

# AAUW Redlands Branch Year End Report 2024-2025



AAUW Members 05.06.2025: row 1: Heather Abushanab, Mary Lou Guerrero, Cassie MacDuff, Mercedes Gifford, Thelma Muro, Twillea Evans-Carthen. Row 2: Joyce Katkov, Jan Negron, Pam Ford, Peggi Cook, Susan Bangasser, Kay Dobbertin, Ellen Gruenbaum, Jane Weldon, Kathryn Brown. Row 3: Sheron Bealer, (2 unknown), Keita Wangari, Amy Bisek, Eileen Sanborn

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# Elected Officer Reports

## President and Co-Presidents Elect

Submitted by Heather Abushanab, Amy Bisek and Kathryn Brown

This year, the president and co-presidents elect operated as a three-person leadership team. The team included Heather Abushanab, president, and Amy Bisek and Kathryn Brown as co-presidents elect. Bi-weekly meetings facilitated communication and kept us focused and accountable to each other. The model worked well and next year's team will continue the regular meeting schedule and team-based leadership approach.

The co-presidents elect divided oversight of branch committees between them, attempting to have a presence in each group. This was successful with AAUW Fund, Archives, DEI/RJ, Programs, PP, Speech Trek, and STEM/Tech Trek, with opportunities for improvement with Communications, CU Partnership, Hospitality, Membership, and NYM Scholarships.

In August, it was agreed that each board and major committee chair would create an end of year report to be assembled into a comprehensive record of branch activities for the year. This is our first attempt.

## Governance Documents Updates

We completed updates to Policies and Procedures, Bylaws, and the Strategic Plan. The Strategic Plan should be reviewed every summer, updating the goals to help drive board priorities for the coming fiscal year.

## Progress on Leadership Development Goal

2025 is the first year AAUW participated in Leadership Redlands, sponsored by the Redlands Chamber of Commerce. Two members received branch scholarships in exchange for a promise to take on a branch leadership role in the near future. The program is still new. It will take a few years to evaluate its effectiveness as a means of developing branch leaders. Money was included in the 2025-2026 budget for up to two scholarships in the coming year.

We also assigned a member-at-large (M@L) to work with hospitality, programs and communications committees, where we thought extra help was needed. The M@L and chairs were enthusiastic about this partnership approach, but we have not yet followed up adequately to determine the success of this effort. The current job description for this position is purposely vague to give the president leeway in using the M@L for special projects or committee assistance where needed. We view this position as a leadership development opportunity and are pleased with the engagement of these board members.

## Progress on Sustainability Goals

All branch leaders have AAUW Microsoft 365 Teams accounts. Board members are using their accounts to read board minutes, reports, and important documents. Members successfully used Teams for online meetings, and an online option was added to regular board meetings. A few people are using their accounts for AAUW email. Group email boxes for news, meeting RSVPs, and FilmFest have been successfully used by their teams. Training for the new board (and others) is scheduled. Documentation for some things is posted, and additional documents will be created over the summer. Responsibility for this going forward will be under the communications area. Heather intends to continue her work in this area for the next few years to ensure that the tools are used effectively.

There was a brief overview of how to read our financial documents during one of our board meetings which should be repeated annually.

## Community Engagement & Branding

Validation of our community engagement was received in 2024-25 from both the San Bernardino League of Women Voters and Senate District 29 Eloise Gomez Reyes' Office in the form of Nonprofit of the Year recognition.

We successfully implemented an attendance rotation to cover Redlands Service Club Council and Redlands Chamber of Commerce Rise and Shine meetings and Mixers. These events facilitate networking with community groups and businesses and promote AAUW Redlands in the community. It was helpful to keep attendance at the leadership level this inaugural year while we assessed how these new relationships might develop. Though anecdotal, increased branch membership and meeting attendance, expanded FilmFest participation, and an increase in STEM conference speaker volunteers point to the positive impact of engagement with the RSCC and RCC.

We invested in two retractable banners and an AAUW flag, all reflecting the branch's new branding, to increase visibility at events.

## Hemet-San Jacinto Branch Dissolution

We assisted AAUW Hemet-San Jacinto branch with their dissolution and signed a Memorandum of Understanding to receive their remaining general funds, a small amount of designated Tech Trek funds, and ownership of two pre-paid Tech Trek camperships held by AAUW CA. A few of their former members joined our branch.

## Other Items

PowerPoint slides replaced printed branch meeting agendas. This enhanced our ability to highlight branch accomplishments for the month, thank committees and individuals for

their contributions to the branch and keep the meetings organized. Members have been complimentary about the change.

Based on feedback from hospitality, programs and the treasurer, we increased the number of greeters at branch meetings from two to three. This helped us more effectively manage our 100+ attendance rates.

With the help of CSUSB, we developed three job descriptions for student interns and presented them at their internship fair. These have potential to provide a lot of value to the branch as well as benefits to this potential future C/U partner, but significant supervision will also be needed.

We have begun monthly meet up networking opportunities for our younger members and hope this will result in a new interest group next fall.

Overall, 2024-25 brought both challenges and successes. We worked well as a team and are proud of what has been accomplished, while still acknowledging areas with potential for significant advancements in mission outcomes, administrative efficiencies and effectiveness, and improved opportunities for branch member engagement.

## Program Vice President

Submitted by Eileen Sanborn

This year the Program Committee met during the summer to begin the process of collecting suggestions and ideas for speakers for the 2024-25 year. Committee members were provided a template to use with the calendar days/dates of the meetings to fill in.

A great year was penciled in by the committee, with various members willing to serve as coordinators for each month. An ongoing list of suggestions made throughout the year was compiled to provide for the new Program Vice President. (Note: All of the original program suggestions were used for the year. A list of this year's Programs is provided on Teams under General, Files, Speaker list)

I worked closely with Kay Dobbartin in coordinating meeting menus and room set up. It was important to arrive early to each meeting to check on the overall set up, post the AAUW Redlands logo onto the podium at the front of the stage and meet the speakers as they arrived.

Our meetings were well attended all year long and I am hoping some of the selected speakers added to members choosing to attend.

