



Fall Brunch a Success--Tech Trek Rules the Day

*Click [Here](#)
to See the
Story*



Judy Wolf tells the story of Tech Trek to captivated Tech Trekkers at the Fall Brunch.



Beatrix Woods and her mom, Katelyn Woods, at the Fall Brunch. Katelyn was Fremont Branch's first Tech Trekker in 1999.

Get Ready for the Holiday Party

With the Fall Brunch behind us, and Death by Chocolate Bingo planned for this Friday, November 1st, the next big thing will be our holiday party, scheduled for December 15 at the Nilas Discovery Church in Fremont.

Planning is underway, with Jo Szeto in charge of the arrangements. To learn the details, click [here](#).

Co-President's Message

We have been Empowering Women and Girls since 1881! That's 143 Years! We are this country's oldest and largest women's organization that can claim such a life span. Think about it—143 years of doing something RIGHT!

Leadership Team

Board of Directors

Co-Presidents - **Alice Manfredi & Jeanne Delp**

Vice President - **Jo Szeto**

Secretary - **Carolyn Hedgecock**

Branch Treasurer - **Phie Dai**

Program Chair - **Judy Wolf**

Membership Chair - **Jo Szeto**

Membership Treasurer & AAUW Fund Chair - **Jennifer Foster**

Public Policy Chair - **Jeanne Delp**

Note: Co-presidents include Jennifer Foster, Carolyn Hedgecock, and Remy Parmar

Foundation for Local Scholarships

President - **Kathy Garfinkle**

Secretary - **Randy Fewel**

Chief Financial Officer - **Bonnie Kellogg**

Programs Officer - **Sowjanya Vutukur**

Development Officer - **Open**

Special Interest Group Chairs

Afternoon Lit - **Joyce Ruiz**

Book Talk - **Margery Leonard**

Cultural Cuisine - **Judy Wolf**

Exploring the Arts - **Karen McCreedy**

Gifts to Give - **Shelley Bartley**

One Book, One Community Read - **Margery Leonard**

Tuesday ESL Chat - **Jui-Lan Liu**

Yoga for Body and Spirit - **Jo Szeto**

But WHAT do we do that's right? WHAT happens in AAUW? Who is in AAUW and WHY even join? These questions are listed on one of our flyers we post at each AAUW event, as we educate TODAY'S women about our organization and encourage them to join our journey to **Change the Conversation about Women**.



My own journey in AAUW began with the WHY even join. I confess that it was for selfish reasons—I wanted ME time: time away from my small children, more adult conversation, and, being new to the community, I wanted friends. I found all of that in AAUW. As my journey continues, with new responsibilities, I learn new skills, become more informed, and strengthen and expand my friendships. WHY? Because AAUW is doing something right.

Let's examine the WHAT happens in AAUW and WHAT it does. We educate our children, our families (boys and men included), our nation, and possibly the world to examples of societies that operate at a higher level when women are treated with equality. AAUW sees the need for equal

access to public education for all students, economic security for ALL women, social and racial justice for ALL of society, and increased representation of women in leadership roles. I believe AAUW's Public Policy furnishes that education, and our Fremont Branch presents programs that supply the pathways for women and girls to change the conversation. Examples include Discovery Day, STEM Summer Camp, Speech Trek, internships, scholarships, as well as just plain fun—CHOCOLATE BINGO!

The WHO in AAUW is the easiest to explain. It is women (and men) who believe in and support AAUW's mission: To advance gender equity for women and girls through research, education, and advocacy. Congratulations! You are a member of an

organization of concerned women (and men) who are doing something RIGHT and helping to **Change the Conversation about Women.**

Jeanne Delp
Co-President



AAUW Fremont Branch hosts

DEATH BY CHOCOLATE BINGO

Friday, November 1st!

Doors open at 6 PM
Bingo starts at 7 PM

Niles Canyon Mobile Estates
711 Old Canyon Rd, Fremont CA
94536

****Proceeds go to AAUW Ohlone College Scholarships****

\$25 per person /
\$15 for NCME residents
includes one free beverage

AAUW Fremont Inc. (CA) Branch Est. 1961
4 Star Branch

Public Policy

LILLY LEDBETTER and the WAGE GAP

By Jeanne Delp

Lilly Ledbetter, born in Possum Trot, Alabama, in 1938, grew up to become known for her equal-pay activism leading to the monumental **Lily Ledbetter Fair Pay Act of 2009**. This was the first bill signed into law by President Obama. Ledbetter became a public speaker, working with the National Women’s Law Center, wrote a memoir, *Grace and Grit*, and was inducted into the National Women’s Hall of Fame in 2011. She died in Alabama on October 12, 2024, at the age of 86.

