

May 2025





Co-President's Message

May Greetings to You. Remember the old saying – April Showers Bring May Flowers. I hope you can enjoy our May activity on the 18<sup>th</sup>.



When I open the *Twig* each month, I'm amazed by the many articles that appear. Maybe you are like me and look through the whole issue before reading any in detail. I think it is important to read at least one article before putting the *Twig* aside and coming back for the others later. That way I am inspired by the quality and importance of the information, and I will come back when I have more time. It's too easy to just skip through emails. I hope you are learning from these monthly *Twigs*.

Garolyn Hedgecock Go-Dresident

# Twig Highlights

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#### **Public Policy:**

# Lobby Days Were Here Again

#### By Jeanne Delp

I was an actual Lobby Day participant this year (April 8th and 9th)! And it was FUN, a feel-good experience, certainly educational and inspiring, and not at all the scary the "mission impossible" that I had imagined! I was scheduled to participate each of the past two years, but circumstance in Sacramento prevented my meetings from taking place. Disappointed, yes, somewhat relieved, yes, but determined to do my Citizen of California and AAUW duty, I registered again this year! And YOU should absolutely participate in 2026!

My team consisted of five AAUW members, three members from our Fremont Branch (me, Remy Parmar, and Diane Ross) with the other two representing neighboring branches. I was the contact person, so I sent emails to each team member with scripts concerning the three bills we would be presenting. Through emails we planned a ZOOM get together to acquaint ourselves with our preferred choice of script and plan our two individual presentations. We also made final meeting arrangements for our one zoom meeting on the morning of April 9, with Assemblymember Alex Lee, (District 24) and one zoom meeting in the afternoon with Assemblymember Liz Ortega, (District 20).

Four team members spoke to Alex Lee's Assembly Fellow who listened carefully and took notes about our information in support of Senate Bill 771, and Senate Bill 418, and a "NO" vote on Assembly Bill 579. She asked questions to clarify and indicated she felt Lee would be supportive of our wishes, but, of course, could not speak for him. All of this in 10-15 minutes!

In the afternoon we again presented our individual bills, BUT, we actually spoke to Assemblymember Liz Ortega. She was well informed about each bill and assured us her thinking matched that of AAUW's--support for SB771 and SB418, and a "NO" on AB 579. As leader, I introduced AAUW and the team and then closed the meetings.

A scheduling conflict of one of our team members necessitated a different team member presenting in the afternoon on AB 579. That was not a problem. Everyone was well prepared. We were a great team drawn together by our desire to advocate for ALL women and girls to be able to live in a healthy, supportive environment.

Again, I urge you to register for Lobby Days in 2026. It involves a few hours of your time, but scripts and facts for all presentations are made available for each of the chosen bills. You may actually READ the script if you choose. Our AAUW-CA Lobby Team has put together all the information you will need to participate (in LARGE PRINT, too!). I found there is no need for anxiety! To quote Lobby Days information: "RELAX! They're just people!"

WHEN you are a participant in 2026, you will reap the benefit of feeling as though you are fulfilling and furthering the goals of democracy. You will make our voice heard as a



member of AAUW CA and help inform the legislators of our mission: to advance equity for women and girls.

Quotes to be encouraged by:

- This from the League of Women Voters: "Democracy needs volunteers."
- And this from Jeannette Rankin (1880-1970) as the FIRST U.S. Congresswoman
  and the only woman to vote on giving women the right to vote. "Today as never
  before the Nation needs its women--needs the work of their hands and their hearts
  and their minds."