With the revision of the Policy and Procedures this year, it became evident that the Program VP position needs to be broken up into committee members who are willing to handle all that the position requires. Conversations on this topic have been held and hopefully will be accepted.

Two meetings have already been held with the incoming Program VP to ease the transition for the new year. Two dates have been set, May 28, 2025, and June 25, 2025, for members interested in serving on the Program Committee to meet and begin the process of setting up the 2025-26 speakers.



## Membership Vice President

Submitted by Jan Negron

In the summer of 2024, I met with Amy Bisek for training on the many aspects of the position. She and Kay Dobbertin have been invaluable resources throughout the year. Kay and I worked together to make sure I had an updated list of guests attending our branch meetings. I provided guests with nametags, brochures, an activities list, and an application at our meeting. Our guests were invited to sit at the hospitality/new member table during our branch meetings. New member applications were emailed to the board, interest group chairs and are posted in TEAMS.

Joyce Katkov and I hosted an orientation meeting in the fall and a “Check in and Chat” meeting in the spring. The spring meeting was a more personal gathering and a better way to get to know our new members. The spring meeting focused more on new members leading the discussion rather than branch members. I plan to continue this process next year.

Membership materials were provided at all outside events we participated in this year. Follow up emails were sent to those who requested information about AAUW.

Last year Kay Dobbertin asked me to take over the “Honoring Our Own” program. I worked with Kay Dobbertin to determine which members needed to be recognized this year. Invitations were mailed, new decade signs were made, and certificates were handed out at our May meeting.

In September, our branch membership was 215. It has increased to 265 members to date. The communications committee’s effective promotion of our branch helped to increase our membership.

## Membership Brochure

Marianne Baldwin updated our membership brochure this year.

## Yearbook

Yearbook preparation began in July after most members renewed, and new officers were installed. This project was spearheaded by the Assistant Treasurer, Marion Golson. Yearbook text was updated using descriptions from the new activities list Amy Bisek created. 315 books were ordered for the current membership of 249, plus new members throughout the year. 2024 printing cost was \$1,186.45. ( $315 = 3.76$  per book.) Labels were printed and attached. The yearbooks were distributed in person to 79 members attending the September branch meeting. The remaining books were sealed with clear circles and mailed. The cost of mailing was \$0.90 per book. ( $169 \times .90 = \$152.10$ .) Cumulative

yearbook updates are issued once per month and distributed to members with the newsletter.

### Membership roster

The assistant treasurer, Marion Golson, maintains the membership roster on an Excel spreadsheet. Throughout the year, new members are added, changes for existing members are updated, and deceased and non-renewing members are moved to a past members spreadsheet. Members may join or renew directly on the AAUW national website or submit payment to the branch. New and renewals sent to the branch are entered on the national website by the assistant treasurer. All membership payments are noted on the assistant treasurer spreadsheet for balancing with national reimbursements. Updated versions of the roster and assistant treasurer spreadsheet are available on Teams.

Committee member Carol Kennedy reached out to members who needed to renew their membership via email, texts, or phone calls. She diligently worked with members who needed help with renewing their membership.

## Hospitality Vice President

Submitted by Joyce Katkov

The hospitality chair facilitated, implemented and assisted with the following AAUW duties during the 2024-2025 year:

- The Hospitality VP worked in partnership with the Membership VP to provide two orientation gatherings for new members. One was provided in October and the other was provided in May. Attendees were given the opportunity to obtain information and ask questions about AAUW's missions and interest groups as well as share about themselves.
- A new method of making new members feel more comfortable and welcome at AAUW meetings was implemented by designating a hospitality table specifically for new members where they can sit and chat with the Hospitality and Membership VPs. This experiment has proven to be a success and it has been noted that as new members begin to get acquainted with other members, they begin to sit at other tables with the new friends they have made.
- When made aware of a need, the Hospitality VP has sent out sympathy or get-well cards on behalf of AAUW to those who are ill or have lost a loved one. Over the course of the 2024-2025 year, 15 such cards have been mailed to our members or relatives of our members.
- New members were given the option to have a mentor assigned to them to assist them in navigating and getting to know AAUW's programs and interest groups. Of the new members who joined during the 2024-2025 year, 10 individuals indicated on their membership form that they would like to have a mentor and consequently, a mentor was assigned to each of them.
- At each of the AAUW branch meetings, the Hospitality VP has put a "Happy Birthday" sign on the buffet table in order to commemorate individual members whose birthdays are that particular month.

## Communications Vice President

Submitted by Keita Wangari

In Communications, we had significant improvements to our website and were fortunate to onboard Marianne Baldwin who provided valuable assistance with marketing materials and website maintenance.

In the previous year (2023-2024), we made needed changes to our website main menu but were missing access to the sidebar menu. Additionally, AAUW had delayed the update of the branch template which would have given the website a more modern look. Well, this year both happened. In September, we were finally able to get super-admin access that allowed us to make long-needed changes such as fixing the calendar widget, adding a Join link, removing the outdated STEM photos, etc. In November, AAUW National finally rolled out the updated template to our branch website, which improved the design and added new capabilities.

Ellen Timothy continued to do an outstanding job with PR, including getting coverage of the candidate forum in the Redlands Community News and Redlands Daily Facts which increased attendance. We also began getting coverage in Community Forward Redlands.

Finally, we averaged well over 5 social media posts per quarter across Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, and NextDoor which is helpful for our branch in achieving 5-star status.

## Secretary

Submitted by Nan Neighbours

### Branch Minutes - Changes

This year the branch minutes were made available for membership review as an accompanying document when the Branches and Twigs newsletter was disseminated to the members via email. This action took place instead of printing and disseminating a copy to each table at the branch meeting for members to review. Anecdotal observation revealed that no one read the minutes when placed on the tables at the branch meetings. This change saved time (by the secretary to print, distribute before the meeting, gather after the meeting, and shred), and money (cost of paper, cost of ink to the secretary since no reimbursement was sought by the secretary). Note: There is no data on whether or not more members are reading the minutes under this new method.