Her story began as a supervisor at a Goodyear tire plant in Gadsden, Ala., in 1979. “Years later and close to retirement, Lilly received an anonymous note stating that she was receiving less pay than her male peers working in the same position. ‘When I saw that, it took my breath away. I felt humiliated. I felt degraded,’ Ledbetter recalled in an interview with NPR in 2009. ‘I had to sort of get my composure back to go ahead to perform my job and then, the first day off, I went to Birmingham, Ala., and filed a charge with the EEOC’ (Equal Employment Opportunity Commission). . . . That action in 1998 was the beginning of a 10-year legal fight for Ledbetter toward equity.

“She retired from Goodyear 11 months after she found out about the pay disparity and filed a gender discrimination lawsuit against the company in 1999. She won the suit in 2003 and was awarded more than \$3 million, but the amount was reduced to \$300,000, because of a statutory cap, and \$60,000 in back pay. Goodyear appealed the decision to the Supreme Court, arguing that Ledbetter could only win damages or back pay for the 180 days prior to the filing of her claim. In 2007, the high court agreed in a 5-4 ruling. . . .”

Justice Ginsburg dissented, claiming the 180-day limit was unfair as salaries were usually secret and urged Congress to address the issue. Congress acted two years later and the “**Lily Ledbetter Fair Pay Act of 2009** reset the clock for filing claims to 180 days from an employee’s latest paycheck, not just the first paycheck noted as discriminatory. The act amended the Civil Right Act of 1964 and allows workers “to obtain relief, including recovery of back pay for up to two years preceding the filing of the charge.”

Yes, we’ve come a long way, but--AAUW’s work is not yet finished.

As Missy Maceyko, co-chair Public Policy, AAUW-CA, explains:

“At the national and state levels, AAUW has been a leader in the fight for increased economic security for all women, becoming well known for putting out annual data on gender-based wage gaps. However, wage gaps are only one part of the much bigger picture of gender-based economic inequality. AAUW, following contemporary socio-economic research, conceptualizes economic insecurity as part of wealth gaps and debt cycles that are created by multiple factors, including the ballooning cost of higher education.

“Education is critically important for social and economic mobility. In 2024, young college graduates still tend to make more money than their counterparts who do not have a college degree and have higher earnings later in life. However, the value of higher education has become a more complicated calculus for many: as education costs have risen, overall income rates have remained stagnant and low-interest borrowing and repayment options to cover these costs have, in many cases, decreased. Without intergenerational wealth, ongoing family support, or scholarship wins, many Americans must go into debt to obtain a higher education.

“Women are disproportionately impacted by these increasing costs. Women tend to make less money directly after graduation when compared with men. This, combined with many additional factors, such as the tendency for women to be primarily responsible for the financial and emotional costs of household maintenance, such as caregiving,

makes any accrued student debt much harder for women to repay. **As such, women in the United States owe \$929 billion, or two-thirds of the nation’s student debt.**

“As part of the larger commitment to economic security for women, AAUW has been a leader in pushing for policies that meaningfully address massive increases in the cost of education and the student debt crisis. In California, reducing the cost of education and easing the financial burden of acquiring a degree remains central to AAUW California’s Public Policy Priorities, as well. In California, our work to reduce the burden of student debt falls under three of our four Public Policy Priority Pillars.

- Economic security for all women.
- Equal access to quality public education for all students.
- Increased representation of women in leadership roles, including access to programs that promote participation in public service careers.”

As Ledbetter said at the Democratic National Convention in 2012: "This cause, which bears my name, is bigger than me. It's as big as all of you. This fight, which began as my own, is now our fight—a fight for the fundamental American values that make our country great." Ledbetter also declared that, "what we lose can't just be measured in dollars.”

Sources for this issue include:

<https://www.npr.org/2024/10/14/nx-s1-5152538/lilly-ledbetter-pay-equity-obituary>