# State of the State

(From the Board to Board newsletter) If you like the zoom background used by AAUW panelists in webinars, you can use it by clicking here. That will take you to Logos on the AAUW California website. Scroll down to see the zoom backgrounds. To install the background, download it to your computer. While on Zoom, click on the carrot next to Video, click Choose video filter, click on Virtual backgrounds, click the +, then Add image, select the background you just downloaded. . . . Two new AAUW Funds are available if you want to donate, the Public Policy Fund and the Defend Higher Education Fund. . . . The annual convention of the National Conference for College Women Student Leaders will be held at the University of Maryland campus May 28th-30th. . . . National AAUW's voting period runs through May 13th, while AAUW-CA's voting period concludes on May 16th. Both elections cover various issues, bylaws, and board positions. AAUW-CA also put a \$10 dues increase on the ballot, or, as they like to phrase it, an \$.83 monthly increase. You received ballots in your email. Be sure to vote. . ... Tech Trek needs volunteers for the various camps. Our nine campers are going to Carson, on the UC Santa Cruz campus. To volunteer, contact the camp of your choice at techtrek-xxxxx@aauw-ca.org, where xxxxx is carson, davis, fresno, hopper, sandiego, santabarbara, sonoma, virtual, or whittier.



# Changemakers Reshma Saujani

# Reshma Saujani Social Entrepreneur and Founder of Girls Who Code and Marshall Plan for Moms

#### Researched and Written in First-Person Narrative by Phie Dai

When I was a teenager, I was annoyed that my parents named me Reshma. No one could pronounce it, and I could never find a cute keychain with my name at the local Kmart. My parents are Indian refugees from Uganda, and I grew up as a person of color in a predominantly white community. I faced bullying and teasing from my classmates, so when I turned 12, I started an after-school club called the Prejudice Reduction Interested Students Movement, or PRISM for short. I organized a march to combat racism in my school and community. From a young age, I knew social advocacy was my dharma, and I was put on this earth to make a difference.

I majored in political science and speech communication at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Later, I earned a graduate degree in public policy from Harvard and a law degree from Yale. At the age of 34, I became the first Indian-American woman to run for Congress. During my campaign, I visited local schools and witnessed the gender gap in computing classes firsthand. I realized that if girls were going to change the world, they needed technology and coding as their arsenal.



In 2012, I founded a nonprofit organization called **Girls Who Code** to increase the number of women studying computer science and working in the tech industry. We offer free summer immersion camps, after-school coding clubs, and college career-readiness programs. To date, Girls Who Code has served over 670,000 girls and women worldwide!

The pandemic led me in a new direction. When I discovered that thousands of mothers were forced to leave the workforce due to school closures or because they had jobs that couldn't be done

remotely, I launched a new initiative: the Marshall Plan for Moms.

With the support of Congresswoman Grace Meng and Senators Amy Klobuchar and Tammy Duckworth, this movement gained momentum. We are calling for legislation that supports affordable childcare, paid family leave, and equal pay for mothers. Kimberley Churches of the American Association of University Women emphasized the urgency: "The problem has been simmering beneath the surface for a long time, but we're at the point where we require bold and decisive action."

To me, there is nothing more satisfying than building something that improves people's lives. But don't just create one organization or solve one problem—tackle another one, and then another!



#### **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.

## Election Called for AAUW Fremont

As you have noticed, it's election season in the AAUW world. Both AAUW National and AAUW-CA are holding elections that close on May 13th and 16th respectively (be sure to vote). AAUW Fremont is also holding elections this month. Our election period will be from May 16th to May 26th.

This is the second year of a two-year cycle, meaning that only those who are stepping down will be replaced.

Continuing on will be:

Co-president: Jennifer Foster Vice President: Jo Szeto Finance Officer: Phie Dai Program Chair: Judy Wolf

AAUW Fund Chair: Jennifer Foster

Membership Chair: Jo Szeto

On the ballot, which will appear in your email on May 16th, are:

Co-presidents: Shirley Gilbert and Syeda Inamdar

Secretary: Maritza Nevarez Co-program Chair: Kimmi Tang

Appointed officers (no vote necessary) for the next fiscal year are:

Parliamentarian: Carolyn Hedgecock

Public Policy: Jeanne Delp

Membership Treasurer: Jennifer Foster

Diversity: Eileen Yap

Hospitality: Susie Claxton, Aimee Wiley Newsletter Editor: Jennifer Foster Newsletter Curator: Alice Manfredi Foundation President: Kathy Garfinkle

## Flower-Arranging Workshop Planned

Learn how to arrange your floral contributions into an attractive display in one of your beautiful vases. Jan Van De Werfhorst, our very own talented floral artist, will lead us in arranging beautiful displays.