### Recap of the Branch Meeting – an additional job

Following the branch meeting, the recording secretary writes a small paragraph of what happened at the branch meeting that is published in the following Branches and Twigs newsletter. At the end of this recap, the readers are urged to read the minutes for details of the meeting. This idea was passed on during a zoom meeting with other branches when they shared what each of them was doing.

### On-going

This recording secretary is keeping a list of information to pass on to the new recording secretary at the end of the 2025-2026 fiscal year.

### TEAMS

With the implementation of TEAMS this year for the Redlands branch, this secretary has been backtracking to update the labels and placement of the AAUW R board meeting minutes for review with the preferred format for the 2024-2025 fiscal year.

The correct placement of both the approved and signed AAUW R branch and board meeting minutes into TEAMS will be completed during the summer. This secretary had significant issues with scanning the approved and signed minutes back into her device, which has created a backlog of minutes that need to be properly placed in TEAMS.

### Hard Copy of Board and Branch Minutes

The collection into a single notebook of both the signed and approved AAUW R branch and board meeting minutes will be completed during the summer as well. This same notebook will be retained by this recording secretary to put in the future minutes for the fiscal year

2025-2026 and then given to the next recording secretary by the end of the 2025-2026 fiscal year.

### Suggestions

1. Consider investing in a scanner that would be owned by AAUW R that both the secretary and the treasurer can use.
2. If the archival committee is purchasing archival plastic sheet holders in bulk, as part of their budget, it is suggested that a set be distributed to the secretary and the treasurer for each of their collections of records that are being saved.

## Treasurer

By Sue Ferguson, Treasurer 7.01.22-6.30.25

### The following has been accomplished in this fiscal year ending 6/30/25

1. The Chart of Accounts has been simplified and organized into a purposeful order.
2. Three bank accounts have been consolidated into one account. We have changed banking from Provident Bank to Chase Bank in order to have the capacity to accept and make payments with Zelle. The online software with Chase is more user friendly and there are more branches throughout Redlands and vicinity to use.
3. Square continues to be used for credit card payments as needed.
4. Using QuickBooks online has given me the ability to provide month-end financial reports in a timely manner and have access to details in the general ledger with ease.
5. Licenses and permits renewed were:
  - a. NonProfit Raffle Registration RF0012462 for 01/01/2025 to 12/31/2025
  - b. State Charity Registration Number RCT120296 annual renewal 11/15/2024-11/15/2025
6. 2023 Tax Return (07/01/23-06/30/24 fiscal year)-IRS 990-EZ and CA 8453-EO forms filed 11/14/24.
7. CDTFA Sales Tax return for calendar year ending 12/31/2024 filed on 01/16/25.
8. Forms 1096 and 1099-MISC for calendar year ending 12/31/24 were filed before 01/31/25.
9. Copies of Form 1099-MISC were mailed to award recipients before 01/31/25.
10. Budget for fiscal year 2025-2026 created and approved. Budget committee consisted of myself, Heather Abushanab, Amy Bisek, Kathryn Brown, and Kay Dobbertin. Prior to the committee meeting, every group chairwoman was contacted and asked to provide their proposed budget revenue and expenses.
11. All items processed have been saved electronically and will be passed on to the incoming treasurer. Backup hard copies will also be provided to her.
12. All membership dues have been entered into the AAUW National hub by Marion Golson, Assistant Treasurer. Membership activity is maintained on a spreadsheet by Marion. Kay Dobbertin has provided her with assistance as needed. Both have access to the bank account and Square.

### GOALS to be realized by 9/1/25

1. Complete the fiscal year end 06/30/25 financial reports and submit to the financial review committee consisting of the current president, past president, and past treasurer. The review should be completed in order to present the financials to the board in August and then to the branch in September. Only then can they be submitted to the CPA to prepare tax return due 11/15/25.

2. Orient the incoming treasurer and provide instruction on QuickBooks and Square as needed.
3. Develop and offer a seminar on reading the financial reports for board members.



## Members at Large

### Lisa McCarty

This year, I was a Member at Large on the AAUW Redlands Branch Board. I was asked to liaison with the Hospitality Committee. One of my main responsibilities for the Hospitality Committee was to check in bi-monthly with the Interest Groups to see if they had anything that needed to come to the Board for discussion. We had a couple groups who had a couple of items but overall, the groups seem to be running very smoothly.

During this year, I attended meetings to contribute to the new Strategic Plan. It was an interesting process, and enjoyed seeing how it really is a living document, as it's already had some changes during the year.

I attended all Board Meetings, most in person, but some online. It took me back to my education days, when I was on governing committees that were very similar to the Board.

I was a Greeter this year at a Branch meeting and found it very enjoyable. It certainly is a wonderful way to meet members, particularly the new members. I felt like this was so worthwhile and was glad that the Branch had this service. The smiles were very rewarding!

It has been useful having my AAUW Microsoft account this year. I use it to send out my bi-monthly check-in emails, read the board minutes and financial reports, log in for Team meetings. I also use it with my own Interest Group, Sew What, posting patterns. I can see it being a place that the Archive group could (perhaps) see pictures and patterns that Sew What is working on and photos of the group.

Overall, I've enjoyed my year as a Board Member and I feel I've been productive. Thank you for asking me. It's been a privilege.

### Ellen Timothy

As with all aspects of AAUW Redlands, it has been a privilege and delight for me to participate along with other branch members who are consistently thoughtful, well-informed, responsible, respectful, organized and dedicated to meaningful support of women & girls.

It's crucial to my own well-being that I actively try to make positive change in the world, and joining with others in that goal makes the work joyful and sustainable.

Serving on the 2024-2025 Board as an M@L offered me much better understanding & appreciation of how-things-get-done. It's not just via "fairy dust;" our organization is an intricate machine!

I was assigned to assist the Communications VP Keita Wangari, who undertook, pretty much single-handedly, retooling our Website and upgrading our social media. This was a huge, time-consuming job, which she accomplished with great success. But having zero technical skills, I was no help with that whatsoever. Instead, my limited responsibility was our PR with external news outlets.

I systematized writing and submitting press releases to various print & online news outlets and calendars, with the goal of promoting community awareness of our branch activities and AAUW ideals in general. Submissions included all branch meetings and other events as needed (e.g., FilmFest, Candidates Forum).