<https://www.nytimes.com/2024/10/14/obituaries/lilly-ledbetter-died>

<https://www.investopedia.com/terms/l/lilly-ledbetter-fair-pay-act.asp>

AAUW-CA Happenings

From the Board to Board Newsletter: National AAUW is updating its donations page on the website. At present, only the Greatest Needs Fund is available. To donate to other funds, contact Tremaine Parquet's office at (800) 326-2289. . . . In other news from National, the 5-Star program has been updated. You can see the list of qualifications [here](#). **AAUW Fremont Branch qualified for four stars in the program for 2023. We expect to qualify for all five stars in fiscal year 2024. The deadline to qualify is December 31.** . . . AAUW-CA publishes a newsletter called Board to Board (B2B), full of information about the various state committees, along with a brief note from Charmen Goehring, president of AAUW-CA. If you are interested in reading it for yourself, instead of just this synopsis, you can find it posted on the AAUW-CA [website](#). Alternately, you can add yourself to the distribution list by contacting webteam@aauw-ca.org. . . . The nominating committee is posting descriptions of the positions of the state board of directors and committee members for 2025. If you are interested in any of these positions, check the AAUW-CA website . . . **Don't forget to vote.**

Changemakers

Kristi Yamaguchi

Olympic Champion Figure Skater and Philanthropist

By Phie Dai

When I was six years old, my mother took me to the mall near our home in Hayward, CA. I saw figure skaters on an ice rink for the first time. They glided so gracefully on ice, I was mesmerized.

I begged my parents to let me take skating lessons. My doctor agreed it would be good therapy to strengthen my legs and feet because I was born with clubfoot. My feet were severely turned inward, so I had to wear casts to straighten them out on both legs. I had to wear corrective shoes and a special brace when I got older.

At my first skating competition, I finished 12th out of 13. I wasn't discouraged, I just kept practicing. My dream was winning an Olympic gold medal like my idol Dorothy Hamill. My parents knew nothing about skating, but they promised to support me as long as I tried my best and enjoyed it.

After graduating from high school, I moved to Canada to study with my skating coach. I practiced harder than ever and qualified for the 1992 Olympics after winning the National Championship. I won a gold medal and became the first Asian-American woman to do so in a Winter Olympics! My parents were so proud. My mother was born in a Japanese internment camp during WWII, and my father spent time in one as well. They never talk about it much, but I know they suffered a lot.

Right after the Olympics, I competed at the World Ice Championships held in Oakland, CA, near my childhood home. I won the gold medal and the distinction of attaining the triple crown of figure skating - National, Olympics, and World championships—all in one year! My childhood dream had finally come true.

I turned professional and toured with the Stars On Ice for 10 years. Our shows raised money for the Make-A-Wish Foundation, and I realized I had the power to make a difference. In 1996, I founded the Always Dream Foundation to encourage a love of reading to children.

If you have a dream like I had, you must work hard to make it come true. No matter what happens, reaching your personal best is very fulfilling. Remember to always dream!

Adapted from AAUW Thousand Oaks *Profiles of Women Past and Present*, 2018.



BRANCH NEWS

Editor's Note: Due to security concerns, members' home addresses, phone numbers, and email addresses are not printed in the Twig unless permission has been explicitly granted. Check your roster for member information.

Holiday Party, A Great Way to End Year

By Jo Szeto

You're Invited to our December 15th Holiday Party!

Come to the AAUW annual Holiday Party on Sunday, December 15th from 5 pm to 7 pm! This year we have a great new venue at Niles Discovery Church at 36600 Niles Blvd in Fremont.



They had a good time at the 2023 holiday party. Here AAUW members, wearing reindeer antlers, are reciting the classic poem *A Visit from Saint Nicholas*, commonly known as *'Twas the Night before Christmas*.

The Daily Beats Band, led by my son Gene Wang, will be performing. Come listen to old jazz favorites, soft rock and sing-along to popular holiday music. We'd like to fill both of the big rooms we rented, so, by all means, invite your friends and family.

About food and registration: please bring an appetizer or contribute \$10 cash at the door. Please register **before December 9th** by email

to: joszeto1e9@gmail.com or call Jo at [510-793-9901](tel:510-793-9901). It would be a great help if you can register as soon as possible because it is really hard to plan without knowing how many people will attend.

'Tis the season to be jolly! Brighten your holidays! Attend the 2024 AAUW Holiday Party! See you there!

To advance gender equity for women and girls through research, education, and advocacy.

Fall Brunch Features Tech Trekkers and Fun

By Kathy Garfinkle

Fall Brunch was held at the Niles Discovery Church on Saturday, October 19. It was educational, inspiring, and just plain fun. The room was set with blue and silver tablecloths and beautiful flowers provided by Jan Van De Werfhorst. There were colorful goodie bags stuffed by Muriel Rodrigues at the tables for all attendees. Members and guests had an opportunity to visit and sign in at the section (interest group) tables before sitting down for brunch.

