and the basis for custody or removal decisions.

Our positions on SB 418 and AB 579 are protective of the rights of transgender people, meeting the challenges of the current moment. A number of the offices expressed support for our positions with empathy and personal stories about legislators' family members who are transgender.

Shortly after our Lobby Days event, we learned that AB 579 was not referred by the Rules Committee; in other words, it was killed before being heard in committee. We quickly replaced AB 579 with AB 1098 (Fong) "Title IX and the California Sex Equity in Education Act" as our third "A" priority bill. AB 1098 would expand protections for pregnant graduate students and institute protections for pregnant undergraduate students, prohibiting postsecondary educational institutions from discriminating against a student based on their current, potential, or past pregnancy or pregnancy-related conditions.

We invite you to track the progress of our top 3 bills, and all of the bills on our Legislative Agenda, by viewing the [2025 Bill Tracking Report](#). The report will continue to be updated as the bills move through the legislative process, so you can always check back to see the latest status.