Starting with information provided by the committee in charge (e.g., Program Committee for branch meetings), I contacted organizers or speakers for quotes and often with help thinking through what they wanted to say. We could usually come up with a better title, if needed. I'd write it up in journalistic style and submit to outlets along with a photo or graphic. I also sent the rewritten version to our Branches & Twigs newsletter each month.

I created a boilerplate for branch meeting PR announcements, a list of external news outlets with contact information & notes on any special considerations (such as "call to remind on Monday before publication"), and archive folders for published articles. At first I made scans of the actual articles as they appeared in print (more archive-ish), but switched to just a Word doc of the press release—much easier & probably more useful. Everything is on Teams.

When asked, I edited/rewrote articles (and even a radio script this year!) and gave the new version back to be used/edited as desired.

Note: FilmFest seems to be the only event that wants PR written up for them. STEM, Sew What, Policy and possibly others get reporters or just submit directly. With our new archiving organization, each committee (including FilmFest) is responsible for archiving their own PR. Communications is only responsible for archiving branch meetings PR.

### Twillea Evans-Carthen

Thank you for the opportunity to serve this past year as Member-at-Large for 2024-2025. This experience gave me great insight into various positions within AAUW.

At the beginning of my term, I was to assist Eileen Sanborn in the programs area. After the first Programs Committee meeting Eileen shared the "AAUW Redlands Branch Initial Programs for our monthly meetings for 2024-25." The working document was a great start to understand where I could help.

Eileen needed me to work with the coordination with Harvest Table at University of Redlands. This involved collaborating with "Harvest Table" to confirm the head count for meals and table orders, matching the branch's invoice in addition to collaborating with Kay Dobbertin who was responsible for receiving number of registered attendees. During the June 2024 branch meeting, Kay indicated that she was already overseeing the responsibilities assigned to me for the Programs Committee.

At the June 2024 branch meeting Kay Dobbertin extended an invitation for me to contribute under her leadership in fulfilling the initial requirements set forth for me. We did not meet outside of regular general branch meetings. That would have been helpful. I was impressed with her wealth of knowledge in servicing so many areas, including the branch newsletter.

I would encourage other new members to join the board as a member-at-large to learn more about the business side of AAUW Redlands Branch. This will open their eyes to the time commitment involved as a board member to ensure they learn the importance of attendance to not only branch meetings but also board meetings should they desire to take on a leadership role.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve.

# Appointed Officers & Major Committee Reports

## AAUW Fund

Submitted by Mary Lou Guerrero, Susan Bentley, and Debra Seibly

For the 2024-2025 academic year, AAUW has awarded 285 outstanding women with fellowships and grants from money invested in the AAUW Fund. There are 31 AAUW Fund fellowship and grant recipients studying in California.

At our March Branch Meeting, AAUW Fellowship Recipient, Zoe Miller-Vedam, spoke about "Standing on the Threshold; Birthright Citizenship and Immigrant Incorporation during the Perinatal Period." She is currently a doctoral candidate in Sociology at UC *Irvine*.

During 2024, our Redlands branch members donated \$3,154.11 to AAUW which allowed us to choose three Named Gift Honorees, Denise Wilcox, Susan Bentley, and Eileen Sanborn, for their work and contribution to our branch. In 2025, our collective branch donations to AAUW totals \$1,378 as of May 31<sup>st</sup>. Many members make a donation to AAUW as part of their branch membership renewal, so we are confident that by the end of 2025 we will reach the threshold of \$2250 which will allow us to choose three Named Gift Honorees in 2026.

National encourages members to make their AAUW donations to the Greatest Needs Fund "which allows AAUW the flexibility to respond to new and emerging challenges facing women and girls, and to utilize the gifts where they are needed most".

Thank you notes were sent out to all who contributed with cash or a check to the AAUW Fund in appreciation for their donation.

## Archives

Submitted by Sheron Bealer

This has been an interesting year researching, organizing, building a Team and learning many new thoughts not only about the past records of the Redlands, CA Branch of the American Association of University Women, but also building for our future. The two years under the leadership of Heather Abushanab have resulted in a large upswing in membership, great improvement in branch processes as well as satisfaction of the members, old and new. Archives organization is just getting started, but there is a fair amount of data hiding in the Archives at A.K. Smiley Library and that remains in people's homes. Our goal this year is to focus on digital archives while planning to include the many hard copy documents and other items being discovered as we move through this process.

In addition to the legal requirements to follow, there are many items to research to set up an Archive. Items from the past we are planning to document are the Minute Books from 1948 forward, preparing a summary of the financial records annually, gathering all the celebratory materials created and documenting the celebrations as we move through almost a century of data.

To date we have not found much evidence of organized materials other than the five scrapbooks and four boxes of records donated this year from the estate of Beverly Cox which will be named its own Collection, one scrapbook from "The Pass" Collection, documenting the activities of Beaumont and Banning member activities; this was an active group who formed their own 501c3 organization. This allowed them to operate their own STEM Conference as well as begin the Branch Tech Trek efforts until the organization merged with Redlands 501c3. We have located annual Yearbooks that currently cover the years from 1999-2025 thanks to the Secretaries that organized those materials. There may be some additional yearbooks in the scrapbooks mentioned above.

In addition to the digital records being amassed this year, it was discovered that a donation of our materials/records was made to A.K. Smiley Library in the 1990's. We have not yet determined the need for that donation but do note it was mentioned in a Board Report at the time.

One new feature this year was the addition of "Archive Moments" to our meetings. It turns out that our members enjoy hearing about our Branch history. Another idea that was implemented was to assign an Archives Team member to each Channel, help them establish standardized Folders that most of the branch channels will implement as well as create additional folders unique to their archive efforts and then create their own archives which will at the end of the year become our branch archives.

There will be a lot of effort to name more mature members in old photos, as well as to capture the event. As a result, we hope to build a photography Team to help better organize and plan to gather this data. Amy Bisek, co-president elect, was our Board Representative this year. She shared with us board plans that had an effect on our efforts, took leadership on our Teams Presentation to the Channels and created a great PowerPoint that we used for training on Archives and Implementing Teams. Thank you, Amy!