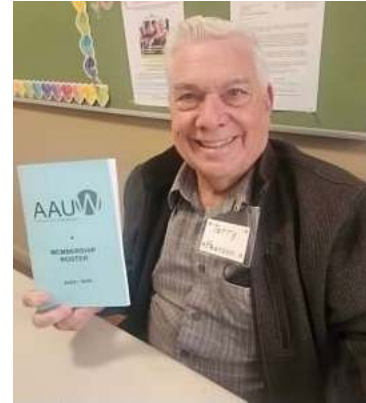


Judy Wolf, left, and Kathy Scrivani at the brunch.

The Fall Brunch committee, headed by Judy Wolf and Remy Parmar, came up with a unique and creative menu that featured a baked potato with all the toppings provided by our members. Our amazing Kathy Scrivani baked 70+ potatoes for our dining pleasure! Linda Pearson provided the yummy pumpkin spice muffins. A lovely, very berried, green salad, assembled by new member Leslie Wang, completed the menu.

Jeanne Delp, the acting co president, called the brief business meeting to order. The budgets for both the Branch and the Foundation for the fiscal year 2024-25 were presented to our members. Click [here](#) to see the approved Branch budget and [here](#) to see the Foundation budget.

There were many highlights during the program that touched our hearts and made us smile. We heard from our Ohlone scholarship recipients, Alain Morel and Alexis Gonsalves, when they were introduced by Foundation President Kathy Garfinkle. She also acknowledged Aunyah Campbell, who was unable to attend.



Terry Pearson mans the roster table. He and wife Linda create the rosters every year.



Treasurer Phie Dai and new member Rick Hood are enjoying the day.

The Tech Trek girls, coached by Jo Szeto, presented a polished and well-rehearsed skit describing their memorable experiences at Tech Trek camp. Katelyn Woods, our keynote speaker and Fremont Branch's very first Tech Trekker, told us that no one in her family had gone to college but that attending Tech Trek convinced her that she too was meant to attend college like the girls she met at camp.

One of the most poignant presentations occurred when Judy Wolf gathered the Tech Trek girls to sit at her feet as she sat and recounted the history of Tech Trek. It was Marie Wolbach's story of her vision for the camp and Judy's very personal connection as her experience as a first-year dorm mom in the summer of 1999 with 21 girls under her wings.

We are proudly celebrating the 25th anniversary of Tech Trek in our Fremont Branch. We heard from Sowjanya Vutukur, our dedicated Tech Trek chair. We also heard from former Tech Trekker Shanvi Gupta, a ninth-grade student at Kennedy High. Shanvi is also currently in Speech Trek for high school students and is serving a valuable role as our student intern.



This year's Tech Trekkers are back row, from left, Navreet Salhotra, Alyzandra Lopez, Mikayla Weiss, and Cassandra Lim, and, front row, Nicole and Natalie Pham.



50-year member Mary Lynn Pelican, from left, Co-President Remy Parmar, and our intern, Shanvi Gupta, smile for the camera.

Kathy Garfinkle presented Mary Lynn Pelican with the pin honoring her 50 years of membership in AAUW. Kathy closed the program with a thank you to everyone for attending. We all gave a big thank you to Judy Wolf for chairing the event and Kathy Scrivani for baking all those potatoes. Everyone was reminded to attend the Death By Chocolate Bingo, our big fundraiser for Local Scholarships, to be held this Friday, November 1st, at Niles Canyon Mobile Home Estates.

AAUW FREMONT BRANCH
 FISCAL YEAR 2025 BUDGET FORECAST
 Covering period July 1, 2024 - June 30, 2025



Branch Budget

	FY 2023 ACTUALS (7/1/22-6/30/23)	FY 2024 ACTUALS (7/1/23-6/30/24)	FY 2025 BUDGET (7/1/24-6/30/25)
OPERATING INCOME:			
Branch dues income	\$784	\$1,427	\$1,400
Bank Interest Income (FY25 forecast = \$10,000 Bank CD @ 4.65% interest rate)	\$22	\$12	\$450
Member Donations	\$989	\$2,416	\$1,000
Membership Event Income:			
Fall Brunch (October)	\$558	\$370	\$1,000
Holiday Party (December)	\$0	\$0	\$0
Bi-Branch Fellow Luncheon (February)	\$441	\$629	\$700
Installation Luncheon (June)	\$150	\$500	\$700
TOTAL INCOME:	\$2,944	\$5,354	\$5,250
OPERATING EXPENSES:			
One Book, One Community Read (Sept)	-\$99	-\$151	-\$60
Fall Brunch (October)	-\$850	-\$958	-\$1,000
Holiday Party (December)	-\$300	-\$191	-\$500
Bi-Branch Fellow Luncheon (February)	-\$505	-\$610	-\$700
Installation Luncheon (June)	-\$62	-\$700	-\$700
Administrative Expenses:			
AAUW CA Liability Insurance	-\$428	-\$439	-\$450
PO Box Rental Fee	-\$258	-\$274	-\$300
Membership Roster	-\$226	-\$285	-\$500
Misc. Operating Expenses	-\$197	-\$212	-\$200
TOTAL EXPENSES:	-\$2,925	-\$3,820	-\$4,410
BUDGET SURPLUS OR DEFICIT	\$19	\$1,534	\$840