Bring flowers, ferns, foliage and fronds from your own garden on Sunday, May 18th, at 2 pm to 3888 Artist Walk Common, Fremont, and make your dream arrangement. It would



be much appreciated if you could bring 15 to 25 clippings of each plant from your garden. This will allow us to all share.

While the event is free, please bring \$5 in \$1 bills to pay Jan for any supplies she provides to you. Please RSVP by Thursday, May 15th, to Judy Wolf at judyjudy1940@gmail.com.



The Foundation for Local Scholarships presented a check for \$13,500 to Ohlone College for scholarships to five hardworking students. All smiles are Binh Nguyen, executive director of the Ohlone Foundation, from left; AAUW members Becky Denevan, Kathy Scrivani, Randy Fewel, Kathi Cyphers, and Avis Kresin; and Brandon Stewart, institutional advancement development officer.

### It's Tech Trek Social Time

Come on Sunday, June 1st, to Artist Walk at 2 pm and meet our new Tech Trekkers who will be going to Camp Carson at UC Santa Cruz in July. We will enjoy do-it-yourself sundaes that Sunday and meet the girls' parents as well as some former Tech Trekkers and other guests to see where they are heading in their educational pursuits.

Sowjanya Vutukur is in charge our Tech Trek program. Please RSVP to Sowjanya by Friday, May 30th.



## AAUW Installation of Officers on June 7th

Meet your new officers for the coming year and other guests at the installation luncheon on Saturday, June 7th at noon. The group will enjoy a Chinese feast at the Rose Garden Restaurant, 33348 Alvarado-Niles Boulevard, Union City. Use Central Avenue for access to the parking area. Come and meet our new officers and guest speakers. Guest speakers will be former and current elected female public officials from the Newark, Union City and Fremont city councils.

The cost of this event will be \$30. Please pay via Zelle to Judith Wolf. The email to send the money is bigbadwolfie@juno.com and the mobile phone is 510-468-2002.

Please make your reservation by Monday, June 2nd, so the restaurant knows how many to expect.



### Homelessness: Causes, Impacts, Solutions

League of Women Voters invites the public



Featured speaker:

Vivian Wan
New CEO of Abode Services
Saturday, May 3
10:00 to 11:30 AM

Admission FREE
Niles Discovery Church, 36600 Niles Blvd., Fremont

Attendees encouraged to view in advance the video Responding to Homeless Encampments

from Iain de Jong, international expert in this work, about responding effectively: https://www.youtube. com/watch?v=3cZs5hB gweo



If you want to help fill the Free Little Pantry at Niles Discovery Church, you are

Church, you are welcome to bring unexpired non-perishable food. Please no books, clothing, household items, or fresh or home-prepared food.





## Gifts to Give Ramps Up

#### By Shelley Bartley

I have decided it is time to pass the torch and retire. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of the AAUW members who have graciously supported Gifts To Give over the years. Many of you knitted/crocheted colorful and warm hats and scarves for Abode Homeless Shelter and for the unhoused. In addition, numerous members have helped by donating socks, washcloths, blankets, toys, books, school supplies, pajamas, backpacks, gift cards, and clothing for those in need. Many of you also helped by sorting, wrapping and delivering gifts. Due to your help and effort for 47 years, we have provided thousands of Christmas gifts to Abode Homeless Shelter and to the homeless! If you are interested in helping this wonderful project continue, please contact Mary Fuchs, Linda Pearson, or Sharon Yool. Thank you again for all of your support!

See more on Shelley's retirement by clicking **here**.

### Notes From Mary Fuchs

Many thanks to those who helped on this project last year. We were able to complete over 75 sets. As you know these sets go to Abode. They are always so appreciative of our efforts to help those in need. We are hopeful to continue this project this year. We will be looking for help later in the summer to cut and tie the scarves. We are also in need of men's black socks and gallon Ziploc bags. Let me know if you'd like to donate either of these. It would also be helpful if you could let me know now, if you think you'll be able to help with the scarves. Just send me your name and email/text number, and I'll let you know when our plans are made.