We could use one or two new members in order to serve the branch well in this effort, but we have made good progress. We look forward to the coming year.

Our committee consisted of Sheron Bealer, Chair, Marion Golson, Nan Neighbours, and Carol Sousa. Kate Pretorius assisted with our grant application. Heather Abushanab, President, assisted when we needed Board intervention/decisions

## Immediate Past President & Nominating Committee

Submitted by Marilyn Shankar

This year's Nominating Committee consisted of Dorothy Nordquist, Ginny Evans-Perry, Margee Fuller, Barbara Simmons, Sally Trost and myself as Chair. The group met in person four times starting in late October through late January. At our first meeting we made a list of possible candidates for each position needing to be filled. These were prioritized and potential candidates were divided up for each nominating committee member to contact. Decisions on who called who was made by the committee members preference. Between meetings there were several phone calls with individuals to learn of the success of attaining candidates for the different positions. In time for the February Board meeting, we had attained a full slate of officers.

Co-Presidents	Amy Bisek and Kathryn Brown
President Elect	Susan Bangasser
Treasurer	Ginny Evans-Perry
Communications Chair	Marianne Baldwin
Program VP	Ellen Gruenbaum
Hospitality Chair	Susan Miller
Members at Large	Kim Cousins Thelma Muro Margaret Wilcox
Nominating Committee	Sue Ferguson Lisa McCarty Eileen Sanborn

Recommendations:

1. Start sooner.
2. Use descriptions of positions used in the installation script to recruit

## College and University Partnership

Submitted by co-chairs Pam Ford and Susan Bangasser

### Activities

- Supported partial funding of student meals at branch meetings
- Maintained contact with our campus reps at 3 campuses
- September meeting highlighted our NCCWSL students from 2024 and asked for donations.
- One committee meeting
- Submitted grant to Yuhaaviatam of San Manuel Nation for NCCWSL 2026
- NCCWSL was shifted from AAUW to control by another non-profit, NASPA. Info about the conference was slow to come. We have 4 current student members, with 3 at CHC. We invited all 4 of them to apply to attend. Two of them, Alison Klemm and Sierra Mason, enthusiastically replied and have gone to the conference. They are able to spend the first night in the hotel on campus (without having to be 21.) These two young women are enrolled in the honors institute at CHC and will be at CHC during 2025-26 as well.
- Collaborated with UofR – for the play Bull in a China Shop, April 12. Outcomes – good attendance by our members, table informed a few about AAUW, branch member Debbie Wilson worked at the table
- CSUSB internship fair – April 21 New Committee members who are also faculty at CSUSB were able to attend to the table where we recruited interns for the FilmFest and for our branch Communications Committee.
- Students from CHC (not necessarily our members) helped with a STEM Fair. A couple were honors students earning community participation points.

### Update on progress towards goal

These are the 5 year goals:

- Robust partnership with 5 institutions
- Send 2 students from each to NCCWSL

Our Progress: submitted grant for increasing the number of students we send to NCCWSL by 3 in 2026. Will know in August if we received the grant and then plan to approach CSUSB.



## Nancy Yowell Memorial Scholarship

Submitted by Keita Wangari

The scholarship year kicked off with a request from the editor of the Community Forward Redlands newsletter to feature a history of the scholarship program and recent scholarship winners. I contacted a few of the more tenured members to get details on Nancy Yowell and the origins of the scholarship. I also reached out to two of the recent winners, April and Sabrina, both of whom agreed to be interviewed. Almost immediately after that article was published, an early application came in (who later became a winner).

In November, Patricia Stubbs coordinated the annual Holiday Boutique that raised almost \$2,000 from sales and a quilt raffled by our Sew What group.

Despite social media promotion, flyer distribution at a couple of local events, and multiple promotions in Community Forward, we received only 4 applicants by the time the February 28th deadline arrived. Seven committee members participated in evaluating applications and selecting winners.

The two winners, Cynthia de los Santos and Perla Caballero, each received a \$2,000 scholarship to aid in their pursuit of Bachelor's degrees. They each spoke at the May branch meeting, where they received their scholarship check.

Later in May, the committee met, along with some Board members to discuss updates to the scholarship program that will make it more appealing to potential applicants and streamline the applicant process. Over the summer, I will present a draft of an updated program and allow at least a month for members to provide feedback. Our goal is to have the changes finalized by the end of August, in time for the new scholarship year.

We are also looking for a new committee chair for next year and have at least two people who have expressed interest.

## High School Scholarship

Submitted by Peggi Cook

### Tuition Scholarships for Redlands HS, Redlands East Valley (REV) HS and Citrus Valley HS

The High School Scholarship Committee had eight members, six of us enthusiastically returning from previous years. We assigned three or four members to each school. For six days in late March the Committee members had computer access to the applications from the Redlands Community Scholarship Foundation (RCSF) which included academic records (grade point, SAT scores, AP courses and grades) as well as school and community activities through high school. There is one standard essay for RCSF and one required essay from AAUW as well as others required by other groups. The RCSF also provides a spreadsheet for each school, summarizing academics and assigned scores for activities, along with family income level. Applicants who have already been selected by previous groups were highlighted as we are not supposed to choose them. This spreadsheet narrows the field and renders the review process fairly easy. Each member read all the applicable files from one assigned school and ranked the top three or four choices. We did not have time to meet and discuss or vote for our choices, but as in previous years there were at least two top three votes for each of our selected winners and required alternates. As Chairman, I read all of the applications and ranked my choices, but the final selections were based on the input from the committee members. At the end of the six days, the winners and alternates were sent to the RCSF but applicants only find out about award choices at their High School Award Night assemblies. I presented the award at Redlands HS and Barbara Krause, an AAUW member on the Board of the RCSF, presented the awards at REV and Citrus Valley for us. RCSF takes care of the financial arrangements, using the funds we deposited to our account by the **March 1<sup>st</sup> deadline**, to send \$500 checks to the appropriate schools to apply to tuition. For privacy reasons we have no direct contact information for our scholarship recipients. As usual, I included a personal note of congratulations in each girl's award package, requesting that she text me a photo to share with our members.