FREMONT AREA AAUW FOUNDATION FOR LOCAL SCHOLARSHIPS
 FISCAL YEAR 2025 BUDGET FORECAST
 Covering period July 1, 2024 - June 30, 2025

Foundation Budget

	FY 2023 ACTUALS (7/1/22-6/30/23)	FY 2024 ACTUALS (7/1/23-6/30/24)	FY 2025 BUDGET (7/1/24-6/30/25)
INCOME:			
Donations	\$8,501	\$20,058	\$10,000
FY 2025 Niles Rotary Grant	\$0	\$0	\$2,400
Program Income:			
Discovery Day (on hiatus in 2025)	\$908	\$802	\$0
Tech Trek	\$350	\$308	\$350
Bank Interest Income	\$654	\$726	\$700
TOTAL INCOME:	\$10,413	\$21,894	\$13,450
EXPENSES:			
Discovery Day (on hiatus in 2025)	-\$197	-\$1,221	\$0
Tech Trek	-\$7,945	-\$7,925	-\$8,400
Speech Trek	-\$462	\$0	-\$1,650
Ohlone Scholarships	-\$8,500	-\$7,034	-\$5,500
NCCWSL	-\$1,125	\$0	-\$1,500
CA State Charitable Trust Renewal Fee	-\$25	-\$25	-\$25
TOTAL EXPENSES:	-\$18,254	-\$16,205	-\$17,075
BUDGET SURPLUS or DEFICIT	-\$7,841	\$5,689	-\$3,625



2024 Elections

Fremont Branch Interns Discuss Kamala Harris

Editor's Note: The presidential election is in a few days, and for AAUW Fremont Branch's three interns, each with an Indian background, it is exciting to see a role model in the race.

By Shanvi Gupta, ninth grader at John F. Kennedy High School, Speech Trek 2025 participant and 2023 Tech Trek alumna



In the 2024 elections, we have seen a wonderfully shocking twist--Vice President Kamala Harris is now running for president against

former President Donald Trump.

As an Indian-American girl growing up in the United States, I was energized to see VP Harris' selection for this position.

This obviously was an immense matter of pride--not just for the Indian-American community, but for the other diaspora communities, too. VP Harris does not just have Indian roots, but Jamaican ones, too, and she is a woman, which will make her the first female to become president in the

Click [here](#) to read the rest of the column

By Ameya Ravi, 11th grader at Washington High School, 2023 Speech Trek finalist and California State Contest 3rd Place winner, and Branch Intern



Vice President Kamala Harris has the opportunity to change our nation this fall and become the first female

president. Already the first female Vice President, she has experience in office to back her up. All it comes down to now is the home stretch before the election.

Kamala Devi Harris, born October 20, 1964, in Oakland, California, has become a trailblazer in politics. Born to immigrant parents, Harris grew up in an "ordinary household." She often uses her roots to connect and relate to the struggles of everyday American people. After

Click [here](#) to read the rest of the column

By Harshini Sanjay, senior at James Logan High School, 2022 Speech Trek 3rd place winner, and STEM intern

As a woman of color myself, growing up in a country where we advocated for women's rights and equality without ever having a woman for president was an intriguing concept for me. And as we get closer and closer to a possible reality of a woman president, my hopes are both filled with incredulity and skepticism but great anticipation.

Let me begin by saying that in the upcoming 2024 elections, I both expect and predict Vice President Kamala Harris to win. She has shown more than capability with her campaigns as

Click [here](#) to read the rest of the column

Shanvi's Story Continues.

United States if she wins.

The Indian-American community has been growing in America, contributing to a little over 1% of America's population. I identify a lot with American culture, but I also maintain my close ties to my Indian roots, and so I look forward to VP. Harris continuing to improve relations with India and her help to combat racist and religious discrimination towards any and all diasporic communities.

Additionally, VP Harris has been amazingly vocal about all the issues she believes in, like border policies, abortion rights, Israel and Gaza, and more.