Thank you again for all your support and help!

### Notes From Linda Pearson

Gifts to Give's backpack project is moving forward for 2025. Hats and scarves are being fashioned and collected for our backpacks. As we plan to fill another 100 packs and additional 30 bags for our unhoused, we do need funds and donations for simple nylon backpacks, dark socks, colored washcloths, and toiletries. So far we have plenty of soap and lotions. We see plenty of hats and scarves planning to arrive. We are a "Work in Progress" and welcome your support. Please feel free to drop of donations at my home. Sorting and purchasing will happen later in the fall. Keep an eye out for future announcements. Onward with joy!

### Notes From Sharon Yool

Collections for Gifts To Give Kindergarten through Third Graders has begun. Thanks to a creative knitter we already have at least 40 knitted/crocheted caps. We do need your



support in collecting other items though, such as two-pocket folders, colored pencils, erasers, crayons (16 or 24 crayons per box), glue sticks, and age appropriate games and toys. Last year someone dropped off bottles of bubblies with wands. Some of these items can be found at Oriental Trading Company website and are reasonably priced. You can drop anything off on my front porch or text me. Thank you for your generosity!

#### **New Member:**

### Janet Barton

"Why did you join AAUW?"

Milicent Shinn made me want to join. I "met" Milicent in the annals of history as a volunteer at Shinn Historical Park & Arboretum, here in Fremont.

Milicent graduated from the University of California at Berkeley in 1880, one of the first women to do so, and received her PhD from Berkeley in 1898, the first woman to receive a PhD from the university. She also hosted the first

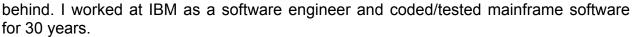
meeting, in 1885, for the West Coast branch of the Association of Collegiate Alumnae, the predecessor of AAUW, at her offices at the *Overland Monthly* in San Francisco, where she was editor.

It just seemed right to join!

My route from biology to computer science to history was circuitous.

I graduated from UC Berkeley with a BA in biology. I worked in plant pathology at UCB for five years. Computers became interesting because they could crunch statistics from plant experiments.

I took computer science classes at Cal State Hayward (now CSUEB). After an internship at IBM, I left plants



After I retired I wanted to get back to plants, and started volunteering in the gardens of Fremont's two historical nursery parks. I wondered about the history of these gardens with their old plants. The park's archives are full of a rich horticultural and agricultural history of our area.

The horticultural history of our area is stored in the archives of our two parks in ledgers, photos, letters, and newspapers. Even Milicent Shinn's baby observation notebooks (she received her doctorate based on the notebooks) contain notes about the plants that grew here, her family, and the ranch employees. These archives are very precious and need to be digitized and brought to light.

What a treasure trove!





## Dine With A Scientist Big Hit With Student

#### By Shanvi Gupta, Intern and Freshman at Kennedy High School

This month, I attended Irvington High and AAUW Fremont's Dine with a Scientist, which provided me with an extremely educational evening.

I am deeply interested in STEM and was inspired to be surrounded by scientists, aspiring students, and educators who all shared a passion for discovery and innovation. The room was set up as a real restaurant and the menu included delicious Pasta Alfredo, garlic bread, and salad.

When I registered for the event, I was asked about my own STEM interests, and this was how I was placed at a table with Ms. Lydia Smith, a scientist currently working at UC Berkeley's Museum of Vertebrate Zoology. She explained complex concepts about genetics in such a clear way that it made even the hardest concepts feel easy to grasp.

My favorite part of the conversation was our discussion on evolution. I had skimmed over evolution in science class but hearing about it from an expert in the field shined a completely different light on it. She showed us how evolution is not just a historical concept, but a continuous force that will always shape life around us. I also learned how genetics play a key role in tracking these changes.

Beyond just talking about science, Ms. Smith also discussed her own personal journey and how genetics was the last place she expected to be. This evening was so inspiring, because I got to hear about a scientist's journey into STEM firsthand, and it provided me with a clearer vision of what my possible future could look like and to be open to experiences that come along.