### Orangewood High School Cash Scholarships

Our scholarships at Orangewood typically award growth and commitment to future education and/or career plans rather than traditional academic and activity measures so we do not go through the RCSF program or engage the Committee members. In Fall and with a Spring follow-up, I requested that the counseling staff choose two girls to receive the approved \$250 cash awards along with information, including excerpts from their application essay, to explain why they were selected. Once I received the names of the

winners, I made sure to send requests for checks to our AAUW Treasurer in time to personally present them at the Orangewood HS Awards assembly. Since the amount of the check is less than \$600, we do not need to provide a Social Security number and personal data for each winner.

### Follow Up

After the scholarships were awarded, I prepared a summary of our five winners to share with our membership at the June meeting. Eventually there will be a newsletter article with some pictures and a display poster and sign-up for our Membership Meeting in Fall. Next November I will personally receive at my home address the request from RSCF to commit to our 2026 awards (which schools to have access to our application and the number and amount of each scholarship). These latter are a standing line item in the budget each year. When there is a new HS Scholarship Chairman, I will need to contact RSCF to change their contact information for AAUW.

## Public Policy

Submitted by Cassie MacDuff

The AAUW Redlands Public Policy Committee had a busy year.

### Candidate Forums

We presented two candidate forums before the November election: on Oct. 10 for Redlands City Council and on Oct. 23 for Redlands Unified School District Board (in addition to the two forums we presented before the March primary, but that falls in the previous fiscal year and so is not part of this report) .

We again partnered with University of Redlands Public Policy Director Renee Van Vechten and Professor Emerita Dorene Isenberg as panelists, along with committee chair Cassie MacDuff, as the panel of moderators asking the questions.

The candidates all thanked AAUW, as we were the only organization presenting a candidate event in this election cycle.

The council candidate forum was held in the Casa Loma Room. We had about 75 people in attendance. We were very pleased with the turnout.

The school board forum was held by Zoom, and this seemed to make it accessible for even more people. At the peak, we had 163 viewers online.

### Lobby Days

The Public Policy Committee also participated in Lobby Days, the AAUW California annual event to advocate on behalf of AAUW's top priority bills with state legislators.

AAUW-CA usually insists on scheduling the meetings in Sacramento or by Zoom, for all of the branches all over the state. This year, we got permission to schedule our own meetings in the districts, as we believe doing so in person in the districts is more conducive to ongoing relationships with our legislators and their staffs.

AAUW California remarked that it was impressive that our branch had 10 members participating, apparently the most of any branch in the state this year. AAUW-CA is now considering allowing all branches to schedule their own Lobby Days meetings.

We reached out to all eight of our Inland Empire legislators whose districts include our service area: state Sen. Rosicilie Ochoa Bogh, state Sen. Eloise Gomez Reyes, state Sen. Sabrina Cervantes, Assembly Assistant Majority Leader Robert Garcia, Assemblymember James Ramos, Assemblymember Leticia Castillo, Assemblymember Greg Wallis, Assemblymember Tom Lackey.

Ochoa Bogh, Garcia and Lackey met with us in person. The rest provided staff members, which is not at all unusual for advocacy meetings.

We advocated on behalf of AAUW-CA's top three bills, including AB 579, authored by Castillo, which AAUW strongly opposed. That bill died without a committee hearing.

The others were advocating in support of SB 771 to make social media platforms civilly responsible for content that is criminal, such as hate speech inciting violence, and SB 418 to ensure equal access to health care regardless of gender identity.

AAUW Redlands members who represented our branch in these meetings included; Kathryn Brown, Patty Ahearn, Twilea Evans-Carthen, Erica Wilson, Ellen Gruenbaum, Jane Weldon, Susan Burnett, Thelma Korpman, and committee chair Cassie MacDuff. Member Jocelyn Yow went to the state Capitol for Lobby Day. The rest of us met in the districts.

All of us had to attend two hours of online training on the bills we were to speak about, and three of us (Ellen, Susan and Cassie) had an additional hour of Zoom training with AAUW-CA lobbyist Kathy Van Osten on AB 579, since it was sensitive as we were to meet with one of our legislators who was the author and AAUW was opposing her bill.

### Other Items

In addition to these activities, chair Cassie MacDuff attended the bi-monthly Zoom meetings of all AAUW branch Public Policy chairs and presented reports on committee activities at branch board meetings, when she was able to attend.

Cassie also discussed partnering with the DEI/Racial Justice committee to monitor Redlands Unified School District meetings, with AAUW-R DEI officer Ellen Gruenbaum. We decided to rotate the assignment among those volunteering so no one has to attend every meeting. The monitor will share a summary of the meeting with the two committees afterwards. Cassie took the first shift, watching and writing up a summary of pertinent discussion and action (or lack of action) on related items. Volunteer Andrea Morics and Ellen took the second and third shifts.

The committee will continue to meet the fourth Tuesdays at 7 p.m. We are already planning the activities for the coming AAUW year.

## Diversity, Equity and Inclusion/Racial Justice Committee

Respectfully submitted by Ellen Gruenbaum, Erica Wilson, and Donita Remington

### Background

The DEI/Racial Justice Committee had been meeting once or twice a month by Zoom, dating back to 2020, after the George Floyd murder and during the Covid pandemic. When we became the AAUW Redlands DEI committee, we continued this pattern.

### Meeting changes

This year our big change was to begin meeting in person. That change led to a lot of enthusiasm and better attendance. Since some people were coming from greater distances (Riverside or Hemet), we shifted the meetings from twice a month to just once a month for two hours, starting at 6 p.m., and including food. Ellen's home and Kathryn's cabana have been our two locations so far, since they are located centrally.