For me, an enormous issue is climate change, and what's been really upsetting right now is that no one is willing to really do anything truly impactful about it. VP Harris, on the other hand, has been working on this since the beginning. When she was California attorney general, she sued oil companies to decrease pollution. This shows us Kamala Harris has the courage to enter into complex topics and actually do better for the country.

Watching the Democratic National Convention was exhilarating! In her speech, Ms. Harris talked about many essential points. She talked about having a strong middle class and an opportunity economy. Right now, about 4.3% of the US population is jobless, and it is so, so, important to bring this number down as quickly as possible. Harris also clearly stated her standing on reproductive rights.

Overall, I am proud of where VP Harris is standing now, and of the trailblazing feats she has already accomplished. I really hope she becomes our first female president, but even if she doesn't, she will always be a role model to many young girls out there--just like me!

Ameya's Story Continues

graduating from high school, Harris attended Howard University and learned the power of community and identity sharing. "The thing that Howard taught me is that you can do any collection of things, and not one thing to the exclusion of the other." She embodied this throughout her career, going from earning her law degree to starting a career in the Alameda County District Attorney's Office. Eventually, she ascended the ladder in the legal world, becoming the first woman and person of color to become San Francisco's District Attorney in 2003 and later becoming the first woman and person of color to serve as California's Attorney General. She made history yet again, getting elected to the U.S. Senate in 2016. In 2020, Harris was elected Vice President of the United States, and her role has been marked by various contributions.

Throughout her career, Harris has championed causes such as criminal justice reform, immigration rights, and healthcare access. As a young American woman, her success is inspiring. It is inspiring to know that many young women like myself can follow in her footsteps. She has shared a philosophy she holds close to her heart: "You may be the first, but make sure you're not the last," which is heartening. Her success as a Vice President and her potential to become the first female President of the United States is a testament to her resilience, determination, and leadership.

However, the road to presidency, while seemingly close, is going to be a taxing period and requires her to do a compelling job articulating her vision for the country and convincing people that she is the better candidate.

Speech Trek Alumna

California's Racial Justice Act

By Rhea Jain, second-year Stanford University student (Human Biology major)

Editor's Note: Rhea Jain is the 2021 and 2022 Speech Trek Fremont Branch finalist and the 2022 California State Contest second-place winner.

As an alumna of Speech Trek, I've carried forward the values of advocacy, effective communication, and equity into my academic journey and professional experiences. This summer, I had the privilege of interning at the Contra Costa Public Defender's Office, where these values found new meaning and urgency in the fight for racial justice within our legal system.



Working in the Post Conviction Unit, I focused on cases involving the Racial Justice Act, a groundbreaking law in California that addresses systemic racism in criminal proceedings. My role involved conducting literature reviews on leading academics, coordinating with expert witnesses, and analyzing data on racially-biased policing and prosecution. The culmination of my work involved drafting my findings and then making presentations to supervising attorneys.

This research wasn't just academic—it directly supported our attorneys in building stronger cases for clients who may have faced discrimination in their interactions with the justice system.

As a young woman of color aspiring to enter the legal profession, this experience was both enlightening and sobering. The data we uncovered often revealed stark disparities in how different communities are policed and prosecuted. It reinforced why organizations supporting equity and education for women and girls are so crucial—they help prepare the next generation to recognize and challenge these systemic inequalities. I learned how women of color today still face demeaning stereotypes that can shape others' perceptions of them in the courtroom and beyond, before they even speak a word. Once again, my work affirmed the importance and nuances of effective communication skills, including the role of individual cultural, socioeconomic, and experiential backgrounds.

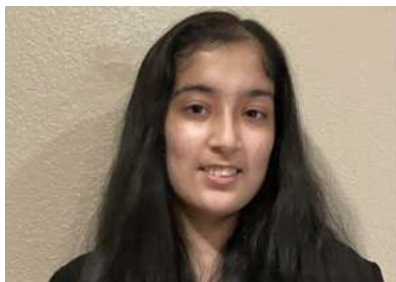
The public defender office's commitment to systemic change was evident in how they approached these cases. Our research wasn't simply filed away; it became part of a larger strategy to identify patterns of bias and build compelling arguments for reform. The office uses this information to advocate for policy changes, educate the community, and most importantly, provide representation for clients who have been unfairly targeted or treated by the criminal justice system.

As an intern, I was struck by the office's inclusive culture. The attorneys I worked with—many of them women—were not only brilliant legal minds but also dedicated mentors. They encouraged me to voice my perspectives and valued my contributions to case strategies. This supportive environment showed me what's possible when women are empowered to pursue careers in law and public service, a pathway I hope to go into someday as an aspiring attorney.