AAUW members attending the Dine With a Scientist event at Irvington High School were, from left, Kathy Garfinkle, Jo Szeto, Fahria Khan, founder of the event; Randy Fewel, Kimmi Tang, and Judy Wolf.



# Shelley Bartley Retires From Gifts to Give

I decided to retire from Gifts To Give to have more time to spend with my family. Both of my grandchildren will be in high school next school year. Before long they both will be off to college. I also need to finish numerous projects I have never had time to complete after teaching for 39 years.

I started Friends of Abode and Friends of Hillside 47 years ago. I had the desire to help those who were less fortunate. I soon realized I needed more help with these Christmas projects. For years I had Christmas wrapping parties at my home. For several years I added Friends of Safe Alternatives To Violent Environments (SAVE) to our gift list. As more of my friends volunteered to help, the gifts quickly filled more rooms in my house! Our bedroom and the bathrooms were the only rooms not filled with gifts. My husband would often say all he needed was a path to the computer and the refrigerator!

I later combined Friends of Abode, Friends of SAVE, and Friends of Hillside into one group called Gifts To Give. Due to the help of my family and friends, the Gifts To Give



Shelley Bartley stands behind last year's gifts to Abode. More than 1,000 gifts were donated.

Christmas Project continues to grow. Our team of volunteers is able to make and purchase over a thousand gifts each year. It now takes a caravan of five cars, a van, and a truck to take all of our gifts to Abode Homeless Shelter.

I was honored to be the Fremont Local Award Recipient in 2014, by state legislator Bob Wieckowski, 25th Assembly District. In 2016, I was named the Community Hero Awardee by Assembly Member Kansen Chu, 25th District, for serving the community and for helping the district become a better place to live

and work. I was able to receive these special recognitions due to the continued help and assistance of my thoughtful husband, Tom, and the support of all of my wonderful and caring friends.

I am planning to help Mary Fuchs make fleece scarves for the homeless. I always enjoy attending her Fleece Scarf Making Parties. In addition, I would like to continue helping Linda Pearson at her annual Sorting and Packing Get Together. I am looking forward to staying in touch with section leaders Mary Fuchs, Linda Pearson, and Sharon Yool.









# California Conference for Women Inspires Student

#### By Ameya Ravi, AAUW Fremont Branch Intern and 11th grader at Washington High

On February 12th, I felt lucky to attend the California Conference for Women. Thank you to Randy Fewel and AAUW Fremont for inviting me.

Immediately upon walking into the San Jose McEnery Convention Center, I saw many



business officials, job opportunities, organizations, and women-owned companies promoting their products, such as unique jewelry and makeovers. The most memorable session I attended was "Bright Futures in Tech Workplaces."

Starting off the morning strong, well-educated female leaders from Google, Johnson & Johnson, Oracle, and Juniper Networks shared their leadership techniques and how they rose in the tech industries while fighting gender stereotypes and societal standards. The keynote session featured high-profile women, most notably Simone Biles, Padma Lakshmi, Brittney Griner, and Jane Fonda.

Simone Biles shared overcoming the "twisties" at the Olympics with the aid of her close inner

circle. She discussed the immense amount of work and perseverance of being a world-class, Olympic gymnast. Jane Fonda candidly shared her experiences with sexism and the rapidly shifting workplace climate for all women over the years.

As a high schooler, I learned the reality of corporate jobs, sexism, the amount of work (trials and tribulations) it takes to "make it." I felt inspired and motivated, and I would recommend more young women attend this event.

With highly-accomplished women sharing their persistence and resilience in the face of adversity, there was one central message—women can achieve anything—a message I'll carry with me.

## Missing AAUW National Emails?

If you unsubscribed to AAUW National's emails and are reconsidering, you can click **here** to resubscribe.



# Exploring the Arts Will be back in June.

#### **Anusha's Corner:**

# Celebrating Service: Volunteer Month Proclamation for AAUW Fremont

#### By Anusha Dube

Editor's Note: Anusha Dube is a student at Ohlone College, majoring in data science. She is deeply committed and passionate about empowering underprivileged girls through education.