### Juneteenth

We continued our annual practice of tabling at the Juneteenth celebration in Redlands, at Sylvan Park, in June 2024. Our goal has been to facilitate the AAUW membership and African American Community people being more aware of each other. We hoped to recruit new members and make new contacts. We have been pleased with that effort. (For example, at previous Juneteenth events we started getting to know some of the African American women involved in academic sororities, we gathered names for possible interest in AAUW, met a CSUSB professor who hoped to find an internship placement with AAUW for her students—she is now a member and the internship is being developed—and our community visibility was increased.) We plan to continue our participation in the Juneteenth event for 2025, which will be celebrated in Redlands on Saturday, June 21. We are using our budget to purchase hand fans as giveaways, with AAUW Redlands info.

### School Board Project

Because of our concern about racial justice and the ways that the “culture wars” antagonisms in our society have been playing out, we have for several years tried to keep informed about the terrible situation of the school board in Temecula, which has tried to ban teaching about diversity (through its anti-“Critical Race Theory” policies, book restrictions, etc.), which led one of our colleagues from AAUW to be very involved in a recall election to try to stop the trend. Because we had been aware of that process, we had taken an interest in the slate of what we considered “extremist” candidates, similar to Temecula, sponsored by the so-called “Moms for Liberty” organization, who were running for the Redlands Unified School District this past election cycle. Although our branch does not endorse or get involved in elections, we thought it was particularly important that our

Candidate Forum include School Board Candidates so the voters would be better informed. Our Public Policy Committee featured a Zoom forum on the school board election.

Since January, we have collaborated with the Public Policy Committee to monitor the school board meetings, in accordance with our branch's strategic plan and the AAUW California's Public Policy Committee recommendations. We have submitted a few summaries of board meeting observations to the AAUW Redlands board and some of us have done training webinars with AAUW California to learn more about how to do school board monitoring. We discussed the wording of the AAUW Redlands strategic plan goal concerning the school board and submitted revised wording, which the board adopted.

## Discussions

The chance to discuss readings and new political developments against diversity in our society has been a valued activity. We hope to do more reading in the coming year. Our current reading is *Prequel: An American Fight Against Fascism*, by Rachel Maddow (2023), which details the history of the uniquely American strain of authoritarianism and racism, the disinformation it spread, and the ultra-right paramilitary movement that was particularly active during the period prior to and during WW II. The book highlights the heroic efforts to counter the growth of fascist ideas in the U.S., the failures of the legal system at the time, and how these events are related to what is happening in the current era.

## Fundraising

Submitted by Amy Bisek and Heather Abushanab

This newly formed committee identified three areas of focus for this year: Direct ask funding, Bridge Scramble, and FilmFest. We have learned from veteran fundraisers that the most efficient and easiest fundraising is building good relationships with people and organizations who might appreciate our mission and then asking them for funding. Event fund raising is one of the most labor-intensive ways to fundraise, though there are advantages to events, like raising our profile in the community and providing a fun activity that is associated with our brand, that go beyond the money earned at an event.

The committee created a master excel sheet to track all donations and sponsorships for the entire branch so that the events and the direct asks were aware of both efforts. We targeted some businesses for direct asks and others to pursue for sponsorships and in-kind donations for our events.

The committee met every other Tuesday morning to keep each other accountable on the various tasks. At various times, efforts were focused on primarily one area. Bridge Scramble planning began through this umbrella group, but moved over to its own planning committee, pulling in additional members.

### Direct Fundraising

This took place throughout the year with a sub-set of the larger committee doing most of the work. Kate Pretorius has been in charge of these efforts for the STEM committee for many years and most of the efforts in this area were direct asks for specific STEM Initiatives. Susan Bangasser pursued a grant thru Yuhaaviatam of San Manuel Nation specifically for NCCWSL, keeping this group informed. Direct asks for general Mission Fund activities did not really develop for this year, but the foundation for that has been created.

### FilmFest 2025

The FilmFest 2025 Mission Fund fundraiser was held on April 25, 2025 to resounding success, achieving all branch goals. Further details can be found in the full FilmFest 2025 Report stored in the Teams Fundraising channel FilmFest 2025 documentation.

Planning Committee: Heather Abushanab, Marianne Baldwin, Amy Bisek, Kathryn Brown, Marcella Cavallaro, Mary Lou Guerrero, Sue Hall, Krista Moreno, Kate Pretorius, Lisa Wright. Approximately 20 additional volunteers supported the event preparation and evening-of activities.

Logistics



- Ticket price: \$50 sold at branch meetings, directly by members, and through Eventbrite with a fee
- Event venue: Esri Café and Auditorium with support from Esri Catering (Aramark), Esri Events (Café setup), Esri A/V, and Esri Security
- Event timing: 5:45-6:45 pm reception in Café; 7pm emcee introduced event. 7:15 films started. 8:45 ish films ended, followed by the raffle drawing for 10 opportunity baskets
- Opportunity baskets: tickets 12 for \$20, 5 for \$10, 2 for \$5
- Four sponsor levels: Oscar \$1500 (2 qty, plus esri); Golden Globe \$1000 (0), Emmy \$500 (12 qty) and People's Choice \$300 (approx. 6 qty)

### Distinguishing 2025 Successes

- Net revenue: \$18,236 (\$30,351 gross revenue, \$12,115 cost)
- Sold out attendance: 365 tickets sold or distributed to sponsors/supporters
- Increased sponsor revenue (doubled over 2024)
- Improved promotional communications quality and expanded promotional outreach by including broadcast media.
- Member-sourced short films and filmmaker introductions were compiled into a single reel by a branch member, allowing the branch greater flexibility for additional revenue generation in the future, pending filmmaker agreement for additional distribution.
- Improved room set up resulted in better attendee flow, less buffet wait time, etc.

### Bridge Scramble Fall 2024

The Fall Bridge Scramble was held Thursday October 24<sup>th</sup> of 2024. A previous Bridge Scramble was held in the spring of 2024, but it was determined that this event would work better for the branch as a fall event to move it away from both the FilmFest and STEM Conferences. A full report of the event can be found in the Teams Fundraising channel Bridge Scramble documentation.

Planning Committee included: Heather Abushanab, Amy Bisek, Kathryn Brown, MaryLou Guerrero, Linda Rowland, and Louise Schumann

### Logistics

- Sign-up were done in pairs, \$50 per person. At branch meetings, through emailed flyers returned by mail, and directly by committee members.
- Event Venue: Dyke's Chapel, 1<sup>st</sup> Methodist Church for a nominal \$100 fee
- Event time: 9:30 check-in, 10:00-1:00 play, 1:00-2:00 luncheon
- 36 players (18 teams, 9 card tables)
- Baked goods and Bridge supplies were sold to supplement revenue.