Looking back at my Speech Trek days, I see how that experience planted the seeds for my current path. The program taught me to articulate my thoughts on complex social issues and to use my voice for positive change. Now, at Stanford and through experiences like this internship, I'm putting those skills into practice, working towards an emergent future where justice truly is not contingent on race, gender, and background.

For other young women considering law or public service, I encourage you to seek out experiences that challenge you and align with your values. The path may not always be easy, but the opportunity to contribute to meaningful change makes every challenge worthwhile.

Harshini's Story Continues



well as the presidential debates against former President Donald Trump and would receive my ballot if I were old enough to vote. However, as a speech and debate student and politics enthusiast, it doesn't mean there aren't concerns with what Vice President Harris believes in or supports.

VP Harris' major problem to tackle in her possible presidency would be the economy. It's true that our economy has been regulated due to the Biden-Harris administration and that growth as well as employment are at an all-time high. What persists about the fundamental problem is the fact that inflation and job growth, specifically, are skyrocketing and stagnant, respectively. Many Americans are seeing continuous job stagnation and find that the cost of living in several places in this nation is simply unaffordable. Now, VP Harris has proposed mortgage assistance to first-time home buyers and tax credits to people from low-income communities as well as first-time parents. She has also



Pauline Weaver (left) presents a check for \$750 to Foundation President Kathy Garfinkle. The money will be used to increase prizes for the Speech Trek competition, to be held March 1.

emphasized her support for reducing grocery prices in order to combat inflation. Whether these promises will actually be implemented in the future with VP Harris as president is a question we are all waiting to see answered, as several efforts have been made to support the economy in the past and those have simply not sufficed.

I personally support VP Harris' stance on abortion. As discussed in the first presidential debate, her views on women's rights are bound to garner almost all, if not complete, support from women as it is ultimately a question of privacy and the right of a woman to her own body. What I believe will be the next biggest issue for her to tackle will be the involvement of the U.S. in the Middle Eastern and European wars and geopolitical tensions that are arising. While VP Harris advocates for a ceasefire in Gaza, the entire situation is much more complicated than that. The expectations of the American public are certainly divided in this matter and over the ties we have with Israel.

Ultimately, the odds seem to be in favor of VP Harris, for the time being, and she herself shows great competence for the role of president of the United States. As Americans are becoming increasingly more restless with issues in our society, it sets the stage for what she has to live up to in the hopeful future with her as president..

SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS



Exploring the Arts

By Karen McCready

Tuesday, November 5, 11:15 am

Conclave (2 hrs.), \$7 (+\$1.89 for non-members of Movie Club) Cinemark at Pacific Commons, Fremont

What to do on election day? Focus on the Vatican's dilemma in the 15th Century when the Pope suddenly died.

Call Karen McCready if you want to join the group for lunch at Market Broiler after the movie--about 1:30, whether or not you attend the movie.

Wednesday, November 6th, 2024, 9:30am to 10:30am (leaving Fremont by 8 am)

Book Club: *The Lost Notebook of Edouard Manet*, by Maureen Gibbon

Triton Museum of Art (\$5 suggested fee)

1505 Warburton Avenue, Santa Clara, CA 95050

This novel in the form of a diary written by Manet imagines the final months of the life of the French painter. In this novel, he reflects on his declining health, his artistic legacy, and his personal relationships while struggling with the effects of syphilis. The writer's blending of true events with mostly fictional storytelling enables readers to look through the eyes of the artist--learning more about his creative process, his deep connection to his art, and his thoughts about the art scene, all while facing his untimely death. Join Triton Executive Director and art historian Preston Metcalf for a deeper inspection into Manet and the history of French art.

Call Karen McCready to join a carpool for this event and for lunch after at our favorite Santa Clara restaurant.

Saturday, November 9 at 3 pm

Bay Philharmonic Youth Orchestra (BPYO)

BPYO Season Opener: Music for the People (free event)

Irvington Presbyterian Church, 4181 Irvington Ave., Fremont, CA 94538

Go to YouTube for Bay Phil--Dr. Carlos Hernandez Excerpts to see the new music director drawing amazing music from these young musicians.

Sunday, December 15, 2024, at 3 pm

BayPhilharmonic Holiday Spectacular!

Chabot College Performing Arts Center

25555 Hesperian Blvd, Hayward, CA 94545

*Parking is FREE on Sundays

Contact Karen McCready for help with tickets. Orchestra Seats: Tier 1, \$89; Tier 2, \$77. If you don't have your seats yet for the Holiday concert on December 15th, an easier way to get a good orchestra seat is to contact the Box Office Manager. She will direct you to the best seats available, not on the balcony because there is no elevator.