As a way to honor the incredible spirit of Volunteer Appreciation Month, I recently had



the privilege of presenting a proclamation to the dedicated members of the AAUW Fremont Branch at Ohlone College. This was a meaningful moment to recognize the vital contributions of all volunteers and members who work tirelessly to empower women and girls within our Fremont community.

The proclamation acknowledged volunteers' commitment to initiatives in every aspect: fostering girls' interest in STEM fields, raising funds for crucial educational scholarships, actively advocating, and holding events. Holding this recognition at Ohlone College felt particularly fitting, highlighting the ties between the college and AAUW, both deeply invested in education and community betterment.

Presenting this proclamation was a heartfelt way to express gratitude for the AAUW Fremont volunteers' countless hours and unwavering dedication. I had the opportunity to present this proclamation to Randy Fewel, who received it and spoke to the senators of Ohlone College about AAUW's

mission, all the work we have dedicated ourselves to, and mentioned the new AAUW club that will be coming to Ohlone College. By recognizing AAUW's invaluable contributions to our community, I was proud to show the importance of volunteerism and building a more equitable, opportunity-filled future for everyone.



### Interest Group Meetings

Afternoon Lit

Afternoon Lit will meet on May 20 at 2 pm at the home of Joyce Ruiz. We will have a short discussion of *Spoken Bones* by NC Lewis and then select our books for the coming year. Bring your book suggestions. Please let Joyce know if you are attending.



Book Talk

Joyce Ruiz will host Book Talkers at her home on May 19, at 3 pm, when Shirley DeLucchi leads a discussion of *The Other Americans* by Laila Lalami.



Cultural Cuisine Goes Korean

The group will visit MIGA Korean Restaurant at 39033 State Street on Tuesday, May 20th, at 6:30 pm. This restaurant is in a strip that faces the old Payless store. The restaurant's back faces State Street.



Cultural Cuisine

Please RSVP to Judy at 510-657-5589 or email at <a href="mailto:iudvjudy1940@gmail.com">iudvjudy1940@gmail.com</a>

Imposed tariffs, export controls, and other regulations are contrary to the "free market"/neo-liberal policies that the state usually abides by....Can the U.S. continue to exercise leadership in the security realm if it fails to keep the open global economy intact?....Why is neo-liberal economic policy incompatible with liberal internationalism?"



Great Decisions

The Evolution of U.S. Leadership in the Global Economy: Dilemmas and Choices is the topic for the Great Decisions discussion group on May 28. Meeting is at Suju's on Thornton Avenue 10-12 am. For more information contact Shari Whitaker or Joyce Ruiz.



Yoga for Body and Spírít This group meets every Thursday morning at 11:15 at Jo Szeto's house. Lunch is included. For more information, call Jo.



### Important Dates

**Deadlines for articles**: 25th of the month before publication

#### Send items for The TWIG to Jennifer Foster at <a href="mailto:jeeinfo@yahoo.com">jeeinfo@yahoo.com</a>

- The board of directors meets on May 2nd at 9:30 am at Suju's Coffee and Tea on Thornton Avenue. If you want to attend a board meeting, but can't meet at 9:30 am on a Friday, email us at <a href="mailto:auwfremontbranch@gmail.com">auwfremontbranch@gmail.com</a> and let us know your availability.
- The AAUW Fremont Branch election period starts **May 16th**. Click <u>here</u> to see who is running.
- Learn flower arranging on May 18th at 3888 Artist Walk Common, Fremont. Jan Van De Werfhorst will host a flower-arranging workshop with flowers from your garden. Click <u>here</u> to learn more.
- Ice cream social for this year's Tech Trekkers will be June 1st at Artist Walk. Click here to learn more.
- Installation of new officers will take place **June 7th** at the Rose Garden Restaurant in Union City. For more information, click **here**.

### 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.

#### **Need a Notary?**

AAUW Member Nkechi (Bridget) Uzoegwu has joined the National Notary Association and is ready to meet your notary needs.