- Majority of bridge supplies came from Louise, with card tables from a variety of members.

#### Results and Recommendations

- Net Revenue: \$1887 (\$384 in expenses, \$2271 in entry fees, bakesale and donations.)
- In kind donations included bake sale items, paper goods, snacks & drinks, prizes, and bridge supplies)
- The event takes the same amount of effort for 8 or 80 players, so it is important to maximized attendance. Next year our goal is 12 tables of players. Increased marketing is needed.
- Wednesday Oct 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2025, is chosen for our next event. Dyke's Chapel has been reserved. This date has the least number of community bridge conflicts during the week.
- Have breakfast and snack items available for purchase as part of the bakesale, rather than just cookies.

## Stem Initiatives

Submitted by Kathryn Brown, Pam Ford, Betsy Grimes & Donita Remington

### Overview

AAUW Redlands sponsors two annual STEM conferences for 8th grade girls and annually selects 8-12 (depending on funds and camp openings availability) 7th grade girls to receive scholarships to attend week-long AAUW CA -sponsored TechTrek camps, both virtual and residential at the University of San Diego and Whittier College campuses. The conferences and TechTrek camps have two primary goals: to encourage girls to keep their educational options open by embracing math & science classes in high school and to expose girls to successful women role models from a variety of STEM careers. Secondary goals include promoting self-confidence, positive peer relationships, aspiration to higher education and recognition of the value of science and math education in most areas of modern life.

### 31st Annual STEM Conference for 8th Grade Girls (Mount San Jacinto College 1/9/2025)

2024-25 began with a challenge for the “Pass Area” Conference. The Beaumont school district was scheduled to have students on winter break at the time of the conference at MSJC. The only other school district in the MSJC outreach area whose students could attend in early January is Hemet. We recruited Hemet and Banning girls to attend. We changed the name of the conferences to clarify their locations rather than the districts served. Hemet will participate again in 2026, and Beaumont will attend at UoR. Erica Alfaro was the keynote speaker & was well-received by students and staff alike. The conference was small since Hemet students were unfamiliar with this opportunity. Our contact at HUSD will be able to increase attendance for 2026. The small size was a benefit since this was the first year we used the new STEM building. With the small conference, all workshops were on the same floor & in the adjacent Makerspace. Our physics workshop was carried out in a lab setting which was a first! Branch volunteers were outstanding and numerous. Conference costs were covered by grants.

### 31st Annual STEM Conference for 8th Grade Girls (University of Redlands 3/4/2025)

The 2025 conference program and photos are both available for viewing on the AAUW STEM Teams channel. Based on 2024 reports of anticipated expense increases and input from both U of R event staff and our AAUW volunteers, conference attendance this year was pre-set at 614 (575 students, 39 staff.) District enrollment was limited as follows: Redlands (290 students, 16 staff), Yucaipa (186 students, 16 staff) and Beaumont (100 students, 7 staff; included for the first time this year due to their unavailability on the date

of the MSJC conference.) Applications exceeded enrollment capacity at most schools; robust waitlists were encouraged (129 students were on the waitlists), and the result was very few empty seats on conference day. Conference reviews were (once again!) overwhelmingly positive. New-this-year Keynote speaker Erica Alfaro received very positive reviews and has offered to serve again next year at no increase in cost. Timing challenges included the tight Chapel welcome schedule (late buses) and tight intervals between Workshops, Lunch and the STEM Fair segments. The adult volunteer lunch in the Casa Loma room was well-attended by both the speakers and AAUW volunteers; student lunch consumption was satisfactory—the cut fruit salad was popular. Several of the newer STEM committee members increased efficiency and expertise in the areas of Chapel slides, printing, speaker scheduling and day-of volunteer planning. Total conference cost was approximately \$19,000, which was covered 100% by 2024-25 fundraising.

## TechTrek 2025

Our TT program was challenged this year by the untimely death of longtime committee Chair Denise Westcott, leaving Co-chair Donita Remington solely in charge as of January, just as the 2025 student applications were made available to them online. Staff at Clement (Redlands), Park View (Yucaipa), San Geronio (Beaumont) and Nicolet (Banning) middle schools were encouraged to nominate at least 8 girls from each school. Results varied; both San Geronio and Nicolet had a minimum number of applicants. Fortunately, all the girls who completed the application process were deemed appropriate for camp participation based on their essays and interviews. We awarded 8 residential and 2 virtual scholarships. Two additional girls were named as alternates and offered virtual camp scholarships but declined to participate. Due to Denise's illness, no branch-wide TechTrek funding campaign was conducted, however, our TT program received credit for two unused camperships from the Hemet branch. In addition, Denise's family asked that individuals donate to the TT program in lieu of flowers and the program received support in Denise's honor. The TT alumni who participated in TT last year were given their certificates at their schools and expressed how much participating in the program meant to them. One of these girls requested funding from AAUW in support of her participation in a STEM and leadership-oriented summer program offered by Civil Air Patrol, Air Force Encampment, that was approved by the board. This alumna will be a peer counselor for the Virtual Tech Trek this year and attended our celebratory pizza party with her mother to answer questions and provide information to this year's campers. 9 of the 10 2025 campers and their families, plus the TT committee, all enjoyed a celebratory pizza party on May 21, 2025 where the girls were given their backpacks, including their Trek Tech Bear. All of the TT committee worked together to make this year's TT a success and to honor Denise's legacy.

## TechTrek Bears

To raise funds for STEM Initiatives, Kathryn Brown again sold small (6”) teddy bears, wearing a blue T-shirt with “AAUW TechTrek Camp” written on it, to other branches to distribute to their campers as a memento of their camp experience. This is a project begun by the now-defunct Victorville AAUW branch and passed on to AAUW Redlands several years ago. We also gifted each of our campers with one of the bears. Net sales in 2025 will be approximately \$1400.