Box Office Manager: katie@bayphil.org or at 341-201-4206

Gifts to Give

By Shelley Bartley

Sharon Yool is getting her colorful knitted blankets ready to donate to Abode Homeless Shelter on November 7th.



Sharon's eleven blankets will make perfect Christmas gifts for some lucky residents at Abode.

It looks like Sharon's cat, Joey, is hoping he will get one of Sharon's cozy blankets for himself. Sharon is also the Gifts to Give section leader for collecting gifts for kindergarten-through-third-grade students at Abode.

If you are interested in crocheting, knitting, or

crocheting edges around a fleece blanket for 2025, please contact Shelley Bartley. Adults and children at Abode Homeless Shelter love receiving one of our special blankets!



Interest Group Meetings

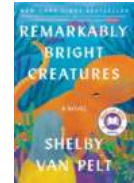
Afternoon Lit

Afternoon lit will meet at the home of Pauline Weaver on November 19 at 2 pm. She will review *Just Mercy* by Bryan Stevenson. Please let her know if you are attending.



Book Talk

Carol Ramos will lead a discussion of *Remarkably Bright Creatures* by Shelby Van Pelt at her home on November 11, 3-4:30 p.m..



Cultural Cuisine

Tuesday, November 19, at 6:30 pm is the time for the group to go to Momo & Kebab at 37100 Fremont Blvd. It is located in the Artist Walk complex just south of Thornton Blvd. The restaurant claims to be Nepalese/Himalayan but it seems very Indian.



Please RSVP by Sunday evening, November 17, to Judy with a call at 510-657-5589 or an email message to judyjudyjudy1940@gmail.com.

Tuesday Chat With ESL Students

Tuesday Chat meets every Tuesday afternoon from 4 p.m. to 5 p.m. at the Fremont Main Library, 4200 Stevenson, Fukaya Room A, to chat with ESL speakers about everyday topics. For more information, call Jui-Lan Liu at the Fremont Main Library at 510-745-1467, or email her at jliu@aclibrary.org.



Yoga for Body and Spirit

This group meets every Thursday at 11:15 at Jo Szeto's house. Lunch is included. For more information, call Jo.



Money, Money, Money

Matching Charitable Money Through Your Employer's Company

By Judy Wolf

Did you know or are you aware that many companies will match what you give to a 501(c)3 charity?

You who are still working, check with your company's HR department to see if that benefit is available to you. If so, get the forms the company has for the procedure and learn how you can do it and what you need to submit for the company's matching funds.

Our local Tri-City Foundation for Local Scholarships could benefit from your donation and your employer's matching funds. Check it out.

To advance gender equity for women and girls through research, education, and advocacy.

Important Dates

Deadlines for articles: 25th of the month before publication

Send items for The TWIG to Jennifer Foster at jejenfo@yahoo.com

- Don't forget Death by Chocolate Bingo. It's happening this **Friday**, the first, and doors open at **6 pm** at the Niles Canyon Mobile Home Estates, 711 Old Canyon Road, Fremont. Bingo begins at 7. This is a major fundraiser for the Foundation for Local Scholarships, and lots of the prizes will be chocolate. Each of the Special Interest Groups contributed a chocolate-themed basket as part of the evening's fun.
- The board directors also will meet on the first (**11/1**) at 10 am at Jo Szeto's house. If you would like to attend a board meeting, but can't meet at 10 am on a Friday, email us at aauwfremontbranch@gmail.com and let us know your availability.
- Our holiday party is coming up on **December 15** at Niles Discovery Church. Click [here](#) to read our story.
- The Speech Trek student recruitment period is in progress. The Branch competition will be on **March 1, 2025**. Please contact Remy Parmar, co-president and Speech Trek chair, if you'd like to become involved as speech writing and presentation mentors

Support Our Members



Enjoy new and bestselling titles for all ages personally curated by Amy and her staff at Banter Bookshop in downtown Fremont! **AAUW Fremont book club titles receive a 15% discount.** Click on the photo to browse Banter's in-store events.



Katryn Bury is the author of the 'tween detective series *Drew Leclair Gets a Clue* (nominated for 3 book awards), and *Drew Leclair Crushes the Case*. Katryn's third title, *We Are Not Alone*, hit shelves October 29th.

Alice's Photoland, your Twig Curator Alice Manfredi's professional portrait studio, covers all types of shoots such as: Family, Mother & Child, Maternity, Engagement, Graduations, and more. Reach out to her either by email or text to book a session.

